



FIRST 5 MARIN

Learn. Grow. Thrive.

COMMISSION MEETING

Wednesday, April 20, 2022

Marin Promise Partnership Offices

101 Lucas Valley Rd, Suite 360

San Rafael, CA 94903

(Also available via zoom)

5:30 to 7:30 pm

I. CALL TO ORDER (5:30)

II. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (5:35) – (Action)

III. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS (5:40)

IV. COMMISSIONER SPOTLIGHT: (5:55)

Maria Niggle – Spotlight Marin Promise Partnership Strategic Plan

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/STAFF REPORT (6:05)

* First 5 Marin Annual Policy Breakfast: “Child Care Keeps Marin Working” – May 6 at Embassy Suites

VI. COMMISSION DISCUSSION (6:10)

* Strategic Plan Update – *Diane Talo, EvalCorp* (Info)

* Summer Backpacks – *Pegah Faed* (Info)

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT (7:15)

VIII. FINAL COMMENTS (7:20)

* Other Business + Community Issues/Events

* Commission Directives/Next Steps for Staff

IX. ADJOURNMENT (7:30)

Next Meeting: May 18, 2022 (In Person- Location TBD)

*Members of the public: please contact michelle@first5marin.org for meeting details



Copies of documents used in this meeting are available in accessible formats upon written request.

The agenda is available online at <http://www.first5marin.org>

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance (i.e. auxiliary aids or services) in order to participate in this public meeting, please contact First 5 Marin by calling (415) 257-8555 or email Michelle@first5marin.org at least five (5) business days prior to the meeting.



DRAFT

FIRST 5 MARIN

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Commission Meeting Minutes March 16, 2022

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Chair Maria Niggle called the online meeting to order at 5:16 p.m.

Commissioners participating online:

Kari Beuerman
David Bonfilio – Commissioner Emeritus
Aideen Gaidmore
Itoco Garcia – Vice Chair
Dr. Jessica Hollman
Maria Niggle - Chair
Supervisor Dennis Rodoni
Kristen Seatavakin

Staff participating online:

Pegah Faed – Executive Director
Michelle Fadelli, Manager of Public Policy and Communications
Susanne Kreuzer, Help Me Grow Marin

Guests participating online:

Diane Talo, EVALCORP

II. MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Beuerman asked if there were changes, additions or corrections to the commission minutes for the last meeting on February 16, 2022. David Bonfilio noted that he was referenced in the minutes but not listed as attending; Michelle explained that since he is now a “commissioner emeritus” she was deciding whether to include his name under “Commissioners” or “Guests.” Jessica Hollman clarified that while a group of UCSF pediatricians was leading a petition to allow mask removal in school, she didn’t want to claim that all pediatricians hold this belief.

Motion/Second: Gaidmore/Hollman

The minutes of February 16, 2022 were unanimously approved as corrected.

III. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Emeritus David Bonfilio reported that State Senator Jerry Hill’s legislation banning the sale of flavored tobacco is facing a referendum. (Senate Bill 793, which was signed into law in August of 2020.) A proposal to overturn the ban has qualified for the November 2022 ballot, and the law is suspended until then. Dave noted that a “YES” vote

protects kids (by affirming the legislation).

Commissioner Aideen Gaidmore reported that there is a group of parents who started an effort called “Mask Choice Marin.” They want to be able to choose whether their children should wear a mask at school. She noted that children 0-to-5 still cannot be vaccinated and are at-risk. Aideen also reported that renovation grants were available for child care providers who need to make minor repairs and need technical assistance. She also added that San Rafael City Schools will not be renewing contracts for two preschools.

Commissioner Kari Beuerman reported that the State of California has a “guaranteed income” pilot program for foster youth who are aging out of the system; monthly stipends will help them through the age 18-to-26 hurdle. Kari also shared that she was interviewed by The Los Angeles Times about CalFresh; Michelle Fadelli suggested she consider writing a Marin Voice.

Commissioner Itoco Garcia reported that the Sausalito-Marín City School District is now a “PreK-to-8” district. They scored 89/100 on their CTTR application and will receive direct funding to offset budget cuts they had to make. The District will be opening two preschool classrooms, offering Transitional Kindergarten for four year olds, and adding after school programs. He added that the Marin Community Foundation extended a PK-3 grant for one more year. He noted that they will be partnering with home-based child care providers on universal pre-K; we need to collaborate!

