

# COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

May 13, 2019

Meeting location: 260 E. 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Merced, CA 95341

## Commission Members Present:

- Lee Lor       Eva de Long       Iantha Thompson       Shirley Brown       Scott Pettygrove
- County Health Officer - Vacant       Aaron Lequia       District 5 Representative - Vacant       Yvonnia Brown

**Staff Present:** James Fincher, Marie Pickney, Rebecca Nanyonjo-Kemp, Kat Zimmerman, Xee Lor

**Guests:** Linda Kaercher, Janice LeRoux, Scott Waite, Michelle Reid, Christie Hendricks, Patti Kishi, Jim Brown, and Dennis Haines.

## Call to Order

Commission Chair, Lee Lor, called the Commission Meeting to order at 5:33 pm.

## Pledge of Allegiance, and Roll Call

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by: Commissioner Scott Pettygrove

Attendance results noted above; a quorum was present.

## SCHEDULED ITEMS:

### Public Opportunity to Speak on Any Matter within the Commission's Jurisdiction

Members of the public were invited to come forward to speak.

Dennis Haines, Family Social Services Supervisor of Family Resource Council under MCOE/EE, came forward to thank and congratulate First 5 staff on the First 5 Children's Summit that took place in April. Haines went on to thank volunteers that took part in

this successful and wonderful summit. Haines also stated that the Family Resource Council has helped organize the last 16 summits and this was the best summit in 16 years due to trauma reform and resiliency. Haines stated that his daughter ended the summit by making a commitment to make Merced County a trauma reformed county. In closing, Haines went on to say that two years ago he received training in this global new idea of trauma informed care, and has made a commitment for the next 10 years to push trauma informed care in Merced County. Haines will be advocating for grants and other methods that will push the agenda of trauma informed care forward in Merced County.

### **Additions/Deletions to the Agenda:**

There were no additions/deletions to the agenda.

### **CONSENT CALENDAR:**

- 1. Approval of Minutes for the April 15, 2019 Commission Meeting.**
- 2. Approval of Expenditures through April 30, 2019.**

Commission Chair Lee Lor moved to approve Item(s) #1-2.

Motion seconded by: Commissioner Yvonnia Brown. The motion was unanimously passed with 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

### **REGULAR CALENDAR:**

- 3. Information regarding Merced County Head Start Program Needs Assessment.**

Commission Chair Lee Lor opened the Public Hearing at 5:33 PM with Merced County Head Start Program Needs Assessment. Linda Kaercher, the Director of MCOE Head Start Program, provided the Commission and public with a Power-Point overview of the yearly Merced County Head Start Community Assessment and the highlights of what was found when conducting the assessment. The assessment represents the end of the 2018-2019 school year, the data for the 2019-2020 school year is not yet available. The Merced County Head Start Program Needs Assessment can be found on the MCOE – Head Start website at: [www.mcoe.org](http://www.mcoe.org).

- 4. Approval to Extend Year 1 of Project Prevention Coalition Hmong Culture Camp Contract.**

This item was presented by First 5 Program Manager, Marie Pickney, requesting the Commission to approve an extension of Year 1 of Project Prevention Coalition Hmong Culture Camp so that unspent funds can be fully utilized by the contractor. Pickney provided the Commission and the public with a brief summary of the project, stating that in December of 2017, Project Prevention (PP) Hmong Culture Camp was awarded a 4-year Direct Services contract. Due to delays with starting the project, Project Prevention returned to speak to Commission regarding the request to roll-over 100% of

their funds. Since then, Project Prevention has undergone structural and organizational changes with the Program Coordinator position that was listed under subcontractor now being directly under the contractor, United Way. At this time, United Way's Hmong Culture Camp is requesting to extend their Year 1 contract in order to align with the County fiscal year instead of the calendar fiscal year established with the RFP. This accommodation will allow them to fully utilize the funding that they have yet to spend. The original approved amounts for all 4 years would remain the same. Year 4 would still be funded solely under United Way Hmong Culture Camp. Commission approval is needed. First 5 staff recommends approval of the Year 1 extension of the United Way Hmong Culture Camp contract.

