

# Children and Families Commission

## Meeting Minutes January 18, 2006

**Members Present:** Katcho Achadjian, Dr. Rene Bravo, Lee Collins, Don Dennison, Joel Diringer, Kathy Long, Dr. Greg Thomas, Dr. Julian Crocker

**Members Absent:** Biz Steinberg (excused)

**Staff Present:** Susan Hughes, Armando Corella, Cheryl Christner and Amanda Wilson

**Call to Order:** Chairperson Katcho Achadjian called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m.

### Public Comments:

1) Charlene Rosales, a volunteer from the American Cancer Society, updated the Commission on the Tobacco Tax Initiative that would raise the state's tobacco tax by \$2.60 per pack of cigarettes and would provide immediate and tangible solutions to some of California's major health challenges. The initiative is expected to raise approximately \$2.27 billion dollars for the following:

- Treatment – 52.7%
- Prevention – 42.25%
- Research – 5%
- Back-Fill Funding for Proposition 10 programs

2) Reyna Korman, School Readiness Coordinator from Oceano Elementary School, introduced Laurie Morgan, Shana Paulson and Gary Liwanag from the Oceano Neighborhood Team and thanked them for all their work.

### Children's Health Initiative Update:

Kena Burke, Executive Director of San Luis Obispo Children's Health Initiative, reported on the first five months of active enrollment. Original data estimated that 3000 children ages 0-18 in San Luis Obispo County were uninsured; of these 2000 children were eligible for Medi-Cal/Healthy Families and 1000 children were eligible for Healthy Kids. The objectives of CHISLO are to maximize enrollment and to address barriers to health care such as:

- Frustration in navigating health insurance plans
- Stigma of "Social Programs"
- Access to providers – medical and dental

CHISLO developed the 815 Release of Information Form, which is now a conduit between the families and CHISLO and Department of Social Services. Families are evaluated using one application, which determines eligibility for all three-health plans. As of December 31, 2005, almost 1,300 children were referred to CHISLO by agencies such as Public Health, Physicians (CHCCC), Schools, EOC and Insurance Companies.

In a survey of 293 children whose families requested information about health insurance through the CHI 815 release form:

- 45% - Medi-Cal eligible
- 25% - Eligible or enrolled in Healthy Kids
- 3% - Enrolled Healthy Family members
- 27% - Unknown – following up

As of January 1, 2006, there are 441 members of Healthy Kids. Of these, 126 children are 0 to 5 years of age and 315 children are ages 6 to 18 years of age. Some preliminary findings are that many more children are without health insurance than estimated. Premium Costs that were initially projected at \$1000 annually actually cost \$1,252. Delta Dental has provided preliminary claims data and fifteen children who are covered by Healthy Kids accessed dental services in October and November. There will be an Evaluation Team conducting a two-year study on the impact that CHI has on the health of the children in the community.

Ms. Burke told the Commission that if the Tobacco Tax Initiative of 2006 passes it will provide funding to insure children along with back-fill funding for Prop 10 and Prop 99 programs.

### **Oral Health Presentation:**

Dr. Kathy Phipps, an Oral Epidemiologist, gave a brief presentation to the Commission on the results of the Paso Robles Smile Survey. A total of 841 children received a dental screening in October 2005– 418 kindergarten and 423 third grade children who attended elementary school in the Paso Robles School District.

Some of Dr. Phipps' findings were:

- Tooth decay is a significant health problem for elementary school children in Paso Robles.
- To prevent dental disease, interventions must be directed toward preschool children.
- The majority of third grade children in Paso Robles do not have access to dental sealants - a proven method for preventing tooth decay.
- Compared to kindergarten and third grade children throughout California, children in Paso Robles have a lower prevalence of decay experience and untreated decay.

Dr. Phipps stressed the importance of dental decay prevention strategies as an integral part of health care messages given by pediatricians, nurses, health department staff, teachers, health educators and day-care providers. Interventions must be directed toward preschool children to prevent dental disease. Dental providers must be educated on the importance of dental education for parents of children 0-5. Most dental providers do not see a child less than five years of age. Dr. Phipps said the most important key finding is that two years of age is too late for the prevention of tooth decay. By the age of two, dental decay has already set in and it is essential the medical and dental professions focus dental disease prevention efforts on children less than two years of age.

Dr. Larry Smith, a pediatric dentist, commented that one of the reasons there are so few pediatric dentists is that the reimbursement rates are extremely low from Denti-Cal.