***Commissioner Gaidmore** said that (private) preschool is out of reach for so many families; some programs cost up to \$4,000 per month.

* **Commissioner Jessica Hollman** asked about CTTR (Child Care and Development Grants), CSP (California State Preschool) and the other acronyms; Aideen she would provide a cheat sheet.

IV. COMMISSIONER SPOTLIGHT: AIDEEN GAIDMORE

Commissioner Aideen Gaidmore introduced herself and shared some of her background. She is originally from Dublin, Ireland. She has an American husband and lives in Petaluma. She has worked at the Marin Child Care Council for 21 years, and has served as the executive director for 12 years. She is passionate about early childhood education.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Executive Director Pegah Faed presented the written report in the commission packet. She also reported that Lucia Martel-Dow has resigned from the commission; she has a new job and is extremely busy as a school board trustee with San Rafael City Schools.

Pegah also reported on the appointment process for First 5 commissioners. There are six at-large positions that First 5 Marin selects and sends a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for formal appointment; the Board selects the other three commissioners (a county supervisor, the Director of Social Services and a representative from Health and Human Services).

Pegah announced the confirmation of the keynote speaker for our forum on Transitional Kindergarten: State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond.

She also announced the keynote speaker for our policy breakfast on Friday, May 6th (not May 1st as stated on the agenda): State Senator Mike McGuire. [The theme of the breakfast is “Child Care Keeps Marin Working.”]

Pegah also provided an update on the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act).

VI. COMMISSION DISCUSSION

A. Strategic Plan Update

Diane Talo from EvalCorp provided an update on the work they are doing for First 5 Marin's new strategic plan. She said they are working hard to reach the under-served population.

Initial findings: First 5 Marin should leverage our strengths, be more data-informed, connect commission effectiveness with family and community outcomes. We need better incorporation of community voices. And there should be a clarification of roles for staff and for commissioners.

Surveys report First 5 Marin's strengths as being fast and flexible, making community connections through our forums and strategic partnerships, and our strong leadership and strategic thinking.

Priority areas were identified as UPK (universal pre-kindergarten) and ECE (early childhood education); Help Me Grow Marin; and parent education.

Diane Talo asked about the "big picture" and First 5's strengths.

Commissioner Garcia said our connections with MC3 (Marin Child Care Council) and ECE are very important and with MCOE (Marin County Office of Education) and the K-12 community. First 5 Marin is an important neutral party, a connector and facilitator.

Commissioner Beuerman said First 5 Marin's focus on early intervention is very important. The connection with Marin Promise Partnership and a focus on data and measures is also important. Kindergarten is too late; we need to start early. She also asked whether we should be looking at home visitation.

Commissioner Bonfilio said that ECE builds on what we have been saying for years. We need to focus on the school readiness of young children— and help schools get ready for kids. Mental health supports in early care settings are also important.

Commissioner Hollman agreed that we need to offer support for PreK and TK. She is concerned for children even earlier, such as children of working parents with out quality child care.

Commissioner Gaidmore asked how can we support what's already out there for early childhood education. We can facilitate. Be the fiscal agent. Produce and share data. Outreach.

***** Diane Talo asked how commissioners hope to see early childhood education impact children, families and systems. For children?**

Commissioner Raffel said caregivers should "look like" the children they serve (diversity)... but maybe that's a "systems" answer? Commissioner Gaidmore replied that childcare providers actually *are* diverse in Marin.

Commissioner Hollman would like to see children connecting with nature and getting more outdoor play. Eating healthy foods. And having caretakers who are trained in early childhood education.

Commissioner Bonfilio asked how can we educate the providers who would like to learn more and improve?

Commissioner Gaidmore said she would like to see every child in a high-quality child care setting—with access to mental health services, food, healthcare, dental care. Every child thriving in Marin County.

Commissioner Beuerman said we need to eliminate barriers to quality care and eliminate negative outcomes.

Commissioner Bonfilio raised the issue of inequitable allocation of resources, and asked if we are spending money in the right ways.

Commissioner Gaidmore said First 5 Marin doesn't have enough resources to address all the problems, but our role in the county is important.

Executive Director Pegah Faed said she's been thinking about a "children's budget" for the county so we can identify gaps. We're missing the community piece. **Michelle Fadelli** said that Marin is very segmented and many communities are isolated; opportunities for children are very distinct.