Commissioner Yvonnia Brown, requested clarification on the extension and rollover alignment with the County fiscal year and what the RFP entailed. Kat Zimmerman, First 5 Support Services Analyst, clarified that most contracts are usually aligned with the fiscal year. This request is released a second time with priority area 1. Commissioner Y. Brown asked if in the past there is a policy in place for what can and can't be rolled over. Zimmerman stated that yes there is a policy in place. Commissioner Y. Brown asked what the amounts were. Zimmerman stated that 15% of the funds can be rolled over from Year 1 to Year 2. First 5 was bringing back the budget revision policy to the Commission to review and possibly revise. Commissioner Y. Brown indicated that the current policy states that 15% of funds can be rolled and now the item is being brought back to the Commission to approve a 100% roll over. Zimmerman explained that the request for approval is essentially to extend the contract to meet the June 30<sup>th</sup> cutoff and start the next fiscal year in July to align with First 5 fiscal years. Commissioner Y. Brown thanked Zimmerman for the clarification.

Commissioner Scott Pettygrove enquired about the period of time the contract was in place for. Commissioner Pettygrove specified that the contract started from January 2018-December 2019. Zimmerman stated that the contract was in place for 6 months from December 31, 2018 to June 30, 2019. Zimmerman reminded the Commission about the second release of the RFP for the direct services. Commissioner Pettygrove clarified that the contract is theoretically in Year 2 and that there were funds unspent from Year 1. Pickney confirmed this and indicated that in the February 2019 Commission Meeting, Hmong Culture Camp spoke to the Commission requesting for 100% roll over. No action was taken at that time and the item was put on the calendar for the March 11, 2019 Commission Meeting. Commissioner Y. Brown indicated that there was a discussion of going over what has been down in the past pertaining to roll overs. The last discussion was to bring back that policy to view and possibly make changes. At this time, the policy states a 15% roll over. Commissioner Pettygrove enquired about how much of Year 1 funds have been spent. Zimmerman stated that the Hmong Culture Camp has spent almost a little over half of the funds and Pickney specified that the camp still has about \$50,000 that they have yet to spend. Pickney then went on to explain that after discussion and internal restructuring of the Hmong Culture Camp, the thought was that instead of requesting a 100% roll over that the contract can be extended for 1 year so that the camp can fully utilize the funding that

they have remaining. Pettygrove reiterated that Year 2 would start in July. Pickney stated that Year 1 started January 2018 to December 2018 and the extension would continue through June 2019. First 5 would cover 100% in Year 1. Year 2 (July 2019 through June 2020) would be covered at 75%, Year 3 (July 2020 – June 2021) would be covered at 50%, and then Year 4 (July 2021 – June 2022) Hmong Culture Camp would cover their expenses completely. Pettygrove asked if this contract requires matching funds. Pickney confirmed, yes, direct services contracts do require matching funds in years, 2, 3 & 4.

Commissioner Y. Brown requested clarification on the initial RFP end date. Pickney responded that the end RFP end date will be December 2021 and that the extension would continue the contract until June 30, 2022. Commissioner Y. Brown asked what the procedure was with prior contractors having requested roll overs and/or extensions and wanted clarification on the difference between a roll over and 6-month and extension. Zimmerman stated that in the second RFP release round there were only 2 contracts with the term that went through December 3, 2021, and that the only organization in that second round requesting an augmentation of funds was Project Prevention Hmong Culture Camp. The rest of the contracts from the original RFP release had already received the 15% roll over. Commissioner Y. Brown wanted to ensure that all contractors were provided the same equal options. Zimmerman confirmed that this was the reason the request was brought back so that the contracts were in compliance with the First 5 Budget Roll Over Revision/ Policy. Pickney specified that Hmong Culture Camp is no longer requesting the 100% roll over but is requesting a term extension.

Commissioner Pettygrove asked how much Hmong Culture Camp has spent. Zimmerman confirmed that Hmong Culture Camp has spent down about \$50,000. Pettygrove stated that this amounted to about 30% of the overall contract and that 15% can be rolled over this fiscal year. Pettygrove expressed the confusion with this request especially with a match involved and asked to clarify if there was a continuation of the first year match. Pickney stated that there was not a first year match requirement however, the expectation is that 100% of the allocation in year 1 is utilized.

In Year 2, direct services contracts are funded at 75% with a 25% match by contractor.

Chair Lor requested clarification regarding the contractor's late start stating it was her understanding that because of internal restructure and staff transitions, duties were shifted and this resulted in the delayed start of the contract. Zimmerman stated that the delay was due to the dollar amount in the original application had not been calculated correctly, therefore Hmong Culture Camp requested to come back to the Commission and augment the total award. Chair Lor asked for any questions or comments from the Commission. Commissioner Y. Brown asked what the contractor was requesting from the Commission and First 5 staff recommendation. Pickney reiterated that the contractor is asking for an extension through June 2022 so that they

can utilize their funding. Chair Lor verified that the original term ends in December 2021 and that the contractor wanted to extend that term to June 30, 2022. Commissioner Pettygrove voiced his concern that other contractors who went through the same RFP process would want the same roll over and/or extensions of the first year. Zimmerman stated that the other contractors were already aligned with the fiscal year and had already started their services 6 months prior to the second RFP release. Zimmerman stated that Hmong Culture Camp started late in January 2018, and are a few months into year 2. Pettygrove clarified that if this extension was approved, Hmong Culture Camp would not start their second year until June and have three more years of their contract. Zimmerman confirmed. Pettygrove also stated that in their fourth year, Hmong Culture camp would then have an additional 6 months.