Recommendations by Dr. Phipps for improved oral health in children included:

- Teach new mothers how to brush the teeth of the baby with fluoridated toothpaste twice a day as the best preventative measure.
- Dental decay prevention strategies should be an integral part of health care messages given by pediatricians, nurses, health department staff, teachers, health educators and childcare providers.

Commissioner Thomas commented the First Time Mothers Program might include activities to educate clients of Medi-Cal eligible children the importance of daily oral health practices for their children and how to prevent oral health disease. Armando Corella commented the First Time Mothers Program serves about 100 children a year and cautioned about expecting a greater impact than they are able to deliver. The Commissioners agreed more programs need to be developed to be successful at addressing oral health disease. Chairperson Achadjian directed First 5 staff to bring this subject back for further discussion at future Commission meetings.

### **Elections of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Commission for the period of January 2006 to December 2006:**

Commissioner Crocker moved, seconded by Commissioner Thomas to nominate Commissioner Achadjian for Chairperson and Commissioner Steinberg for Vice-Chairperson. Nominations were closed. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Consent Agenda:**

### **1) December 7, 2006 Minutes Approval**

Commissioner Diring commented that a statement made by Ms. Kendra Davis regarding Denti-Cal reimbursement rates being slow in the December's Commission meeting minutes, should be low instead. Also, Commissioner Thomas said that in the December Commission meeting minutes, it was Children's Health Centers not Children's Health Services that was interested in locating at the Georgia Brown First 5 School Readiness Preschool. A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Diring. Commissioner Crocker seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

## **MAA/TCM/Title 4E Matching Funds:**

Unable to obtain updated documents, Commissioner Collins postponed his presentation. This topic will be on a future agenda when those documents are available.

## **Funding Request: The Children's Assessment Center:**

Jan Campbell, MCH Director with San Luis Obispo County Health Department and member of the Children's Leadership Team, submitted a proposal to the Commission to request funding for the Children's Assessment Center. Ms. Campbell reviewed the outline of the Center's organizational structure and what services would be available and how those services would be funded.

Commissioner Dennison commented there is some degree of services in the public school system, and the Children's Assessment Center needs to interface with those services already in place. Commissioner Bravo said that if this project is as successful as he thinks it will be, this center could be a model for all small counties. Commissioner Long asked if the school districts would be a part of the assessment team. Ms. Campbell said the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education and the Tri-Counties Regional Center are part of the assessment team and a large number of the children who are assessed at the center will be referred to Tri-Counties Regional Center because they have other health issues. Commissioner Crocker asked Ms. Campbell if preventive measures were still being implemented and Ms. Campbell replied there were two staff members continuing to work on the 4P's Plus© project.

Ms. Campbell and the Commissioners dialoged briefly over several points of Ms. Campbell's proposal, Commissioner Diring asked if a comprehensive evaluation was involved in the project and what is the process of selecting an evaluator? Ms. Campbell said that Dr. Chasnoff has evaluated other projects. Commissioner Diring asked if it is conceived by them, sold by them, marketed by them and then it is evaluated by them as well, he would feel more comfortable with an outside evaluator. If we really want to know the success of this program we need to have an external evaluator. Ms. Campbell said that she would pass that on to Doctor Chasnoff.

Commissioner Diringler also asked 1) how specific costs in the budget were allocated to First 5? And 2) did the BOS funding, include current county funding or additional funding? Ms. Campbell said that in creating the budget, she split it right down the middle. The project is requesting the same amount of funding from both BOS and First 5.

Commissioner Bravo made a motion that First 5 allocates \$500,000 beginning July 1, 2006 and ending June 30, 2008 to fund an early childhood assessment treatment center. Chairperson Achadjian seconded the motion. He asked if there was any further discussion. Commissioner Diringler said with all the options the staff prepared, he is most comfortable with Option 3 to fund one year of startup funds subject to the Commission retreat when the Commissioners will review the 10 year plan and determine where the fund balances are going. Commissioner Dennison was more comfortable with Option 5 with a commitment to fund, but discuss at the retreat where that money would come from. He supported discussing an amount at the retreat and then returning at a future Commission meeting to commit an exact amount.

Chairperson Achadjian said that if the Commission gave First 5 Staff an amount they could determine from where the funds would be allocated. Commissioner Thomas agreed with Commissioner Diringler to fund one year of startup funds using CSIP savings and a portion of the reserve account. Commissioner Thomas also said that this program needs this commitment to move forward, and then the Commission needs to meet at the retreat to determine the source of the additional \$250,000. Chairperson Achadjian requested a vote, which was a 4-4 tie.