***** Diane Talo asked about systems.**

Commissioner Hollman said parents need childcare nearby, near their homes or near their jobs. What are the options? Aideen said parents should call MC3! Pegah added that Help Me Grow Marin can also become a hub for information (for providers and for outreach).

Commissioner Bonfilio shared the example of First 5 Marin's work in healthcare. In the early years of the commission, we worked to get healthcare coverage for uninsured children. We made a major investment and hired outreach workers to get kids signed up; for those who were not eligible for free programs, First 5 Marin paid the premiums.

Commissioner Hollman said that parents have to make so many calls and fill out so many forms. It's a barrier, especially without access to desktop computers. (Many families just rely on internet access from their phones.)

Commissioner Gaidmore said we need a cohesive system for case management. The Marin Child Care Council has a waiting list of 400. We need to invest in ECE workers, many of whom are women of color. **Michelle Fadelli** added that TK may create greater barriers in child care, with providers and staff leaving to work in the Prek-12 school system.

Diane Talo shared the example of The Learning Bus in West Marin. The strengths reported are unity and togetherness, faith and love. The needs reported are more and better services, housing and employment. Dennis asked if people reported Internet access as an issue (no).

Diane Talo also provided an update on the surveys they are conducting. They have a very limited number, and many only have partial responses.

Diane Talo asked commissioners to think about:

- * working outside the traditional scope of First 5
- * partnering with other agencies for economies of scale
- * suggested networks or collaborating organizations.

Commissioner Seatavakin shared the example of the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). One organization can't "move the needle" but working together, we can.

Commissioner Rodoni said we need to align the strategic plan and the budget, and asked how do we get the resources we need?

B. Q1 and Q2 Financials

Pegah Faed announced that she hadn't received the materials she needs from First 5 California to present the financial reports for the first and second quarters of the year. David Bonfilio said this was a historic problem with the State, and asked how far behind they are. (two months)

C. Annual Report

Michelle Fadelli previewed the annual report on First 5 Marin's website—our first online report. It can be viewed at: <https://www.first5marin.org/data-reports/>

D. Summer Backpacks

Pegah Faed reported that we are working with the Marin County Free Library on plans to distribute backpacks with books and school/art supplies for the second year. There will be distribution events at each library in the system. The Library will fund backpacks for older children and youth, and First 5 Marin will pay for preschool-aged children. Last year, we provided \$20,000 for this project.

Commissioner Bonfilio (who helped at two backpack events last summer) said the kids were really excited and the parents were all very grateful.

VII. FINAL COMMENTS

Commissioner Niggle asked about the Kit for New Parents and the "What to Do When Your Child Gets Sick" book. David said we should share the Kit at the next commission meeting.

Michelle Fadelli announced the upcoming events for the Marin Communications Forum: Climate Solutions on March 18th and Transitional Kindergarten on April 1st. She added that recordings of both meetings will be available for those unable to attend.

Pegah Faed announced the April 20th Commission meeting.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Niggle adjourned the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

NEXT SCHEDULED COMMISSION MEETING:

Wednesday, April 20th

5:15 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. at Marin Promise Partnership offices; online option will be available.



FIRST 5 MARIN

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Executive Director's Report
April 2022



Public Policy and Communications

Marin Communications Forum – The Forum has returned to in-person meetings! (However, we will likely alternate in-person and online in the future— both have benefits!) We continue scheduling topics for the remainder of 2022. Since the Commission last met, there have been two forums; recordings will be available soon and will be posted on Youtube.

- * **Climate Solutions for Marin** – 125 guests
- * **Transitional Kindergarten** – over 200 guests

SAVE-THE-DATES for our future forums:

- **June 23: Celebrating Immigrants in Marin** (planning with the Immigrant Rights and Justice Working Group, HHS, MCF and the Multi-Cultural Center of Marin)
- **August: Ages and Stages: Developmental Milestones in Young Children**
- **September 23 – Hunger Action Month** (with HHS and the HEAL program)

Newsletter – Michelle continues to produce a monthly newsletter to announce our events and programs. (If you have news to share, please email Michelle@First5Marin.org.)

Opinion Editorials – Michelle worked with the Marin County Office of Education to ensure that we had a Marin Voice published in support of the Transitional Kindergarten Forum. See **“Universal Pre-Kindergarten Furthers Equity for County Children”** by Mary Jane Burke and Carol Barton.