Rebecca Nanyonjo-Kemp, Interim Executive Director, First 5 Merced County, stated that this contractor's budget narrative was not matching the expenditures provided to First 5. It was discussed with the Project Prevention that the projects services and expenditures need to align with what was proposed and stay the course or the contract could potentially be terminated. Nanyonjo-Kemp stated that there were perhaps too many contracts within the contractor's management potentially becoming an issue of being able to hold them to the all of objectives listed in the RFP put out at that time. Nanyonjo-Kemp stated that this was a better way of holding them accountable to the projects initial plan. Pettygrove stated that changing course midstream with this contract could raise concerns from other contractors and First 5 should not be making exceptions for one without the same extension for others. Pickney stated that with the 100% rollover originally being requested, First 5 staff would have proposed an updated budget revision policy that would allow for all direct service contractors to rollover the remaining first year balances therefore, this was the best option to extend the term and not the remaining funds. Commissioner Y. Brown suggested keeping the timeline as is and allow for the 15% rollover as that is what is currently in the policy, that as item stands, she could not support it. Commission Chair Lee Lor asked First 5 staff if there was a current policy for contract term extensions. Zimmerman replied no, at least not one staff is aware of. Lor then asked County Counsel, James Fincher what is the Commission's obligation to the contract process, and could the extension be added. Fincher responded that yes, a 6 month extension could be done, however, the Commission could open up themselves up for challenges from other programs funded by First 5 requesting to amend their contract terms as well. Lor thanked Counsel for the explanation. Commissioner Aaron Lequia asked what changes were made to the organization structure for this project. Pickney explained that Hmong Culture Camp staff was originally in the sub-contractor line item of the United Way contract with First 5MC. Pickney stated that since staff is no longer under Project Prevention, they would be moved into United Way directly. Lequia asked if the staff is the same, Pickney said yes, Hmong Culture Camp staff would remain with the project. Lor asked Commissioners for a motion, there were none. Lor went on to say that at the time of the original grant, First 5 staff and Project Prevention staff had discussed the budget and budget narrative, during which there was staff transition at First 5 that Project Prevention felt

had delayed the start date of the project. Lor also stated that budget had been returned several times for revisions to First 5 staff no longer here, causing further delay. Lor stated that in the future, as an organization we need to ensure any transitions that we have are smoother so that our grantees are not affected.

This item dies due to lack of motion.

#### **5. Information regarding First 5 Commissioner Overview by Janice LeRoux, Executive Director, First 5 Association.**

This item was presented by Rebecca Nanyonjo-Kemp, interim Executive Director First 5 Merced County, who introduced Janice LeRoux, First 5 Association and Executive Director at First 5 Placer County. Nanyonjo-Kemp stated that there have been a lot of activities at the state level with First 5 and First 5 Association working with a variety of different counties. Nanyonjo-Kemp had reached out to Moira Kenney, Executive Director First 5 Association, who offered to give a broad overview and details about the role of the Commission, the role of the Commissioners, and what is taking place at the state. Because Kenney to attend this meeting so Janice LeRoux will be presenting a PowerPoint. Nanyonjo-Kemp gave a brief summary of LeRoux's accomplishments. LeRoux gave thanks and appreciation to the Commissioners on their efforts and good intentions for attending meetings in the evenings in order to make decisions that affect children and families of Merced County. LeRoux expressed that the Commission was in an exciting time at this period of transition. LeRoux indicated that the Head Start Needs Assessment presentation gave a great deal of data that could be incorporated in the next First 5 strategic planning process. LeRoux went on to state that since the first strategic plan in 2016, there have been economic and environmental changes. Now, the work that is being done and the opportunities that exist are extraordinary. With First 5 Merced's new Executive Director and Strategic Plan which will be looking at the kind of impact that can be created here in Merced County. LeRoux emphasized that First 5 is government at its best with funds from the state that help children and families in Merced County and support through development from 0-5 years. LeRoux stated that what happens in Merced will look different than what is happening in San Francisco. The work being done here is perfect for the children and families of Merced County based on data and needs of the community. First 5 works with a variety of agencies to prioritize the needs and assets of the families in the community. LeRoux gave a brief history of how First 5 first started and how the idea was to get funds out swiftly to try and sow seeds and see what was working. Grants were out there to get projects started during this period of experimentation. LeRoux detailed that the role of First 5 is to assure in the County that there is a system of support for children and families, decrease duplication of services, and tax dollars are used in the best way to suite the children and families in Merced County. Over the twenty years, First 5 Association has developed a statewide assortment of proven strategies that work. As a result funding has descended and will continue to descend. First 5's work over the years has come into fruition. First 5 now has some credit because of the work that has been done and is representative of all aspects of the whole child, whether it be health and welfare of the

