

First 5 Commission of San Diego

October 10, 2011

First 5 San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative – Release of Solicitation

Request

The request before the Commission is to authorize the Executive Director or her designee to release a solicitation for the First 5 San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative for up to \$47.1 million for FY 2012-13 through FY 2014-15.

Quality Preschool Efforts in San Diego County

From FY 2006-07 to FY 2010-11 the Commission has provided a total of \$30 million to fund a five-year Preschool for All (PFA) Demonstration Project. (The project was continued for one additional year [FY 2011-12] to allow sufficient time to develop the design for a new quality preschool initiative.) Additionally, First 5 San Diego has received an approximate 20% funding match from First 5 CA for providing a local preschool program that meets all of the service delivery requirements of the state-wide “Power of Preschool” program. The goal of PFA has been to provide high quality preschool services, completely tuition free regardless of family income, in both existing and in new public and private center-based and home-based early childhood programs, in eleven high need communities. More than 18,000 San Diego County preschool children and their families have been served by this project.

In September 2011, the Commission was provided an overview of a summative study of the PFA Demonstration Project in which the accomplishments and challenges of the project were identified. The information from the summative report, input from a community stakeholder meeting held on May 11, 2011 and best practice research are being used to develop the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the upcoming First 5 San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative (QPI) scheduled to be released in October 2011, so that services may begin in FY 2012.

Design of the First 5 San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative

The overall purpose of the QPI is to use a multi-tiered service delivery model to implement high quality preschool programs. The initiative will build upon the First 5 Commission’s Preschool for All (PFA) Demonstration/ Power of Preschool (PoP) project. The ultimate goal is to reduce the school readiness gap in high-need communities and improve school achievement in San Diego County.

The QPI will address the following key services areas:

- Impacting the Growth and Development of Children
- Parent/Family Involvement
- Kindergarten Transition Activities
- Quality Preschool Environment
- Professional Development
- Community Engagement and Collaboration
- Supporting the QPI Infrastructure

Over a three-year period, the QPI is designed to:

- Ensure access for 4-year-old children to a high quality preschool experience at no cost to families living in targeted high-need communities;
- Promote uniformly high standards for preschool program services and learning environments, based on state and nationally recognized best practices;
- Offer families in targeted communities a choice of programs in a range of settings - school-based facilities, Head Start, private centers, faith-based programs, and family child care homes - that meet the project’s quality criteria;
- Support preschool program providers in offering children a variety of quality learning experiences that promote their school readiness as well as later success in school and life;
- Engage families in their children’s early learning; explore new technological approaches to parent education; and empower families to advocate for their children;

- Assist the large population of preschool children and families in San Diego County who are dual language learners by training providers to offer preschool programs and parent education services that are culturally and linguistically appropriate for the communities being served;
- Provide preschool programs that recognize the importance of family home language and culture - supporting children's identity, self-esteem, and promoting learning and English language development; and
- Strategically position preschool service providers throughout San Diego County to sustain the quality of their programs beyond the three-year QPI contract period.

In addition, the three-year QPI project is designed to address the following improved or expanded activities:

- Provide quality preschool services to at least 70% of four-year-old children in the eleven previously targeted San Diego County communities of Borrego Springs, Chula Vista, El Cajon, Escondido, Lemon Grove, Mountain Empire, National City, San Ysidro, South Bay, Valley Center/Pauma and Vista;
- Expand support for high quality preschool services into additional communities identified with the highest needs;
- Ensure that teacher and director educational qualifications align with both nationally recommended standards and California's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) criteria;
- Train providers in cultural and linguistic competence to facilitate their work with a population where a large percentage of the participants are Latino and English-Language Learners;
- Improve outreach to parents of preschool-age children and increase opportunities for involvement in their children's preschool activities through take-home lessons, videos, and innovative technological resources;
- Explore new strategies to include the family child care community in quality preschool services;
- Expand efforts to support *Live Well, San Diego!* by promoting healthy lifestyle behaviors for young children and their families, reduce childhood obesity, and provide early identification of health related issues;
- Leverage other efforts to expand outreach to businesses and other potential partners to increase support for quality preschool throughout San Diego County.

If additional funding becomes available Attachment 1 provides a summary of other services to be considered to be included in the QPI.