<https://www.marinij.com/2022/03/20/marin-voice-universal-pre-kindergarten-furthers-equity-for-county-children/>

Commissioner Kari Beuerman also published a Marin Voice **“Expressing Appreciation for County’s Social Workers”**—for Social Worker Appreciation Month in March! 😊

<https://www.marinij.com/2022/03/27/marin-voice-countys-social-workers-deserve-our-appreciation-right-now/>

Policy Breakfast – We are all set for our policy breakfast 2022: “**Child Care Keeps Marin Working.**” **State Senator Mike McGuire** will provide the keynote address (10 am for those who are unable to be present for the full event). Pegah will moderate a panel discussion with **Mike Blakeley**, the CEO of the Marin Economic Forum, **Joanne Webster**, the President and CEO of the San Rafael Chamber of Commerce, and First 5 Commissioner **Aideen Gaidmore**, executive director of the Marin Child Care Council. Join us on **Friday, May 6th** at the Embassy Suites Hotel in San Rafael. A breakfast buffet will be offered at 8:30 am and the program will begin at 9.

Commissioners are encouraged to “host a table” and to announce the event and extend the invitation to co-workers and community partners.



- **WEBSITE:**

- The HMG staff continues to service families and providers who have contacted HMG Marin. Our website had over 1,000 users March. We had 1,042 users of which 1,006 unduplicated active users. There was a total of 1,230 sessions or visits to the website. This represents 87.9% New Visitors with 12.1% Returning Visitors. Approximately 646 visited via a computer and 379 from phones, the remaining was from other devices.

We are still experiencing many users from Spain, Chile, Argentina and Mexico, Puerto Rico and Columbia with a few from Costa Rica, Guatemala and Ecuador. However, this month we had more visits coming from the United States.

- **HOME VISITING PROJECT:**

- In October 2019, First 5 California State Commission approved up to \$24 million in funding for 5 years to **help counties create a sustainable, unified system that supports families with the home visiting services they need and maximize funding to serve more families.** This funding is meant to promote increased coordination and collaboration, and is expected to yield significant systems changes.
 - **Two Stages of Funding:**
 - **Stage 1:** 2 years of funding to improve local home visiting coordination; F5CA will provide technical assistance throughout the grant.
 - **Stage 2:** additional years of funding to prioritize the needs identified in stage 1 funding
 - First 5 California will be postponed funding for the coordination activities and it's likely some of the requirements will be different in the next funding cycle. It is anticipated an RFA will be out in fall 2022 for funding to begin in July 2023. Over the next few months, the Marin Home Visiting Collaborative will discuss how to continue their work during this non-funded period and what to focus on.

- **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

- HMG Marin staff continue to outreach and connect with parent groups and community partners in introducing HMG Marin, the website and providing materials about the program.
- HMG Marin has strengthened their partnerships with several agencies, including pediatric medical homes. The following is the list of partners that we continue to strengthen our relationship with.
- **Community Organizations:**
 - Golden Gate Regional Center
 - Novato Unified School District
 - San Rafael Unified School District
 - North Marin Community Services
 - Fairfax/San Anselmo Children's Center
 - Postpartum Support Center (PPSC)
 - Marin Health and Human Service
 - CAL Works
 - Children and Family Services
 - Perinatal Health
- **Medical Clinics:**
 - **Marin Community Clinic**
 - **Tamalpais Pediatric**
 - **Coastal Health Clinic**
 - **Magnolia Pediatrics**
 - **Kaiser Pediatrics (North Bay)**
- Staff continue their work attending workshops and webinars with other HMG programs throughout the National Network.

Support Child Care Providers to Ensure High-Quality Affordable Child Care

By Aideen Gaidmore

If we've learned anything in the past two years, it's the critical importance of Marin's child care infrastructure-- allowing our residents to work, our businesses to open and our county to operate.

From day one of the shelter-in-place order during the COVID pandemic, our child care programs were asked to remain open to care for the children of essential workers—and they did, regardless of the risk to their own health and well-being.

Without child care, many of our health care professionals could not have cared for our family and friends who were ill with COVID. Without child care for our retail staff, stores could have not stayed open to allow us to buy food and basic supplies. Without child care, our community would not have functioned.

Reliable child care allows parents to go to work and stay at work as dependable employees. For many new mothers, it allows them to re-enter the workforce and provide for their families.