child or nutrition and education of the child. First 5 has their own spheres of expertise with respect to early childhood, family support and strengthening. LeRoux went on to present the First 5 network where First 5 Commissioners are not just silo looking at just health or education but are looking at the cross systems of how things are moving and/or improving. Commissioners are looking at where gaps exist and where things are working well. As advocates, the Commissioners are given the ability to use their collective wisdom as a voice for children and families to support policies and movements by giving acknowledgement to those that are making impact in that issue. First 5 has also been facilitating groups of people together to have conversations to compare the different data that can be used to create a kind of plan on what we as a community can work on. As funding has gone down, what First 5s throughout the state have been dealing with is leverage for funding where First 5 is not investing so much in direct services but investing more in developing capacity and helping communities to get together to do things together. LeRoux used Help Me Grow as an example of a great system connecting people with resources that they need, child developmental screenings and assessments with referrals to appropriate services. First 5 is working as a connector and working across systems. LeRoux emphasized how First 5 Merced has already started developing the system that creates the platform by which services can be delivered and connected, where families can be engaged and referred. People and agencies can work closely and in better alignment as the strategic plan develops. First 5 counties have developed a sense of authority and credibility with respect to all things 0-5. LeRoux goes on to state that since the Governor has been in office, First 5 is being called to participate in the census. No one else statewide has contact with the 0-5 community. Funders from the state and outside of the state are engaging First 5 to help them with the 0-5 community, who are the largest uncounted population in the state of California. The First 5 network can work to develop a plan countywide to reach these families and children. LeRoux pointed out that when she started in 2000, the First 5 movement was only about a year and still trying to figure out what the movement was doing. LeRoux gave praise to the First 5 Association, the Executive Directors and Commissioners, who started First 5 for where she is today. LeRoux stated that the greatest assets that the Commissioners and staff have is to be a part of the association. LeRoux indicated that she has been with the First 5 Association for about 20 years and is confident on communicating regarding what First 5 does and can do. LeRoux stated that staff also has an ability to engage with questions on the policies and assisting commissioners. LeRoux expressed her support for the First 5 Association which has enabled negotiations with the State Controller's office about standardizing Audit requirements across First 5, and what is reasonable to expect of First 5 counties. LeRoux asked the Commissioners and public for any questions before going over her presentation. No questions were asked. The PowerPoint is available at [www.co.merced.ca.us](http://www.co.merced.ca.us) under the First 5 page, Commission Meetings Agendas and Minutes.

## **6. Information regarding First 5 Merced County Strategic Plan**

First 5 Program Manager, Marie Pickney, summarized that this item is agendaized to inform the Commission of resources identified by First 5 staff to assist in revisions made to the First 5 Merced County Strategic Plan. Staff recognizes that statutory requirements for First 5 require a Strategic Plan and also an annual approval on any necessary revisions. Pickney stated that going through the current Strategic Plan, it is noted that there are some revisions that need to occur on the acknowledgement page as far as changes in staff and Commissioners. Pickney acknowledged that the current Strategic Plan is under review by Commissioners to evaluate the alignment of current contracts with the priority areas. First 5 Merced County has a multitude of resources as identified from the last few Commission meetings. There is the Head Start Program Needs Assessment, First 5 California Annual Report, Multi-Year Grant Study that was completed by our evaluator, Hamai Consulting. Pickney informed the Commissioners in June Hamai Consulting plans to conduct focus groups with contractors and a learning framework meeting with Commissioners, staff and contractors. Hamai will be attending the June 10<sup>th</sup> Commission Meeting to express the benefits of incorporating data collected from partners in the strategic planning process. Also, in August Hamai will be scheduling site visits with our multi-year contractors. There are no attachments, this is informational only.