The First 5 San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative will provide services in the following twelve communities in FY 2012-13 and expand to additional high need communities as additional funding becomes available:

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| ○ Borrego Springs | ○ National City |
| ○ Chula Vista | ○ San Ysidro |
| ○ El Cajon | ○ South Bay |
| ○ Escondido | ○ Vista |
| ○ Lemon Grove | ○ Valley Center/Pauma Valley |
| ○ Mountain Empire | ○ Central San Diego (92102, 92105, 92113, 92114)* |

* QPI Program services shall be initiated in these Central San Diego communities during FY 2012-13

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 following objectives from the Commission's 2010 - 2015 Strategic Plan will be directly addressed by the First 5 San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative:

- **Key Objective (3):** Decrease the percentage of children entering kindergarten with undetected and/or untreated developmental, social emotional or behavioral delays or problems.
- **Key Objective (4):** Increase the percentage of children ages 3 to 5 enrolled in quality early care and education (ECE) programs.
- **Key Objective (5):** Increase the number of households with children ages 0 through 5 that regularly engage in age-appropriate parent-child activities that promote early learning.
- **Key Objective (6):** Increase the use of positive parenting practices to promote the healthy social emotional development of children 0 through 5.

Link to: *Live Well, San Diego!*

The First 5 San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative supports *Live Well, San Diego!* by providing a variety of opportunities to promote healthy behaviors for children in First 5 funded early childhood education programs and for the families of preschoolers enrolled in these services, and by providing early identification of health related issues for preschool students which can then be addressed prior to entering kindergarten.

TPAC Statement

TPAC reviewed and discussed the key components of high quality preschool programs at their May 23, 2011 meeting. Susan Muenchow, consultant with the American Institute for Research, presented the group with background information regarding the essential components of quality preschool programs, information on her research into national and state ECE best practices, and a summary of the interviews she has done with key staff in the eight other First 5 counties that are participating in the First 5 California Power of Preschool (PoP) program. She also provided TPAC members with feedback from the San Diego Early Childhood Education Community Forum that was held on May 11, 2011.

TPAC was asked to provide their feedback and recommendations regarding the key components to be considered for the upcoming First 5 San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative. TPAC suggestions include:

- QPI should incorporate the ten “key elements” identified by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) as national/state ECE best practices;
- QPI should support all of the General Principle program findings presented by Ms. Muenchow so that First 5 San Diego can remain aligned with the State First 5 Commission, participate in any new state-wide ECE programs and draw down match funding;
- QPI should continue to provide the high quality program components/services that have been identified as favorable practices by other California counties providing Power of Preschool (PoP) programs and further develop the key components/services noted in the Muenchow presentation as ‘areas of improvement’; and
- Staff should consider feedback on sustaining the initiative into future years by incorporating ideas on how to best use technology to support San Diego County ECE providers, parents and children.

Staff Recommendations

- 1) Find that the proposed First 5 San Diego Initiative is consistent with the Commission’s Strategic Plan, furthers the support and improvement of early childhood development within the County and provides a public benefit.
- 2) Authorize the Executive Director or her designee to work with the County Director of Purchasing and Contracting to release a competitive solicitation for the First 5 San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative for up to \$47.1 million over three years.

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$47.1 million for FY 2012-13 through FY 2014-15 from the Commission’s allocation for Quality Preschool. These funds are included in the 5-Year Program Allocation Plan approved by the Commission on June 13, 2011 (Item 9).

Attachment 1

Summary of Potential Program Services to be Considered if Additional Funding Becomes Available

- Expand support for quality preschool services into other new target communities in San Diego County that have been identified with high-need zip codes.
- Pilot a high quality *Infant/Toddler Program* in at least one of the QPI target communities using a standardized tool approved by First 5 to assess program quality; with the mandate to incorporate all components of the QPI program including: tracking child development outcomes, administering timely developmental screenings, making referrals to services when indicated, implementing parent/family involvement programs and ensuring professional development opportunities for staff.
 - Ensure collaboration with Infant/Toddler services and the future First 5 San Diego Home Visiting Initiative to insure early intervention for young children.
- Participate in state and federal opportunities to pilot new ECE program components and/or leverage local program funding.
- Explore the feasibility of conducting a study to measure the long-term impact of quality preschool on children (e.g. at grade 3).
- Initiate efforts to place QPI programs in settings that offer full-day care for the children of working parents, and/or link children in QPI part-day preschools to extended day options.
- Explore additional efforts to support *Live Well, San Diego!* by promoting healthy lifestyle behaviors for young children and their families that reduce childhood obesity and programs.
 - Evaluate evidence-based programs related to intergenerational service delivery such as the Intergenerational Center at Temple University's *Five and Fit: Obesity Prevention Program*. The program addresses the issue of early childhood obesity by educating the network of adults who surround a child (parents, caregivers, and teachers) in the importance of adopting healthy habits regarding nutrition, physical activity and other practices that contribute to improved health.