Unfortunately, the cost of child care is prohibitive for many working parents, especially in Marin County, with the average cost of licensed infant care at \$2200 per month— or \$26,400 per year. At those rates, many people literally cannot afford to go to work.

In addition to price, the availability of high-quality child care is another serious issue.

Working parents need full-day, year-round, flexible child care options, and many need non-traditional hours. They want to use our current system with their own choice of private preschools, care by family members, friends or neighbors, care by family child care providers, state-funded programs or Head Start.

Overall, working families need an early care system based on parental choice and convenience.

The availability of child care also depends on having a sufficient number of child care providers running successful businesses.

Our child care programs in Marin are approximately 90% private small businesses. And like all small business, they suffered immense financial hardship during COVID. They can no longer stay viable without investments from the State and from funders at the local level.

Without child care available for Marin residents, how are we going to rebuild our economy? Without financial support for child care, parents are forced to either stay out of work and remain in poverty, or leave their children in unsafe, inconsistent child care situations to keep their jobs.

This missing element affects families financially but also impacts the early education of our children. High-quality child care provides critical learning opportunities for young children while their brains are developing rapidly. And studies show that children without quality child care are more likely to have problems throughout their educational career, and the cycle of poverty often continues.

The time is now to recognize the importance of our early childhood education field and to invest in child care providers, their programs and the families who need them.

An analysis by the President's Council of Economic Advisers describes the economic returns of investments in childhood development and early education. For every dollar spent, there are benefits to society of \$8.60 (about half of which comes from increased earnings for children when they grow up). That sounds like a smart deal to me.

To learn more, please join me at First 5 Marin's Policy Breakfast on May 6th; the theme is "Child Care Keeps Marin Working." The keynote speaker is Senator Mike McGuire. I will be joined on a panel discussion with Mike Blakeley from the Marin Economic Forum and by Joanne Webster from the San Rafael Chamber of Commerce. To register for this free event, email Michelle@First5Marin.org.

Aideen Gaidmore is the executive director of the Marin Child Care Council and member of First 5 Marin Children and Families Commission.

Word Count: 591

TEXT BOX:

The time is now to invest in child care in Marin County by investing in our child care providers.



FIRST 5 MARIN

Learn. Grow. Thrive.

STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2030

PREPARED BY:

EVALCORP
Measuring What Matters®

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FIRST 5 MARIN 2022-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN



In 1998 California voters passed Proposition 10, the California Children and Families Act, a statewide ballot initiative that added a tax to tobacco products. Revenues from this tax are used to fund programs that promote early childhood development, from prenatal to age five. First 5 Marin Children and Families Commission is responsible for utilizing Marin County's portion of the tax revenue.

Building On Our History

The 2022-2030 Strategic Plan represents a continuation of the values and efforts detailed in First 5 Marin's prior strategic plans. Like earlier strategic plans, the new Strategic Plan is grounded in listening to and incorporating community voices, ensuring that our approach to developing and implementing programs is equitable, and utilizing policy and system change investments to strengthen early childhood systems.



Looking Ahead

Notably, the 2022-2030 Strategic Plan also represents a transition away from direct services. This transition reflects declining revenue from tobacco taxes, as well as, our belief that systems and policy change efforts can create meaningful and lasting changes for a larger number of children and families, while maximizing available tax dollars. We will continue to fund direct services, but we will focus on funding programs that meet an immediate community need or seed innovation. We will work closely with partners to identify sustainable sources of funding for our investments and to create changes that lead to sustainable funding for early childhood systems.

Planning for Long-Term Systems Change

The 2022-2030 Strategic Plan spans eight years. We selected eight years because systems and policy change efforts are long-term investments. They may be slower to manifest outcomes and may require mid-course changes to ensure the success. An eight-year time frame with a purposely flexible Strategic Plan accounts for the complexities of investing in and implementing systems and policy change efforts and allows us to pivot, when needed, to respond to changes in the landscape.

Strategic Direction, Implementation, and Learning

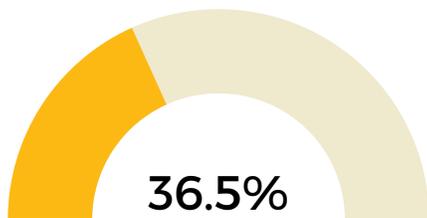
The 2022-2030 Strategic Plan provides a succinct description of our strategic direction. It will be complemented by a detailed Implementation Plan, which will provide an actionable roadmap to achieve our goals, and an Evaluation Framework that will guide measurement for decision-making, quality improvement, and ongoing learning.



