

**Riverside County Children and Families Commission
Special Meeting of the Advisory Committee to the
Riverside County Children and Families Commission
Thursday, February 28, 2008 – 12:00 p.m.**

**Riverside County Children and Families Commission
2002 Iowa Avenue, Suite 100
Riverside, CA 92507**

I. Call to Order

The meeting of the Advisory Committee was called to order at 12:13 p.m. by Executive Director, Harry Freedman.

Advisory Committee Members Present: Chair Dr. Carla Lidner (Arrived at 12:16 p.m.), Betty Folsom, Donna Greene, Donna Johnston for Supervisor Tavaglione, Judy Wood and Lynne Craig (Arrived at 12:14 p.m.)

Absent: Aurora Wilson, Debbie Lauda, Georgann Koenig (participated via email), Dr. Touraj Shafai

Vacant: One position open in District IV and one position open in District V

Staff Present: Harry Freedman, Executive Director; Stella Smith, Deputy Director; Lynn Stephens, Commission Secretary; Michelle Burroughs, Administrator Health and Community Programs; Arrin Banks, Administrator Grants and Contracts; Sherry Watkins, Facilities and Operations Specialist

II. Chair and Committee Member Comments

None

III. Discussion/Action Items

Formulating Recommendations Regarding Criteria for One Time Funding Cycle

Mr. Freedman recapped the Early Education discussion from February 20 meeting. The Commission asked Advisory Committee to make recommendations on how to focus one time money with the understanding that the funds would not be renewable. The services that are funded would have to have an impact and demonstrated outcomes while it is funded, and cannot include ongoing expenses such as salaries. Georgann Koenig's e-mail with her recommendations was shared. It was noted that funding Parent Literacy programs and roaming libraries was a possibility.

Chair, Dr. Carla Lidner (Arrived at 12:16 p.m.)

Health Goals

Mr. Freedman noted that the health fund fewer dollars available. The Commission acted to fund the four agencies health RFP applicants that were recommended but not funded during the FY 06/07 funding cycle.

Ms. Michelle Burroughs, Administrator, suggested allocating a portion of the funds for an obesity prevention public education campaign. She shared information on the partnership First 5 California and Westfield Malls. Local counties have been given the opportunity to participate in the partnership. The poster created for this campaign is located at the West Field Mall in Palm Desert and at all WIC locations. Carla Lidner asked Ms. Burroughs how effective she thinks additional funding for nurses to carry the nutrition message would be at school sites. Ms. Burroughs replied that she thinks it would be very effective. Donna Greene commented that classes targeting low income families as well as food vouchers would be beneficial for parents who cannot afford services and expensive foods. Mr. Freedman said that Orange County is implementing a Sesame Workshop, and Healthy Habits for Life is being implemented within Orange County schools. The curriculum incorporates more physical activities and healthy foods. Lynne Craig reminded Committee members of their previous discussions regarding the inclusion of funds for autism and mental health. Carla Lidner expressed concern with the shortfall of funds currently in the K-12 programs. She noted at the sites the Head Starts have more resources than Kindergarten. It was noted K-12 falls under the jurisdiction of the individual school districts, and not the County Office of Education. Donna Green suggested incorporating obesity and healthy habits messages in a health screening providing to children enrolling in kindergarten.

Lynne Craig expressed concern with serving the five-year-old kindergarteners and not the six-year-old kindergarteners. Ms. Burroughs suggested adding a parent workshop at the time of registration. She noted the program could not be condensed into one program. Carla and Betty both agreed any programs held at school sites are more effective than conducting them at other sites. Betty reported that she has been in contact with many principals and finds that the principals are interested in implementing these types of programs.

Carla suggested providing assistance in nutrition and autism. Lynne Craig suggested 0-2 age be targeted. She noted the benefit of the Sesame Workshop program is that once it is purchased, it can be provided year after year with minimal if any investment. Advisory Committee members requested that Michelle gather additional information and cost information. Harry noted the Advisory Committee would present recommendations to Commission at the March 31 Commission Meeting. Arrin noted that the time line can for one time programs can be modified so the award can be out by September 1 as long as it is issued and can be completed during the fiscal year.

Recap for Focus of Health Funds

- Nutrition Education Campaign: Center based, or family child care based and/or preschool based on school campuses for ongoing family education.
- Mental Health: Allocate a portion of funds to complement existing mental health initiative primary prevention piece to free up more funds in the Mental Health Initiative for assessment and treatment.
- Autism: Allocate some money to autism screening outside the Mental Health Initiative. Lynne Craig expressed the need for early identification of autism.

Ms. Burroughs reported the Mental Health Initiative permits parent self identification of child behavior concerns. The Regional Center has responsibility for assisting families with assessment and treatment resources for autism.

Lynne Craig suggested if all the money was not spent, then left over money could be used to develop a partnership with Stater Bros. or another grocer to distribute food cards or vouchers that can only be used to purchase nutritious foods. Ms. Smith suggested something similar to the WIC voucher program. Judith commented there might be a better turn out with the incentive. There was committee consensus around the value of nutrition education at a sustainable program that prevents obesity, teeth decay and other diseases. Michelle noted parents will learn from the program and the learnings passed on to future generations. Donna Greene added that she likes the fact that the curriculum can be utilized in family child care homes.

