



Executive Director Report – April 20, 2023

This report provides programmatic and administrative updates about key activities staff have engaged in since the January 2023 Commission Meeting. Program updates include relevant highlights, rather than a summary of all staff work, and are framed by the [Strategic Priority Areas](#) and [Theory of Change System Levers](#).

Please note: Items that will be presented as Action or Information Items during the April 20, 2023, Commission Meeting will not be included in the report below.

1. Fatherhood Initiative

Priority Area: Family Functioning

System Lever: Catalyst

First 5 California (F5CA) staff have been working with the Glen Price Group to develop a Literature Review and Environmental Scan on the various fatherhood programs around the state. The Literature Review and Environmental Scan provides high level summaries of the existing research on fatherhood initiatives, as well as a preliminary landscape of California's fatherhood related efforts and initiatives, to inform potential future investments and work of F5CA. This report was informed by research on the current landscape, distribution, and analysis of a survey of local First 5 county commissions, and interviews with local First 5 county commissions engaged in active fatherhood related efforts.

F5CA staff are developing a project scope of work for future Information and Action Items. The scope will be brought to the Program and Evaluation Advisory Committee this Summer for their review, feedback, and guidance.

2. Media Campaign Update

Priority Area: Child Development, Child Health

System Lever: Broadcaster

The public education and outreach media campaign, Stronger Starts, launched in April 2023 focuses on educating families about Toxic Stress Response and what they can do at home to buffer against its effects in children. The campaign is geared to reach families throughout California through various forms of media, including television, radio, social media, out-of-home billboards and displays, partnerships, as well as an upcoming in-person experiential tour throughout the state. The F5CA parent's website has been updated with new content and articles with in-depth information for families and links to resources for further assistance.

This campaign will run through 2023 with new content being developed throughout the year. F5CA will continue to focus on the importance of *Talk. Read. Sing.*[®] by celebrating *Día de los Libros* on April 28, 2023. This annual event, in partnership with the California State Library, celebrates early literacy and family engagement by sharing

recorded readings of children's books by First 5 county commission executive directors, partners, and commissioners through our parent-focused social media platform, Facebook.

3. California Health Interview Survey (CHIS)

Priority Area: Child Health

System Lever: Catalyst

Following investment approval for the next contract cycle during the last Commission meeting, F5CA staff have developed the next contract, which is currently with the Department of General Services (DGS) for approval. Meanwhile, progress continues with the current contract cycle, with deliverables being received as scheduled. Recent deliverables, which are being reviewed internally prior to approval, include briefs on knowledge about and use of paid family leave by California families and the impact of COVID-19 on California families.

4. Improve and Maximize Programs so All Children Thrive (IMPACT)

Priority Area: Child Development, Child Health, Family Functioning

System Lever: Catalyst, Convener

Efforts to address inequities within Quality Counts California (QCC) are continuing through the equity audit, as called for in the Master Plan for Early Learning and Care. Through leadership and IMPACT 2020 funding from F5CA, a contract with School Readiness Consulting supported the facilitation of focus groups and partner surveys. Extensive outreach to participating and non-participating early learning and care providers and parents was used to identify system inequities and issues of access.

School Readiness Consulting has analyzed the data from the focus groups and surveys and is working with F5CA, the California Department of Education, and the California Department of Social Services to create a final slide deck with actionable, stakeholder-oriented findings, takeaways, and recommendations. The final deliverable is currently in the process of approval and is expected to be complete by the end of April 2023.

With IMPACT 2020 funding sunseting June 30, 2023, staff will be working hard to close out the program following the final quarter while also focusing on the next and final round of IMPACT funding, IMPACT Legacy. We anticipate the IMPACT Legacy RFA will be released late April 2023, with grant funding released in July 2023.

5. Program for Equitable Access to Resources for Literacy Support (PEARLS)

Priority Area: Child Development, Family Functioning

System Lever: Catalyst

PEARLS helps to create safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments through early literacy programming and supports. As approved by the F5CA Commission in May 2022, PEARLS is a multi-pronged strategy designed to get

books into homes, provide training and resources, and promote local innovations around early literacy. Book distribution will focus on improving access to high-quality books that reflect the diversity of California, including race, language, ability, and age. Training and resource development will support those working directly with families of young children to incorporate early literacy into their existing programs and curriculum. This is to help leverage current early literacy investments that are being administered by other state sister agencies such as the CA State Libraries, California Department of Public Health and California Department of Education.