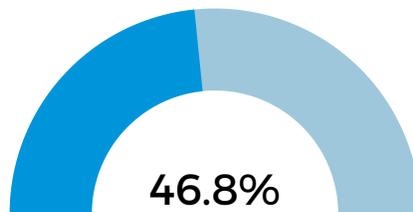
CURRENT LANDSCAPE OF MARIN COUNTY

Marin County is the 26th of 58 most populous county in California, with over 250,000 residents.¹ It is continuing to grow with the percent of population increasing almost 4% between 2010 to 2020.² Marin County includes 11 cities, as well as large areas of rural, coastal and unincorporated land.³

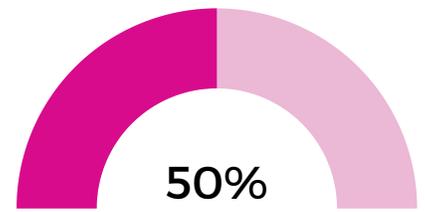
In 2020, about 11,710 or 4.5% of Marin County residents were under the age of five.⁴ It is estimated that approximately 9.2% of people living with children under the age of five have an income that is below the Federal Poverty Level.⁵



Households with children 0-18 participating in SNAP⁶



Families With Licensed Child Care⁷



Third graders proficient in both English/Literature Arts and Literacy and Mathematics⁸



Marin County's Population by Race and Ethnicity⁹



- 85% White
- 16% Hispanic or Latino
- 7% Asian
- 4% Multiple Races
- 3% Black/African American
- 1% American Indian and Alaska Native
- 0.3% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander

*The total is over 100% because respondents may choose multiple races and ethnicities.

Marin County has many resources. In 2020, Marin County had the highest per capita personal income of any county in California and the sixth highest of any county in the nation.¹⁰ However, Marin County is also one of disparities. The Advancement Project California's Race Counts initiative currently ranks Marin County as the second most racially disparate county in California, with Black residents being most impacted by racial disparities.¹¹ Racial disparities exist in multiple areas including crime and justice, economic opportunity, health care access, and housing.¹² These racial disparities directly and indirectly impact children and have implications for children's early and development and long term outcomes.

Highest

Per Capita Personal Income
of Any County in California

Second

Most Racially Disparate
County in California



VISION

Children and families will live in connected communities where systems are aligned to promote their well-being.



COMMITMENT TO EQUITY

Since its inception First 5 Marin has been, and continues to be, committed to serving the diverse demographic and geographic landscape of Marin County by utilizing equitable and inclusive methods of engagement.

We commit to:

- 1.** Combatting the harm historically racist practices have inflicted on communities of color in Marin County, and the perpetuation of those practices that continue to interfere with an equitable pathway to success for our children,
- 2.** Actively using inclusive and equitable strategies when soliciting community voices to ensure our current and future work reflects the needs and desires of all families living across Marin County, and
- 3.** Continuing to learn and grow together, purposefully ensuring the use of practices that liberate our communities from past harm, and provide fully inclusive systems that underpin every aspect of our work.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Commitment to Community

- Reflect the varied and diverse demographic and geographic landscape of Marin County.
- Include community voices to ensure that our work and decisions reflect and respond to the needs and desires of families living across our County.
- Prioritize children and families living in historically oppressed communities.

Focus on Systems

- Focus on equity and justice centered decision-making.
- Continue to expand our efforts related to sustainable and actionable systems and policy change.
- Identify opportunities to strengthen and expand partnerships with organizations who support and serve families and children.

Continuous Reflection and Learning

- Build upon our history to guide work and learning going forward.
- Maintain flexible decision-making processes to ensure that we are responsive to emerging needs and opportunities.
- Systematic review of the Strategic Plan goals and progress to guide decision making throughout 2022-2030.
- Incorporate evaluation and data to inform decision making.

INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

To achieve our vision and honor our guiding principles, we will use the following guidelines to make decisions about our investments.

Alignment with Goals and Objectives

- We prioritize investments that are directly linked to the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan.

Equity

- We prioritize investments that reach children and families living in historically oppressed communities.

Responsiveness to Community Voice

- We prioritize investments that reflect the expressed needs and wants of our communities.

Partnership

- We prioritize outcome-focused collaboration with partners.