Two options

The Sesame Workshop model can be either RFP'd utilizing a single entity or directly with organizations to coordinate/implement the program to participating venues (i.e. school based preschool settings, child care centers and family child care homes) or work through the Child Care Consortium to connect with centers to implement the program. Centers can be given incentives for providing programs (equipment to enhance/promote physical activity etc).

The Committee agreed to recommend implementing the Sesame Workshop, Healthy Habits program without an RFP and use extra money for incentives for center if they agree to conduct the program.

Ms. Burroughs added the Healthy Habits for Life program is for a variety of health related topics with nutrition and physical activity being the primary message. More than one activity can take place at the same time with this program. Donna Greene suggested training for childcare nutrition workers. Ms. Burroughs will email the implementation costs of the program to committee members. The Advisory Committee agreed to use all of health funds for this program. Note: Implementation costs were provided later in the meeting as follows:

Healthy Habits for Life Tool Kits. Orange County Commission purchased 2500 kits and 5,000 parent guides for \$95,448

Word on the Street Tool Kits: 3,000 kits and word cards for Sr. Coordinators and partner agencies for \$49,860

Early Education

Lynne Craig reminded Committee of the inclusion training for provider's discussion. Mr. Freedman clarified that preschool providers would be offered training and consultation on how to accommodate needs of special needs children. Another potential recommendation that was discussed in the previous meeting was to replicate the child care recommendation to increase capacity in preschools that could be sustained over time by renovating space to allow for more spaces and provider training (not include to additional teachers or staff salaries unless sustainable through client fees).

Judy Wood added that all state preschool child development unspent funds have been pulled into the general fund. So funding for alternative pay participants may not be available in the future, thereby impacting the sustainability of spaces created as a result of the one time grant funds. Donna Greene cautioned that if there is no money to serve the state funded children, centers may not be able to sustain expansion.

Judy Woods expressed that training and adding spaces for children with special needs is equally important. Donna Johnston suggested allowing programs to apply for training and/or special needs spaces. Carla Lidner suggested that the RFP be written so that low income centers or those who except private and state pay are considered.

Suggestions from Georgann Koenig via email were discussed. Her suggestions included funding for quality improvement, specialized curricula, training supplies and early literacy purchase of materials or mobile vans with the understanding it is one time money.

Advisory Committee concerns with purchasing a book van would be if the agency would be able to sustain the insurance and license on the van in the future.

Donna Greene noted the tremendous need for increased quality in preschool programs. She suggested speaking with West Ed concerning their training model to assist preschool programs in meeting State preschool quality standards. CPIN is another company that provides related training.

Mr. Freedman asked if RFP for training and materials could be issued and if it is a real need. It was noted that there are not many Title V State funded agencies who would not want to take advantage of the training. It was noted the smaller private child care centers are more likely to be able to expand than the larger child care centers.

Carla Linder suggest preschools serving low income populations be considered for funding.

Advisory Committee Recommendations for One Time Funding are as follows:

Childcare:

- Any activity aimed at increasing the number of available child care spaces (i.e. renovation for existing facilities or playground improvements supplies, training that is not included with CARES around specific programs). Currently funded agencies will be eligible to apply.

Note: The standard five year declining reimbursement policy will be included.

Health:

- Sesame Workshop Healthy Habits for Life Program: It is a valuable education tool, sustainable, aimed at prevention of obesity, dental decay and promotion of healthy lifestyle. Parents will learn from the program. The information goes to existing childcare centers and family child care homes and if they are interested then they are trained on the curriculum. This program offers nutrition and physical activity.
- Child care center, preschool based or family child care based are all eligible to apply.

Notes: More than one activity can take place at the same time with this program. Training for child care cooks will be part of the recommendation. Remaining funds not spent on program implementation to be Food vouchers/ gift cards to be used for purchase of healthy/nutritious foods.(similar to the WIC voucher program). This incentive might help have a better turn out for parent trainings.

The Committee will further recommend implementing the program without an RFP and use extra money for incentives for Center if they agree to conduct the program.

It will be recommended to work through the Consortium who can connect with the centers to implement the program. Some incentives suggested would be playground equipment and training for child care cooks.

Education:

- Funding for activities aimed at creating new preschool slots, quality improvement including facility improvement.

Notes: The Advisory Committee agreed to recommend not to cap the RFP applications and recommend the five year clause of accountability for the agency of having to repay the funds if they do not utilize the space or

equipment to support the First 5 funded improvements for a minimum of five years.

Donna Green and Judith Wood will present all three recommendations at March 31, 2008 Commission meeting.

(Donna Johnston left meeting at 1:50 p.m.)

IV. Staff Report – Harry Freedman Executive Director

No Report.

V. Public Comments

No public comments

VI. Future Agenda Items

Adjournment at 2:00 p.m. to the regular meeting of the Advisory Committee scheduled for Wednesday, April 16, 2008 at 1:30 p.m. at Mt. San Jacinto College - Menifee Valley Campus 28237 La Piedra Road, Menifee, CA 92584 Learning Resource Center on the Menifee Campus, Building 800 Community Room.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.