



Marin Children and Families Commission
Meeting Minutes – November 9, 2011

I. CALL TO ORDER

Cío Hernández called the meeting to order at First 5 Marin at 5:40 p.m.

Commissioners Present

Regina Archer
Sister Joan Hanna
Cio Hernández
Steve Kinsey
Alicia Suski

Commissioners Excused

David Bonfilio
Aideen Gaidmore
Heather Ravani
Sparkie Spaeth

Staff Present

Amy L. Reisch
Patricia Brady
Barbara Clifton Zarate
Michelle Fadelli

Representatives from the community

Jara Dean-Coffey, jdcPartnerships
Jill Casey, jdcPartnerships
Alexandra Danino, Promotores Marin
Kathy Tabor, Tabor Consulting

II. MEETING MINUTES

Cio asked if there were changes, additions or corrections to the October 5, 2011 Commission minutes. No changes were announced.

Motion: Archer/Suski

The minutes of October 5, 2011 were approved.

III. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Alicia provided an update on the Medical-Legal Partnership, and reported that they would be revisiting the issue of home visiting with Sutter Home Health Nurses in January/February.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Alexandra Danino, representing Promotores Marin, thanked the commission for its support of the Promotores movement in Marin County. She reported that they have launched a website (www.promotoresmarin.org) which includes “The Hub,” a set of resources to support the individual promotores. Promotores are now working countywide, and have expanded their knowledge and skills with a summit (funded by First 5 Marin, providing speakers and training to more than 50 people). Alexandra thanked Cío Hernández for her support at the County and in the community; she offered special thanks to Barbara Clifton-Zarate who has been key to the growth and development of the Promotores movement in Marin and provides support and encouragement to the individuals involved.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/STAFF REPORT

Board of Equalization (BOE) Fees – Amy reported on the issue of administrative fees charged by the Board of Equalization for the collection and distribution of tobacco taxes in California. Those fees are now charged at a rate of 17% for First 5 Children and Families Commissions. She shared the official explanation for the fees with Commissioner David Bonfilio, who participated in the “Master Settlement Agreement” with the tobacco industry. Amy will provide an update as additional news or action becomes available.

- Alicia noted that a recent legal decision will block the printing of graphic images on tobacco packaging (read more at <http://www.baycitizen.org/blogs/quality-of-life/judge-blocks-disturbing-images/>)

Steve asked about Children NOW, in reference to a note in the staff report about meeting with them, and whether we can have a presentation from them or partner with them.

- Amy replied that the meeting was regarding the “Children’s Movement of California”, a new effort begun by Children Now, and stated that First 5 Marin has signed on a supporter, as has MarinKids. Ted Lempert addressed MarinKids, and uses MarinKids as an example when he’s promoting the development of local movements. Children Now is stepping back a bit for now, however, to think more clearly about and develop a more robust communications plan for the Movement.
- Steve noted that the most notable time for First 5 was when First 5 California sponsored a very visible and powerful media campaign
- Amy replied that kind of expenditure would not happen again on a statewide basis; however First 5’s Bay Area executive directors are looking at options for regional media efforts.

Cio asked about MarinKids’ forum in Novato (a public forum for Novato school board candidates).

- Amy reported that it was a good event, with good attendance (it was also filmed, with Spanish translation, for public television). Amy attended, along with Jenny Callaway (from Asm. Huffman’s office), Kim Mazzuca (from 10,000 Degrees), and Commissioner Alicia Suski (who is a Novato parent of school-age children). The forum was moderated by Dana King, the chair of MarinKids. Francine Joselowsky from MarinKids also attended, along with Michelle Fadelli from First 5 Marin.
- Alicia commented that there is a lack of common understanding—what is the achievement gap? It will be interesting to follow up on the statements that were made.

Amy also reported that First 5 Marin is working on transferring Summer Bridge/Kinder Academy to the schools and to the Pre-K to 3 initiative.

- Steve referenced conversation between MCF (Marin Community Foundation) and a Cincinnati organization regarding education interventions. He expressed concern that the result might circumvent MarinKids.

- Amy replied that the program is the “Collective Impact” model. She said that solutions are not just limited to education and not just limited to K-12.
- Kathy Tabor added that there is an opportunity for MarinKids to align itself with that movement.
- Barbara stated that there is an evolution underway, with opportunities. First 5 Marin is changing, and MCF is looking at new strategic initiatives. There are opportunities to connect.
- Steve noted that there is opportunity and risk—if education becomes the only arena in which to measure success through the foundation’s efforts.

Amy concluded by noting that attached to the Executive Directors report is the budget-to-actual report for the first quarter of the fiscal year (2011-12).

VI. COMMISSION DISCUSSION

A. Presentation: Summer Bridge Report

Jara Dean-Coffey and **Jill Casey** from jdcPartnerships presented the Summer Bridge Key Findings Report/Summer 2011. A total of 12 classrooms offered kindergarten preparation programs this summer {3 in San Rafael, 2 in West Marin, 2 in Marin City, and 5 in Novato (known there as Kinder Academy)}. 44% of student were female; 56% male. For 70% of students, a language other than English is spoken in the home. 65% of the parents’ education levels are high school or less. Nearly 60% of students had no preschool experience whatsoever; most of those with experience gained it through Head Start classes.