Impact

- We prioritize investments based on their potential to:
 - reach the largest number of children and families, and
 - have significant and meaningful outcomes for children and families.





STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The 2022-2030 Strategic Plan continues our history of using multiple approaches to improve the lives of children and families in Marin County. We have chosen five Strategic Priorities that will guide how we select and design investments.

Systems Strengthening, Policy & Advocacy, and Direct Services¹³ will be our primary strategies for this plan. Communications and Data & Information strategies will support and complement the primary strategies. Given our need and desire to move our efforts towards systems and policy change, we will increasingly limit the use of Direct Services as a primary strategy over the course of 2022-2030.



Primary Strategies

Systems Strengthening

We will strengthen early childhood systems by increasing connections and coordination among child- and family-serving organizations and by supporting efforts to sustain systems over time.

Policy & Advocacy

We will advocate for policies that promote early childhood systems and equitable application of policies and funding for children, families, and communities through information sharing and promoting mutual responsibility for better outcomes for children and families.

Direct Services

We will fund direct services for children and families on a time-limited basis when there is an immediate need in the community or to promote innovative programming that is directly related to our Strategic Plan. Prioritizing immediate needs and innovation will allow us to use our direct services dollars flexibly and efficiently.

Supportive Strategies

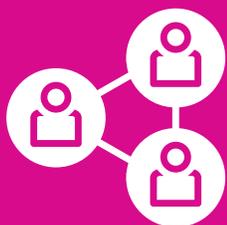
Data & Information

We will use data and information to ensure that our investments reflect the needs and wishes of Marin communities. Data and information will also be used to document our progress towards goals and objectives, inform mid-course adjustments, and support continuous innovation and improvement.

Communications

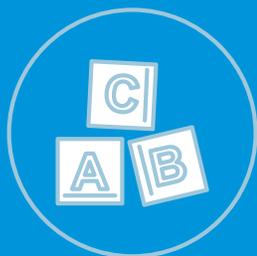
We will share targeted information with parents, caregivers, community organizations, government agencies, and other stakeholders. Communications will be used to inform, connect, and advance our systems strengthening, policy and advocacy, and direct services strategies.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



Goal 1: Children and families in Marin County are connected to services through sustainable systems.

- Parents and caregivers have knowledge of available services for their children.
- Parents and caregivers access available services for their children.
- Supports and services for children and families are aligned with families' needs and are sustainable.



Goal 2: Children in Marin County are prepared for school.

- Children in Marin County have access to high quality care and resources that promote early development.
- The systems that provide early care and education in Marin County are coordinated and complementary.



Goal 3: Children live in communities that support their development.

- Parents and caregivers feel connected to and supported by their communities.
- Parents and caregivers have opportunities to advocate for their families' and communities' needs.
- Communities are connected to resources that support children's development.

APPENDIX A: REFERENCES

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APPENDIX B: DATA COLLECTION AND KEY FINDINGS

The development of First 5 Marin's Strategic Plan was guided by information from multiple sources, including formal mixed-methods data collection with three stakeholder groups. A Learning Summit was conducted at the conclusion of formal data collection to share back and reflect on findings from data collection. Stakeholder groups, data collection approaches, and findings are summarized below.

Current and Potential Partners

Over 50 representatives across 32 community organizations and governmental agencies were invited to participate in an online survey. Survey topics included partnership opportunities with First 5 Marin and the needs of families in Marin County.

In total, representatives from 23 organizations completed the survey. Slightly less than half (n=11) of the respondents represented organizations that were already partnering with First 5 Marin. Most of the respondents represented organizations that served children (n=20) or parents and caregivers (n=19).

Key Findings from Current and Potential Partners

- All respondents indicated willingness to partner with First 5 Marin now or in the future.
- Respondents reported that affordable quality housing (n=21), child care (n=21), and financial stability (n=12) were the top three unmet needs for families.
 - Barriers to meeting families' needs included unequal access to services and racial injustice.
- Respondents reported that high-quality direct services (n=10) that are family-focused (n=14) and facilitated through collaborative efforts (n=16) are most effective in meeting family and community needs.
 - Respondents also noted that there are not enough of these services.

First 5 Marin Commissioners and Staff

Interviews were conducted with First 5 Marin Commissioners (n=8) and staff (n=4) via Zoom. Interviews lasted between 30 and 75 minutes. Interview topics included First 5 Marin's past work, goals for the future, and data and information needs. First 5 Marin staff were also asked more detailed questions about specific programs and funding priorities.