## **7. Information regarding Census 2020**

Pickney summarized this item is agendaized to give the Commission information regarding Census 2020. Pickney was not certain how many Commissioners were already fluent in Census 2020. Pickney stated that these conversations were happening across the county. Pickney indicated that the Commissioners received a PowerPoint presentation and she will give an overview. Pickney outlined that there needs to be a great deal of education and outreach in Merced County. Merced County has been deemed a "hard to count" county with parents not knowing if they should be putting information down for their children that are 0-5. Pickney indicated that one of the overall recommendations is that First 5 is at the table when these discussions are being held so that staff can work with and collaborate with other organizations to make sure that children 0-5 are counted. Pickney emphasized that this will help our community as a whole receive the funding needed to make changes in our community.

Commissioner Y. Brown asked Interim Director Nanyonjo-Kemp if First 5 will be taking part in the County census. Nanyonjo-Kemp responded that First 5 has stated that they are going to be reaching out to the hard to reach areas. Nanyonjo-Kemp stated that it will take place at some point since Merced has a large amount of migrant families living in the county. Nanyonjo-Kemp stated the county executive office has a Census 2020 committee and that it is important to leverage efforts from both the county and First 5 for a community wide count where we have own chapter. Commissioner Pettygrove inquired about what kind of census is used for the results. Pettygrove stated that there is actually a second community based group actually chaired by Head Start or Childcare staff that would be appropriate for First 5 to be involved with and potentially can apply for funds to participate. Nanyonjo-Kemp stated that yes, however since Merced is a

“hard to reach” county, funding may not need to be requested but be provided contingent on achieving objectives that have not yet identified.

### **8. Information regarding Children’s Summit Evaluation Results and Hands on Heroes Update**

First 5 Program Manager, Marie Pickney, presented this itemized agenda to provide the Commission with an update of the Children’s Summit evaluation results and the Hands on Heroes awardees. At the September 10, 2018 Commission Meeting, the Commission approved funding for the Annual Children’s Summit and Hands on Heroes Program. The following Hands on Heroes (HOH) were awarded at the April 10<sup>th</sup> Children’s Summit: Fernando Aguilar awarded Business HOH, Judy Coleman awarded Volunteer HOH, Elisa Klietman awarded the Educator HOH, Patricia Pratt awarded the Community HOH, Gloria Morris awarded the Denard David Lifetime Community Service Memorial Award, and Elen Vang awarded the Babatunde Osungboye Emerging Leader Memorial Award.

Pickney provided evaluation results under separate cover. The Children’s Summit was a smash hit. There were minimal to no negative evaluations. Pickney played a video of the young man, Miles Lima, who closed out the show with an amazing song performance. Pickney emphasized that there was still a large amount of people who stayed after lunch, which usually does not happen with previous summits. Pickney indicated how great the keynote speaker and panel were which made this an extremely successful Children’s Summit. Chair Lor asked for questions and comments from the Commission and public. Chair Lor apologized for not asking for questions and comments from the public on items# 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 previously, but if anyone wanted to make them they are welcome to. Linda Kaercher, the Director of MCOE Head Start Program, commented on the Census that they have had Head Start staff involved in this process because they are serving over 1000 children and families who are low or very low income. Kaercher stated that these are indeed the families who are the hardest to reach and count. They also have Migrant Head Start staff involved as well. Kaercher thanked all staff and agencies who participated. Chair Lor thanked Kaercher and her staff for leading the efforts. Chair Lor also thanked the Head Start Early Education Department for allowing the community to utilize their conference space.

### **9. Approval to implement G.R.O.W. Application as mechanism for accessing Emerging Community Needs funding**

First 5 Program Manager, Marie Pickney, presented to the Commission this itemized agenda to approve First 5 Merced County’s application to access Emerging Community Needs funding called Grants Responsive to our Work (GROW) for 2019/2020. The current budget for FY 18/19 and the proposed FY 19/20 budget include a line item name “Emerging Community Needs”. This line item is used for the Children’s Summit and other Commission recognized community needs, however, there is currently not a mechanism in place for the community to access these funds. At the February 2019 Commission meeting, GROW was presented as an informational item. The GROW application was presented as the mechanism to access this one-time funding from the

“Emerging Community Needs” line item. Guidelines and criteria will be developed after approval of this agenda item and will be brought back for review and possible approval at the June Commission meeting. Pickney stated that First 5 is looking at potentially modeling it after the joint funding partnerships guideline criteria. Pickney stated to the Commission that the GROW application is attached and is similar to the one brought to the Commission in February. The First 5 recommendation is to approve the GROW application for 2019/2020.