Students made good progress with colors and shapes, using writing tools to draw shapes and write their names. A major focus was placed on social/emotional development: learning the schedule, getting accustomed to working with a teacher, interacting with peers, and getting comfortable the school environment. Teachers surveyed report that social/emotional readiness has a large impact and prevents excessive time on classroom management (once the kindergarten year begins).

100% of teachers reported that Summer Bridge is “effective or very effective” in preparing students for kindergarten. The most favorable responses were given for the “Raising a Reader” program and Family Days. Teacher recommendations included: shared curriculum, maintaining smaller class sizes, and providing clear expectations for parents at the beginning of the program.

95% of parents reported that their children were better prepared to learn in school. 90% said that the workshops increased their understanding of how to support their child’s school readiness. And 65 to 70% reported an increase in family (parent/child) activities (parks, library, museum, etc). Family recommendations were for longer class days and additional weeks for the program.

Student attendance and enrollment, parent and teacher satisfaction, and student outcomes remain highly positive. Moving forward: Summer Bridge programs are being picked up by schools, MCF and Marin Country Day; jdcPartnerships is looking at their data collection and how to best provide information that promotes these transitions

- Steve asked whether we have any ability to track (students’ progress) over time
- Amy replied that we did not have “unique identifiers” for students who participated in the initial years; later identifiers do not match the schools’ info. However, Pre-K to 3 will allow longitudinal studies of the summerbridge participants, beginning last year, and there will be a control group.
- Steve asked about the number of students served this summer. (Approximately 200) and about the costs.

- Amy replied that the budget does not allow a truly isolated cost, but the estimated amount per classroom, factoring in School Readiness Coordinator and advocate time, is about \$15,000.
- Steve said that's about \$200,000 for 200 kids, or \$1,000 per student. (Amy noted that this is much, much less expensive than traditional preschool.) Steve added that the cost-per-student estimates are critical for the advocacy role; we need to know the price tag. We need to be able to show "what an exceptional county would invest."
- Alicia questioned what Marin Country Day costs were like (for the Summer Bridge classroom they sponsored); Amy replied that we should be able to get those figures. And Barbara noted that they may be expanding to two classrooms next summer.
- Michelle asked Steve about the best methods for communicating information from this report; Steve noted that most elected officials would not take great notice as it is not their area of responsibility, but that a summary two-page flyer might be useful for school board members.

B. Update on AB 99 Lawsuit

Amy gave a brief update on First 5's AB 99 lawsuit, noting that we should have a ruling by the end of November. (AB 99 of March 2011 requires First 5's statewide to transfer \$1 billion to the State Treasury by June 30, 2012.) Amy reported that First 5's accomplishments were the backbone of California's Race to the Top grant application; and she noted that Governor Brown's cover letter emphasized the importance of First 5 – a locally-funded, locally-controlled program — which was a key component to First 5's argument in the AB 99 suit. (The Governor's letter has been shared with our legal team.)

C. Strategic Planning – Setting the Stage for December 9th Retreat

Kathy Tabor summarized our approach to the next round of strategic planning, which will begin with a retreat on December 9th. We will be looking at a "Plan A and Plan B" for funding, with options and strategies that will depend on the results of the AB 99 lawsuit. We will review our finances, our vision and our accomplishments.

- Regina asked about our potential impact over the next few years. Who needs to be on board? Who can do the things we can't?
- Steve noted that we probably don't need a long review of our values and history. But it would be helpful to be briefed on other efforts—local, regional, state—to provide context for where we're going. We want to make an impact with limited funds. It would be helpful to illustrate any gaps or opportunities and let the commissioners react.
- Kathy said we will look at efforts First 5 Marin can tap into (like MarinKids, regional advertising) and what's coming up (like Promotores).
- Cio asked about MarinKids and how we've done. Did we do what we thought MarinKids was going to do?
- Alicia asked about our core initiatives—who will take over or have an equivalent voice?
- Steve asked about how to involve untapped partners
- Kathy said we will first focus on our strategic priorities, and the next steps would be implementation.
- Amy noted that she has been meeting with all of our funded partners to explain and emphasize the funding really ends at the end of this fiscal year (June 2012). The exception is healthcare and Pickleweed Preschool.

VII. FINAL COMMENTS

Cio announced a meeting of the **Healthy Marin Partnership** on Thursday, November 17 from 9 to 11:30 a.m. Topics will include a needs assessment and the social determinants of health.

Amy announced that an e-mail ("Doodle") would be sent out to schedule the second retreat meeting in January.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

IX. NEXT MEETING

Retreat: Strategic Planning
Friday, December 9, 2011 – 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM
First 5 Marin 1101 -5th Avenue, Suite 215
San Rafael, CA