Key Findings from First 5 Marin Commissioners and Staff

- Commissioners and staff reported multiple organizational strengths including:
 - Responsiveness to community needs (n=10) including flexible programming and providing timely funding.
 - Collaboration with strategic and community partners (n=8).
 - Strong organizational leadership and culture (n=7).
 - Community engagement efforts (e.g., Communications Forums) (n=5).
 - Successful transitions to new Commission leadership (n=4).

APPENDIX B: DATA COLLECTION AND KEY FINDINGS

- Commissioners and staff highlighted multiple strategies that they hope to include in the next Strategic Plan including collaboration and trust-building (n=6), and sustainable partnerships and funding strategies (n=6).
 - Human capital (n=7) was cited as a possible barrier to achieving organizational goals. Respondents highlighted potential challenges in leveraging collective efforts with partners that are also engaged in multiple efforts.
- Commissioners and staff expressed a desire to focus on actionable steps that will result in meaningful and sustainable benefits for children and families.

Marin Families and Community Members

Marin families and communities were engaged in information gathering in three ways.

Community Survey

Community members were invited to complete a brief online survey (available in English and Spanish) about community needs and strengths. Survey responses from 165 community members were included in the analysis. Most respondents were female (86%) and resided in San Rafael (43%) or Novato (27%). Most respondents had at least one child living in their home (70%).

Learning Bus Survey*

Parents and caregivers were invited to complete a brief survey about community needs and strengths (available in English and Spanish) while their child was engaged in activities at the Marin County Free Library's Learning Bus. Learning Bus staff were available to address questions and/or verbally administer the survey. In total, 20 parents completed the survey. Most respondents were female (n=18) and identified as Hispanic (n=18).

Focus Groups

In person and Zoom focus groups (n=5) for parents and caregivers were conducted in partnership with several community organizations. Focus groups were stratified by subpopulation (i.e., Asian-American [n=4], African-American [n=4], and Hispanic [n=20]) and were conducted in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Topics included community strengths and needs, available services and resources, and recommendations for improving the well being of children and families.

*The Learning Bus travels throughout Marin County and provides bilingual learning opportunities for young children.

APPENDIX B: DATA COLLECTION AND KEY FINDINGS

Key Findings Across Family and Community Data Collection

- Respondents reported family strengths including:
 - A sense of unity and togetherness, including strength and commitment within families and support provided through relationships with community members.
 - Resilience and hard work in overcoming adversity.
 - Love for their family members.
- Respondents reported multiple family needs including:
 - Improved family economic stability including affordable housing, better paying jobs, and help paying bills.
 - Financial concerns often force parents to decide between work commitments and childcare.
 - More quality affordable childcare and family services.
 - More quality enrichment opportunities for children and families such as playgroups.
 - Help understanding available supports and services for children.
 - Respondents noted a desire for a resource guide or other centralized resource that can facilitate connection to supports and services.
 - Respondents also noted confusion about preschool, transitional kindergarten, and other related programs.

Learning Summit

First 5 Marin Commissioners and staff, partner agencies, and community members participated in a two-hour Learning Summit in March 2022. Findings from the strategic planning data collection efforts (described above) were presented, and facilitated discussions were used to reflect on the findings.

Key Reflections from the the Learning Summit

- Learning Summit participants agreed with the findings presented regarding community needs and strengths.
- Participants highlighted the need to keep the potential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and families (particularly children's social and emotional health) in mind during strategic planning.
- Participants discussed challenges of systems-level work focused on strategic funding and partnerships rather than direct services.
 - One specific challenge noted is that needs identified during data collection were primarily about the lack of quality services and supports available and challenges accessing those resources. Notably, these types of needs are commonly addressed through direct services.
 - Despite the challenges, participants felt a shift towards systems-level efforts reflects a community with commitment, collaboration, and dedication.
- Participants are ready to focus on next steps including strategizing about initiatives that can lead to meaningful benefits for children and families.



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Action Item

Subject: Summer Backpack Series Project Approval

This memo is to request \$25,000 for the Summer Backpack Series Project, in partnership with the Marin County Free Library. The funds will be used to prepare 1800 bags full of school supplies. The Library will be providing the bag and the books and First 5 Marin's funds will be used to purchase approximately \$15 per bag of school supplies.