Chair Lor asked for questions or comments from the Commission. Since there were no questions or comments from the Commission, Chair Lor questioned if the Emerging Community Needs, prior to this item, if the community was not aware of this funding source. Pickney confirmed. Chair Lor asked that when those community members come to First 5, present a project they are working on, and ask for funding outside of the stipulation cycles to support and the decision was.... Pickney stated that staff did not directly have these conversations but that the Executive Director had the conversations with the people of the community. Chair Lor asked what, at this time, is the Executive Director or staff authority in terms of the amount. Zimmerman stated that the only contractor at this time is community engagement and that is up to \$1000.00 at staff level.

Chair Lor stated the process action is for the Commission to approve the application, staff will go back to develop the criteria, and come back for the Commission for approval. Pickney confirmed. Chair Lor asked for questions and comments from the Commission.

Commissioner Pettygrove moved to approve Item# 9

Motion seconded by: Commissioner Y. Brown. The motion was unanimously passed with 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

## **REPORTS/COMMISSION DIRECTION:**

### **10. Executive Director’s Report**

Interim Executive Director, Rebecca Nanyonjo-Kemp does not have anything to report at this time.

### **11. Commissioner’s Report**

Commissioners had nothing to report at this time.

### **12. CLOSED SESSION: PUBLIC EMPLOYEE APPOINTMENT**

**(RECRUITMENT): Pursuant to government Code section 54957: Title: Executive Director First 5 Merced County.**

Commission Chair Lor stated the commission will depart to a closed session at 7:27 pm.

Commission Chair Lor called to resume meeting at 8:24 pm.

Chair Lor reported that the Commission voted 5-0 to extend the offer of employment of Executive Director First 5 Merced County to Scott Waite. The Commission has given staff authority to negotiate the final salary and would let Nanyonjo-Kemp take it from here. Chair Lor asked if there were questions and comments from the Commission or the public. No questions or comments. Congratulations were given to Scott Waite. Scott Waite thanked everyone and stated that he is very excited. Chair Lor stated that the Commission invited Merced County CEO Jim Brown and Scott Waite in to the closed session.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.

### **POSSIBLE DIRECTION FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on:

**Monday, June 10, 2019  
260 E. 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Merced, CA 95341**



## Building a Network Strategy for First 5

**FIRST**  **5**  
ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA

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**First 5** builds the early childhood systems and supports needed to ensure California's young children are safe, healthy, and ready to succeed in school and life

## Two ways of thinking about First 5

Siloed Approach: First 5 Merced spends Prop 10 revenues to serve children and families.

- Pros: Contained approach
- Cons: Impact limited to the dollars you have, and declines over time. The system doesn't grow

Networked Approach: First 5 Merced staff and commission links siloed early childhood systems together and uses its partnerships to leverage new resources to grow the system and serve more children.

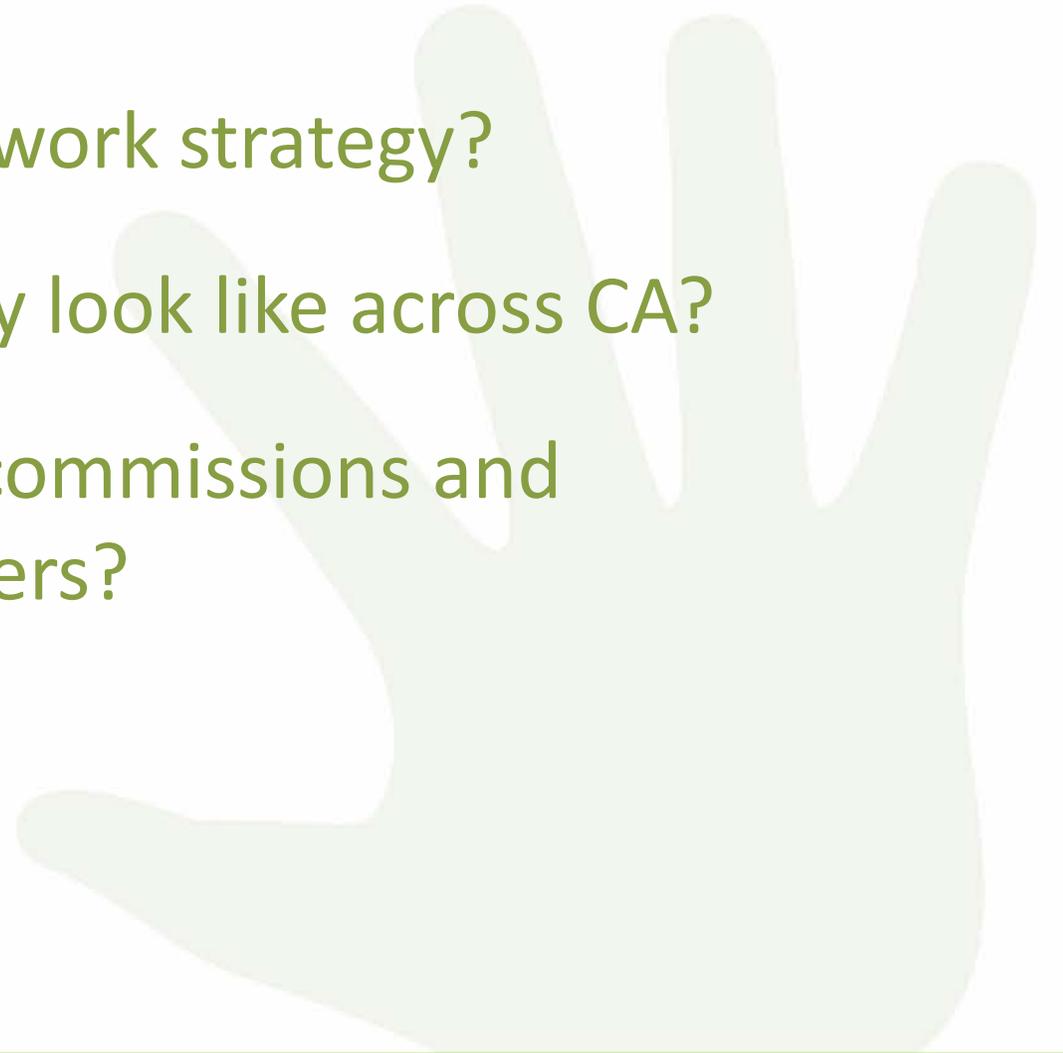
- Pros: Focus on the work and the need, not the limits of your funding