Chairperson Achadjian asked Commissioner Bravo if he wanted to revise his motion. Commissioner Bravo expressed his continued support for full funding and asked for further clarification of other Commissioners concerns. Commissioner Thomas supported a motion to fund the first year with CSIP savings and the reserve account so that the Commission would know exactly where the funding was coming from. He stated he supported using available funding for the first year and then supporting the second year with an additional \$250,000, with the Commission deciding the source at the retreat. Commissioner Bravo agreed he would resubmit the motion with the changes the Commission discussed. Commissioner Bravo made a motion to accept staff's recommendation for Option 3, to fund Year One start up funds in the amount of \$250,000 with \$175,000 coming from the savings realized from CSIP and \$75,000 from a portion of the reserve account.

Commissioner Thomas asked the motion go further in stating the Commission is funding the first year and is committed to funding the second year; amount and source of funds to be determined during the March 31<sup>st</sup> retreat. Commissioner Bravo agreed to accept those changes. Commissioner Collins seconded the motion. Chairperson Achadjian called for a vote and it was passed unanimously.

## **First 5 Family Literacy School Video:**

Reyna Korman, Oceano School Readiness Site Coordinator, introduced several families in attendance specifically to thank the Commission for their interest and investment in the children of Oceano community and to watch a brief video of the First 5 Family Literacy program.

## **2-1-1 Update on Implementation in SLO County of SLO:**

Commissioner Collins gave a brief update of 2-1-1, a health and human services hotline. It will be a twenty-four hour a day, seven days a week hotline that provides resources and referral information based on the needs of the caller. This service is in the early planning stages, and Commissioner Collins will provide updates at future Commission meetings.

## **Preschool for All:**

Commissioner Crocker informed the Commission of the proposed initiative on the June 2006 ballot: Preschool for All. The initiative provides the state constitutional right in California for all four year olds to attend a publicly funded pre-school on a voluntary basis. Commissioner Dennison asked if there had been any analysis done between the three-hour kindergarten program and the full day program on what would be the better program? Commissioner Crocker replied that the full day program was more cost effective.

Commissioner Bravo asked if there was any opposition to the initiative. Commissioner Crocker said most of the opposition was about casting doubt on the effectiveness of preschool. The other issue is the allegation that it would put private providers out of business. Commissioner Bravo asked if at a future meeting the Commission could have the actual Initiative to review. Commissioner Achadjian asked First 5 staff to put this item on a future meeting agenda, and to also have a copy of the initiative for the Commissioners to discuss.

## **State Commission, State Association, Retreat and General Staff Updates:**

Susan Hughes updated the Commission on all new legislation that will be implemented. Ms. Hughes informed the Commission the Commissioner Retreat is being held at the Shore Cliff Pacific Room on March 31<sup>st</sup> from 8:30 am to 5 pm.

## **Commissioner Comments and Announcements:**

Commissioner Crocker commented the Commissioners appreciate the effort that Chairperson Achadjian and Vice-Chairperson Steinberg give to the Commission with regard to their leadership.

Commissioner Collins updated the Commissioners on the resolution passed by the Board of Supervisors that established a policy that children in foster homes will not be exposed to second-hand smoke.

Commissioner Collins added there is an opportunity to establish a kinship center, which exists in other California counties and would provide therapeutic mental health centers to children in need. Commissioner Collins said in the future he would like to come back before the Commission and request funding for such a program.

Commissioner Collins also announced that SLO County was identified by the National Children's Defense Fund as one of ten most promising and effective programs to interrupt the "Cradle to Prison Pipeline", on the basis that some children born in certain demographic locations and situations are highly likely to be sent to prison. With the kinds of linkages and interventions that SLO County has established, the National Children's Defense Fund asked SLO County to give a presentation at a conference in Tennessee regarding how other states and counties can achieve similar success in this area.

There were no additional comments or announcements; Chairperson Achadjian adjourned the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

**All materials referred to in these minutes are available at the First 5 Children & Families Commission office. For a more detailed account, tapes of the meeting are available by calling 781-4058.**

**The next regular Commission meeting will be:  
Wednesday, March 22, 2006  
From 4:00 – 6:30 p.m.  
Department of Social Services, Room 115  
3433 South Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA**