



January 25, 2010
Commission Meeting Minutes
River Room, Mendocino County Office of Education
2240 Old River Rd.
Ukiah, CA 95482

Commission Members Present:

Mary Elliott	Jim Levine	Jeremy Mann
Lucresha Rentería	Diane Pauli	

Commission Members Absent:

David Colfax	Tammy Scott	Paul Tichinin
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Staff Present:

Anne Molgaard	Ashley Hileman	Christy Barron
Natalie Swiencki	Roseanne Castro	

Public Present:

Linda Nagel	Cathy Ferron	Megan Van Sant
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ITEM 1 Welcome & Introductions by Commission Chair, Lucresha Rentería

Commissioner Rentería called the meeting to order at 1:19 p.m. Those present introduced themselves.

ITEM 2 Public Comment on Non-Agendized Items

None.

ITEM 3 Consent Calendar (*Action*)

- A. Approve Agenda
- B. Approve Draft Minutes of November 30, 2009 Commission Meeting
- C. Approve Revised Evaluation Contract for 2009 to October 31, 2010

Motion was made to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion/Mann, Second/Levine. Passed.

Maximize Operational Effectiveness (ITEMS 4 –8)

ITEM 4 Director's Report

1. Anne Molgaard, Executive Director, reported that the Executive Committee approved two Special Funding Requests:
 - a. \$2,500 for the Round Valley Public Library to purchase Native American themed story books appropriate for children ages 0-5 and
 - b. \$2,000 for Breathe California to help with the tuition and mileage expenses for health care providers to get asthma educator certification.
2. The Pediatric Dental Initiative (PDI) held its open house on January 21, 2010. PDI is planning for state budget cuts.

3. 2-1-1 Mendocino will launch on February 11, 2010. The website is now live. 2-1-1 partners have been asked to add a 2-1-1 banner to their websites.
4. The Ounce of Prevention video, *Change the First 5 Years and You Change Everything* was shown to Commissioners.
5. Laytonville, Round Valley and Willits Unified School Districts were awarded BRONCO funding. A Steering Committee has been named to provide oversight. Maya Stuart, Raise & Shine Program Manager is a member. Planning for a Round Valley Family Resource Center is underway.
6. FIRST 5 Mendocino is looking for volunteers to offer two to three weeks of free housing to allow incoming VISTAS time to find permanent housing.

ITEM 5 Fiscal Report (Action)

An account summary of the funding held by the Community Foundation will be added to future fiscal reports. Discussion was held regarding the State Budget Deficit, impending changes to Healthy Families funding and the unknown status of Title IV E funding.

Motion was made to approve October and November, 2009 Fiscal Reports. Motion/Pauli, Second/Elliott. Passed.

ITEM 6 Governor's Budget Proposal (Action)

Executive Director Molgaard stated that a hearing will be held in Sacramento on January 26, 2010 regarding the Governor's proposal to divert 50% of Proposition 10 funding to the Departments of Developmental Services and Social Services.

Ms. Molgaard stated that the First 5 Association of California is encouraging county First 5's to submit letters of opposition before the Governor's proposal becomes a ballot initiative.

Motion was made to approve the opposition letter to Governor Schwarzenegger, Senator Wiggins, Assemblyman Chesbro and the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors. Motion/Mann, Second/Levine. Passed.

ITEM 7 Strategic Plan

The Commission considered planning questions for the upcoming strategic plan. Executive Director Molgaard suggested that the plan be based on two scenarios: (1) with a 50% cut in state funding or (2) without a 50% cut in state funding. The Commission stated that it wants to hear from parents, community members and partners. The goal is to discuss issues they find most critical and how FIRST 5 can meet those needs. The Commission wants to: (1) focus the strategic plan to critical issues; (2) develop a strategic plan for the next three years; and (3) receive input from the community.

Discussion will determine if the community member has been serviced by FIRST 5 Mendocino and if the community member recognizes program names.

Kindergarten Entry Profile (KEP)

Cathy Ferron, of Ferron & Associates, Local Evaluator for FIRST 5 Mendocino presented 2009 Kindergarten Entry Profile (KEP) data. Ms. Ferron explained that KEP serves as a structured observation tool that kindergarten teachers use to assess a child's readiness for school in the areas of social-emotional development, language, reading and writing skills. KEP's were conducted annually from 2003-2009 in Mendocino County.

A total of 2700 children were assessed by a KEP from 2003-2009 with 58% of kindergarteners from School Readiness (SR) schools and 46% of kindergarteners attending non-School Readiness schools. School Readiness sites include: Brookside; Hopland; Nokomis (reporting for 2004-09) and Round Valley (reporting for 2003-04). Non-School Readiness sites include: Grace Hudson, Yokayo, Calpella (reporting for 2007); Frank Zeek (reporting for 2004-06); Oak Manor (reporting for 2004-05); Anderson Valley; Laytonville; Leggett; Manchester; Mendocino, Albion, Comptche, Greenwood; Potter Valley; Arena; and Redwood Valley.

According to the data, an increasing percentage of Spanish-speaking children are entering kindergarten. In SR sites during 2003, 22% of children entering kindergarten were Spanish-speaking, in 2009, 34% were Spanish-speaking. In non-SR sites during 2004, 24% of children entering kindergarten were Spanish-speaking; in 2009 32% were Spanish-speaking.

In SR sites during 2003, 49% of children entering kindergarten were ready to read; by 2009 64% of children were ready to read. Ms. Ferron reported that overall, for SR sites there is an increasing trend of children entering kindergarten ready for school. In non-SR sites there is a decline in children entering kindergarten ready for school. KEP scores are declining in the following areas: (1) social emotional; (2) language comprehension; and (3) math. In 2004, 81% of children entering kindergarten were ready for school, this dropped to 63% in 2009.

Ms. Ferron reported that children who are English-speaking scored “ready for school” at a higher percentage (71%) than Spanish-speaking children (58%). Ms. Ferron stated that if a Spanish-speaking child is placed with a Spanish-speaking teacher they are more likely to succeed in school. Data also indicated that children who attended preschool scored higher on the KEP at 69% ready for school while those who did not attend preschool scored at 57% ready for school.

According to the SR data from other counties, children are most prepared for school when they have attended preschool and have proficiency in English. According to a longitudinal study from Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties, children who score poorly on school readiness for kindergarten tend to be behind on academic achievement by the third grade level. Ms. Ferron noted that not all children who were considered ready for school do well on the third grade Standardized Testing and Reporting or STAR test conducted statewide for all third graders.

The Commission asked Ms. Ferron what elements of the SR project are most beneficial. Ms. Ferron stated that Transition Committees and principal participation have the greatest impact in helping children get ready for school.

ITEM 8 Report Out on Annual Report to the Public

Natalie Swiencki, Communications Program Manager reported on the positive feedback received from partners and community leaders regarding FIRST 5 Mendocino’s annual report. Positive comments regarding format and content were shared with the Commission. Ms. Swiencki reported some recipients had computer connection issues that affected their viewing of the video.

The Commission suggested:

- to keep the video format;
- highlight other programs for next year;
- highlight the breath of FIRST 5 Mendocino’s programs;
- highlight partners more effectively, use larger font;

- highlight investment in the first 5 years;
- highlight how FIRST 5 Mendocino helps other programs/services/projects in the county succeed;
- highlight need for existence;
- use a different location for filming; and
- use compelling parent stories

Swiencki passed out draft postcards that will be made available for Commissioners and staff to pass out to the public directing them to the electronic Annual Report. The post cards provide the website link to the Annual Report, statistics regarding the number of children served and the distribution of FIRST 5 Mendocino dollars. Annual Report DVD's were made available.

(Commissioner Levine leaves the meeting at 3:11 p.m. due to extreme weather, poor driving conditions and road closures)

Healthy Children (ITEMS 9 –11)

ITEM 9 Nutrition & Fitness

Ashley Hileman, Nutrition & Fitness Advocate provided an update on recent Sports, Play & Active Recreation for Kids (SPARK) activities. Adrienne Binder, new VISTA Nutrition & Fitness Advocate, will arrive in a few weeks. Ms.Hileman will help orient and train Ms. Binder.

SPARK

The goal of SPARK is to foster healthy habits for children to enjoy physical activity. SPARK trainings were provided to child care providers and teachers on November 6, 7, 8 and 9, 2009. There were 139 providers trained, one half unit of college credit was offered by Mendocino College and four new sites received equipment.

Safe Play Areas

Safe Play Areas funding was awarded to: (1) Round Valley Indian Head Start awarded \$9,900; (2) Potter Valley Family Resource Center awarded \$22,800; (3) Redwood Valley Lions Club Park awarded \$17,250; (4) Arena State Preschool awarded \$20,240; and (5) Whale Gulch School awarded \$7,500. Ms. Hileman reported that all five sites have completed installation of their play areas. Most sites used the funding for resurfacing of their playgrounds.

Other Nutrition & Fitness Events –

- Food For All Mendocino outreach activities countywide to increase food stamp participation
- Family Fun in the Sun held in June, July & August, 2009
- Fruit & Veggie Fest held in May, 2009, this year's theme was *Eating Right When Money's Tight*
- Willits Kids Fair held in June, 2009
- Wild About Health, first children's health fair in Ukiah, held in October, 2009
- Annual Holiday Express event sponsored by Roots of Motive Power in Willits held in December, 2009.

Commission asked Ms. Hileman what elements of Nutrition & Fitness work the best. Ms. Hileman stated that SPARK is very effective in motivating physical activity and several teachers report back that they use the SPARK equipment at least once a day.

ITEM 10 Food For All Mendocino

Megan Van Sant, Program Administrator for Healthy Kids Mendocino stated that her department receives federal funds for food stamp outreach. Food For All Mendocino is a local coalition to increase food stamp enrollment in Mendocino County. Coalition members include: the HHSA Community Health Services Branch and Healthy Kids Mendocino; HHSA Social Services Branch; Plowshares Peace and Justice Center; Ukiah Community Center and Food Bank; School Nutrition program; FIRST 5 Mendocino and others.

Thirty Food Stamp Advocates in the county have been trained to assist community members with the application process. Advocates are available at Family Resource Centers, clinics and community organizations. AmeriCorps and VISTA volunteers help with Food Stamp outreach.

The coalitions focus is on Social Marketing to change the perception of the Food Stamp Program for the elderly, undocumented parents of citizen children, and for those who do not want to be associated with the government. There is a different message for each group. At the federal level, the campaign theme is "Food Stamps make America stronger." Ms. Van Sant stated that this message is compelling for families, they get food and help their community by bringing federal dollars into their community.

Ms. Van Sant also reported that applicants and recipients love the concept that they can use food stamps at the farmers market and health food store.

Food For All Mendocino provides alternative locations for community members to apply for assistance. Direct help with Food Stamp applications is available at the Healthy Kids Mendocino office and outreach tables at community events. Assistance is also available through 46-BREAD (462-7323), a phone line for community members who need assistance with their applications. Ms. Van Sant reported that Food Stamp events in Covelo have been successful in boosting enrollment in the community which had previously been underserved.

Food Security in Mendocino County.

According to the California for Rural Policy, Health Interview Survey, 30% of Mendocino County households have gone hungry in the past year because they could not afford enough food. California has the lowest Food Stamp participation rate in the country with only 50% of those eligible enrolled in the program. Ms. Van Sant stated that California recipients are required to complete quarterly reports to maintain benefits; only two other states have this requirement. Ms. Van Sant reported that Food Stamp case load from January 2008 to October 2009 has been on the rise.

Bring A Million Dollars to Mendocino County

The goal of the campaign is to increase food stamp enrollment by 10% in Mendocino County by 2010. Ms. Van Sant reported there has been positive feedback regarding the campaign. There is a regional contest, local outreach provided by the Family Resource Center Network and individual Family Resource Centers to assist those in need of food and to educate the public on how Food Stamp enrollment will benefit the whole community.

Ms. Van Sant was asked about outreach to the young parent program at the Ukiah High School. She stated that Food For All has provided outreach to the Young Parent Program at the Arbor on Main Youth Resource Center in Ukiah. Executive Director Molgaard requested that Food For All consider outreach to the Young Parent Programs in Willits and Fort Bragg. Ms. Van Sant Reported that Healthy Kids Mendocino staff is working on outreach to the coast, particularly the south coast as the community is underserved in health insurance and Food Stamps.

(Commissioner Elliott leaves at 3:54 p.m.)

ITEM 11 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study

Executive Director Molgaard reported that the Children’s Action Committee, or CAC, a sub-committee of the Policy Council on Children and Youth is seeking co-sponsors for the Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES) workshops. ACES, a Kaiser Permanente study conducted in southern California found links between adverse childhood experiences and poor adult health.

Molgaard stated that offering two workshops in Mendocino County will educate partners on the effects of adverse childhood experiences on adult health. Molgaard stated that the anticipated outcome from the workshops is to increase partner awareness about child abuse, its effects later in life and how to work towards preventing child abuse to improve adult.

Molgaard stated that the information in this study will resonate with community partners who do not directly work with young children, helping to reach more potential partners in the community. Commissioners discussed planning for an ACES presentation. Two workshops will be held on the coast and inland between March 1st and May 15th.

Molgaard stated that after the workshops attendees will be encouraged to volunteer, donate and support CAC on the prevention of child abuse. Volunteer opportunities will be made available through the Boys & Girls Clubs, Boy & Girl Scouts, Court Appointed Special Advocate, or CASA, program and other agencies that help children.

ITEM 12 Commissioner Reports, Announcements & Additional Materials

Commission Rentería opened the floor for Commissioner Reports.

Commissioner Pauli discussed, “Orchid Children” an article in the *Atlantic* regarding the rearing of emotionally sensitive children and how to nurture and help them reach their fullest potential. Discussion regarding child rearing in current society. Commissioner Pauli requested staff copy the article for Commissioners.

Commissioner Rentería shared that Kei Velasquez sent in a thank you card for FIRST 5 Mendocino financial assistance for the lactation specialist exam. She is a bilingual provider in Fort Bragg.

No other reports were heard.

There being nothing further to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 4:23 p.m.