## Building a local network strategy

Why do we need a network strategy?

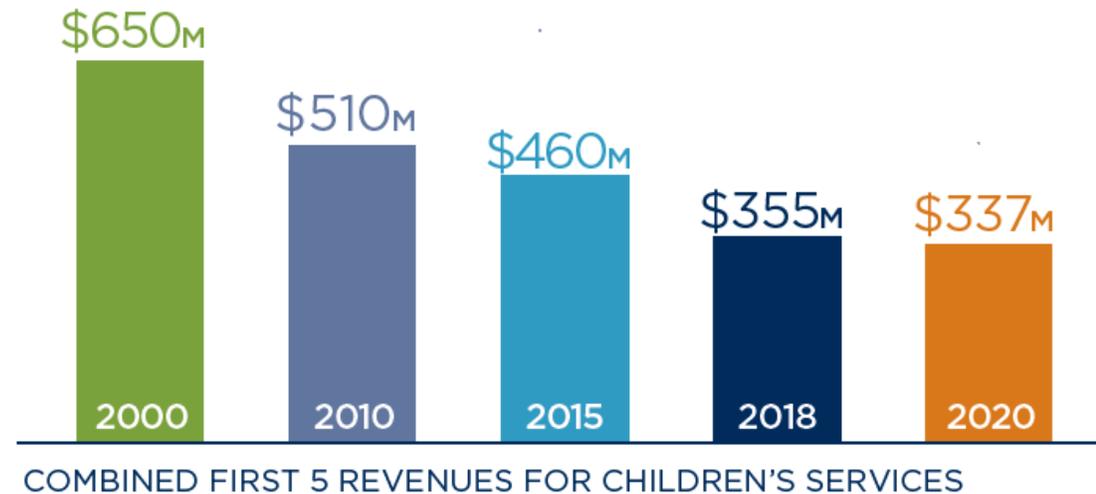
What does a network strategy look like across CA?

What's our role as local commissions and commissioners?



## Why the network strategy matters:

Funding for First 5s will decline by 48% by 2020, from \$262 per child to \$135 per child



# Our Strengths and Assets as a Network



## **SIGNIFICANT FUNDER:**

**First 5** has made nearly \$10B in investments over 20 years, and uses its experience to direct funds strategically



## **EXTENSIVE PARTNERSHIPS:**

**First 5** has relationships with families, government, nonprofits, businesses, and influencers in every county



## **LOCAL EXPERTISE - STATEWIDE:**

**First 5** works on the ground with children and families in every CA county, and develops innovative solutions that work



