

First 5 Commission of San Diego

June 13, 2011

Quality Preschool Initiative

Request:

The Commission will receive an update regarding the development of the First 5 San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative to include information on “best practices” in preschool and key features of quality preschool. Additionally, the Commission will be asked to provide feedback and direction on the key components that should be included in the upcoming Quality Preschool Initiative, so that Commission staff may develop the Scope of Work for these services and return to the Commission in October 2011 with a specific program design and request approval to release the Request for Proposal (RFP).

First 5 Efforts in the Development of the Quality Preschool Initiative to Date:

Commission staff is on target in the development and release of an RFP for the new Quality Preschool Initiative so the services may begin effective July 1, 2012.

Staff (in coordination with an expert consultant and the Commission’s evaluator) is incorporating: up-to-date research on national/state “best practices”; feedback from the eight First 5 California ‘Power of Preschool’ (PoP) programs; community input from stakeholders, providers and parents; a cost-analysis; and, the best practices from the First 5 San Diego five-year Preschool for All Demonstration Project into the design of the new initiative. Additionally, both First 5 California and the California Department of Education (CDE) proposed program requirements are being considered so that First 5 San Diego will be in alignment with statewide preschool program efforts and will have the opportunity to draw down potential State funding for the local program.

A timeline of key activities and milestones to support the development of the Quality Preschool Initiative is provided in Attachment 1.

During the last few months, Commission staff has been working with Susan Muenchow, a national expert in the field of Early Childhood Education (ECE) and Quality Preschool, in activities supporting the development of the Quality Preschool Initiative. Ms. Muenchow is responsible for the following:

- Reviewing national literature on ECE and quality preschool “best practices”
- Interviewing the leaders of eight First 5 California PoP County preschool programs
- Facilitating & obtaining input from the May 11, 2011 Community Forum (See Attachment 2)
- Facilitating & obtaining input from the May 23, 2011 TPAC Meeting (See Attachment 2)
- Developing cost estimates for maintaining and/or expanding services

Ms. Muenchow has developed a number of findings/preliminary recommendations that will be incorporated into the Quality Preschool Initiative Scope of Work and RFP. Ms. Muenchow’s draft report is provided in Attachment 3.

Today Ms. Muenchow will present additional background information regarding quality preschool and provide preliminary information on her findings based on her activities to date, and provide preliminary recommendations for the design of the Quality Preschool Initiative.

TPAC Recommendations:

On May 23, 2011 TPAC received information regarding best practice and the key elements of quality preschool to be considered for inclusion of First 5 San Diego’s Quality Preschool Initiative. TPAC recommended that the First 5 San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative should:

- Incorporate all key components identified as national/state best practices;
- Align the program with State requirements to enable First 5 San Diego to draw down funding; and
- Continue to provide and develop program components/services that have been identified as favorable practices in other counties providing PoP programs.

Additionally, TPAC suggested that staff consider strategies to sustain this initiative in future years, such as developing private-public partnerships and incorporate strategies to maximize the use of technology to support the ECE providers, parents and children.

Commission History:

- On May 9, 2011 (Item 1), the Commission approved the allocation of \$15.7 million per year for FY 2012-13, FY 2013-14 and FY 2014-15 for Quality Preschool Initiative services.
- On September 11, 2009 (Item 1), the Commission approved a 5-Year Strategic Plan that supports Learning as a critical Strategic Goal Area.

Link to the Strategic Plan:

The Quality Preschool Initiative links directly to the Strategic Plan Learning Objective to: *Increase the percentage of children, ages 3-5 enrolled in quality early care and education (ECE) programs.*

Staff Recommendation:

None. For information only

Potential Fiscal Impact:

Up to \$15.7 million per year has been approved in the 5-Year Program Allocation Plan for FY 2012-13, FY 2013-14 and FY 2014-15.