

First 5 Commission of San Diego

September 12, 2011

First 5 San Diego Preschool for All (PFA) Demonstration Project: Five-Year Summative Report

Request

The Commission will receive a summary report on the First 5 San Diego Preschool for All (PFA) Demonstration Project. The information in this report will help inform the development of the upcoming First 5 San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative to be implemented in 2012.

Background – PFA History in San Diego County

First 5 San Diego PFA Demonstration Project Implementation In June 2005, the Commission approved \$30 million to fund a five-year PFA demonstration project in San Diego County. In December 2005, the Commission approved the final *Preschool for All Master Plan* document; approved the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) as the implementation contractor for the PFA Demonstration Project; and directed staff to develop a phased implementation plan for the five-year PFA Demonstration Project in high priority communities that could ultimately lead to the development of an infrastructure capable of serving all eligible preschool children in San Diego County.

Six communities were initially targeted based on their elementary schools' low Academic Performance Index (API) scores during 2004, the number of English language learners, and average family income in the communities. The original communities were: Escondido, Lemon Grove, National City, San Ysidro, South Bay and Valley Center/Pauma. Currently eleven communities participate in the First 5 San Diego PFA Demonstration Project: Borrego Springs, Chula Vista, El Cajon, Escondido, Lemon Grove, Mountain Empire, National City, San Ysidro, South Bay, Vista, and Valley Center/Pauma.

In December 2010, the Commission approved a one year extension of the current contracted services (to June 30, 2012) so that the First 5 San Diego PFA Five-Year Demonstration Project could be thoroughly evaluated, community input could be obtained, and best local, state and national practices could be identified to inform the development of the new Quality Preschool Initiative.

Participation in the First 5 California Quality Preschool Program First 5 California identified quality preschool for all children as a high priority in 2003 and implemented its Preschool for All program, but changed the name to Power of Preschool (PoP) in 2006 when Proposition 82, which would have provided State funding for preschool for all 4-year olds, failed. San Diego First 5 has participated in the First 5 California's PoP program since 2006, and draws down approximately 20% of our annual investment in matching funds from First 5 California. The PoP program concluded on June 30, 2011 and First 5 California has not yet identified whether it will continue to support a similar program. The First 5 San Diego PFA Demonstration Project has received positive feedback from First 5 California with regard to the wide diversity of providers being supported, the workforce development components and the quality improvement systems that have been implemented.

Summary of PFA Demonstration Project Design

Multi-tiered Service Delivery Model The objective of the First 5 San Diego PFA Demonstration Project has been to design, develop and subsequently establish and evaluate a multi-tiered service delivery model for preschool that will support the implementation of high quality PFA programs countywide. The First 5 San Diego PFA Demonstration Project is designed to:

- Ensure universal access to a quality preschool experience at no cost to families;
- Provide a wide variety of choices in quality preschool providers for parents;
- Promote uniformly high standards for both early learning curriculums and preschool facilities (for both public funded and private providers); and
- Support both families as consumers, and local preschool program providers to ensure that children are offered a variety of quality learning experiences that will give them the foundation they need to be successful when they enter kindergarten.

The goal of the PFA Demonstration Project has been to engage families with 4-year-old children (including those children with disabilities and/or special needs, and those whose primary language is other than English) living in the target communities and offer those children a wide variety of preschool programs that meet both PFA Quality Criteria, and are culturally and linguistically appropriate for the communities that are being served.

Infiltrating Targeted Communities Another goal over the five-year project period has been to successfully enroll and serve 70% of 4-year olds residing in the targeted communities. This goal has been achieved in three of the six original communities, despite economic challenges across the state and programmatic obstacles. During the First 5 San Diego Demonstration Project, over 18,000 preschool-age children have received a high quality preschool experience in a variety of settings that were identified as PFA provider sites.

Summary Report The *First 5 San Diego Preschool for All Demonstration Project: Five Year Summative Report* utilizes findings from FY 2006-07 to FY 2010-11 and a variety of data sources to evaluate the overall impact of the project. Sources include classroom and teacher interaction assessment scores, developmental scores for participating children, surveys with parents and teachers, interviews with site directors and stakeholders from the early childhood education community, two parent focus groups, a community meeting and best practice information provided to the Commission and the Technical and Professional Advisory Committee (TPAC) from American Institutes for Research (AIR) consultant, Susan Muenchow.

Commission History

- On December 5, 2005 (Item 6), the Commission approved the final PFA Master Plan, and directed staff to develop a phased implementation plan for the 5-year PFA demonstration project in San Diego County. The Commission also approved the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) as the fiscal agent for the PFA Demonstration Project.
- On June 20, 2005 (Item 13), the Commission approved \$30 million for a local, 5-year Preschool for All Demonstration Project.

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.*

Link to: *Live Well, San Diego!*

The Preschool for All Demonstration project supports *Live Well, San Diego!* in its opportunities to promote physical activity and healthy nutrition in Early Childhood Education programs and for families with preschoolers enrolled in these services and to provide early identification of health related issues for preschool students which can be addressed prior to entering kindergarten.

Staff Recommendation

None. For information only

Fiscal Impact

The Commission approved \$30 million for this project in 2005 and the funding was allocated between FY 2006-07 and FY 2010-11.