A competitive Request for Application (RFA) is under development to allow First 5 county commissions to apply for funds to expand or initiate local literacy programs. The intent is to prioritize and incentivize literacy activities that promote healing-centered and culturally responsive systems and to support cross-county collaboration around literacy. F5CA staff are working to release the RFA in Summer 2023.

6. Refugee Family Support

Priority Area: Family Functioning

System Lever: Catalyst, Convener

The Refugee Family Support program implementation started on September 1, 2022, and continues through August 31, 2023. Grantees are providing support in systems navigation, short term emergency housing, and emergency childcare. Through the implementation, grantees aim to support over 850 refugee families. Grantees submitted supplemental data during the half-way mark of the implementation period and have reported reaching over 400 families, including nearly 600 children. Staff are preparing to disseminate the annual performance report in early summer 2023.

Grantees and their partners convened in two quarterly network meetings since the beginning of implementation. Several topics were explored in the quarterly network meetings through presentations from experts in the field, including the Department of Social Services Refugee Program Bureau staff and International Rescue Committee. Staff are working on coordinating the third network meeting which will focus on culturally responsive mental health screenings.

7. Home Visiting Coordination

Priority Area: Child Health, Child Development, Family Functioning

System Lever: Catalyst

F5CA staff are in the process of closing out phase one of the Home Visiting Coordination grants approved by the Commission in October 2019. Between 2020 and 2022, 50 counties received approximately \$9 million of funding to develop or strengthen a cross-agency, cross-system understanding of the role home visiting plays in supporting family well-being, increase access to culturally and linguistically responsive home visiting, and integrate home visiting into other child- and family-serving systems.

Phase two, which continues and expands on this work with a focus on regional coordination, will begin in July 2023. The RFA for phase two was released on January 3, 2023, with final applications due on May 24, 2023. A Request for Offer for a technical assistance contractor was awarded to Children Now. F5CA is awaiting final execution of the contract from DGS before the contractor can begin work in supporting the regions to develop and submit their applications.

8. First 5 Network Alignment

Priority Area: Child Health, Child Development, Family Functioning

System Lever: Convener

In April 2023, staff participated in the first of a series of meetings to support F5CA and the First 5 Association of California in an effort to uplift and better clarify the role of the First 5 Network and how the two entities will work together to support a state and local early childhood systems change structure. An outside consultant has been hired to plan and facilitate these meetings and make recommendations about next steps.

On a related and parallel track, First 5 California and the First 5 Association of California are also engaging in conversations around First 5 Network sustainability and understanding what sustainability looks like long term amid declining revenue and the impacts of Proposition 31, California's ban on flavored tobacco products.

Personnel Update

- The Deputy Director position in the Program Innovation and Evaluation Division has been re-advertised, with a final filing date of April 18, 2023.
- Staff is working on next steps for the vacant Education Administrator I position over the Prevention, Equity, and Opportunity Office, as the previous incumbent, Debra Silverman, retired in November 2022, and the vacant Education Administrator I position over the Early Learning Programs and Partnerships Office, as the previous incumbent, Erin Dubey, transferred to the California Department of Education in March 2023.
- Staff is working on recruitment for the vacant Information Officer I position in the External Governmental Affairs Office, as the previous incumbent Oscar Ramirez retired in February 2023.
- Staff is deciding next steps for the vacant Information Technology Specialist I position in the Information Technology Services office, as the previous incumbent Riley Henderson took on a promotional opportunity outside of state government in January 2023.
- Joseph Chang, Associate Governmental Program Associate, in the Contracts and Procurement Office, completed his term as a retired annuitant in February 2023.

Contracts Update

In a bit of exciting news, F5CA was recognized by the California Department of General Services for its achievements in executing state contracting practices. F5CA received the *Agency of the Year Award* and the *Most Improved Award* for its best practices, creativity, and outstanding achievements to advance the state's Small Business (SB) and Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) advocates, and state leadership for outstanding achievements in SB & DVBE advocacy and contracting.

Erlynn Cardenas-Jackson, Director of Contracts and Procurement Office represented the agency and accepted the award on behalf of Executive and Contracts and Procurement Office staff: Erik Miyao, Joan Dutra, and Rick Espinoza.

F5CA demonstrated its commitment and success across the areas of outreach efforts, education, performance measurements, and notable improvements. This was the first time the agency was awarded this distinction.

By exceeding the statutory mandates for these programs, F5CA affirmed its commitment to small, diverse, and disabled veteran-owned businesses to thrive and make impactful differences in their communities by driving millions of dollars into local economies while supporting F5CA's initiatives. We welcome you to view the awards on your next visit to our Sacramento office.