## **A VOTER MANDATE:**

**First 5** is the only state entity focused on the whole child and empowered to coordinate all sectors

***These collective assets can only be leveraged when we work together***

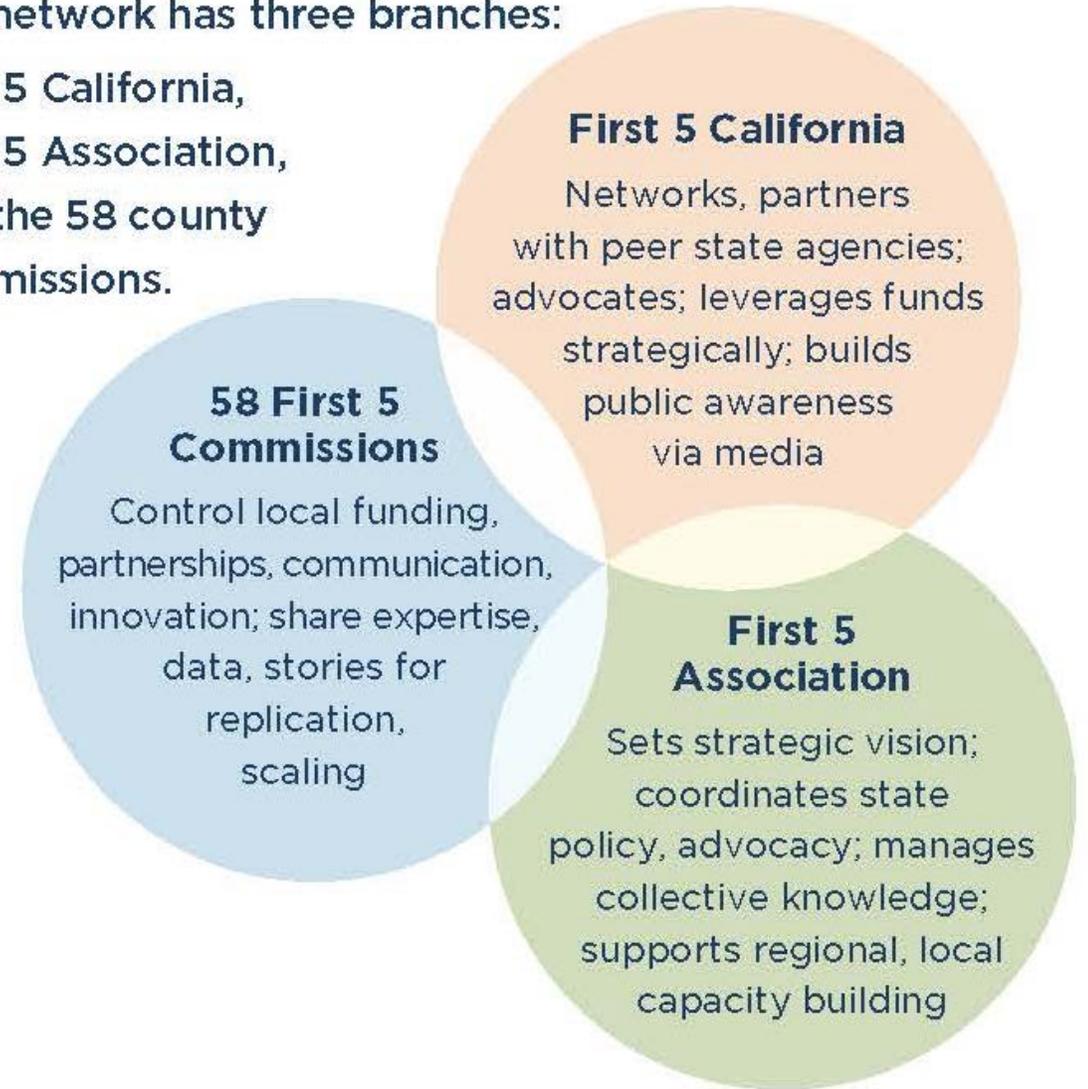
# How are First 5 commissions building local networks?

- CA's new Home Visiting Initiative
  - First 5s as lead agencies
  - Funding data integration systems and supporting workforce development
- QRIS
  - First 5s bringing IMPACT resources to the county for quality ECE supports
- Help Me Grow
  - 35 counties working to improve early intervention systems by focusing on screening and referrals
- Convening and Training
  - First 5 Merced hosting Central Valley regional convening on cannabis

**First 5 Merced is part of this network, and the First 5 Association links us all together**

Our network has three branches:

First 5 California,  
First 5 Association,  
and the 58 county  
commissions.



# Summing Up Respective Roles

## Local Commissions

- **Control local funding, execute the strategy on the ground**
- Innovate and test ideas
- Cultivate local relationships; engage and build influence

## Association

- **Facilitate strategic vision setting for network**
- Manage collective knowledge
- Coordinate policy efforts across network
- Support regional and local capacity building, with focus on leadership development

## State Commission

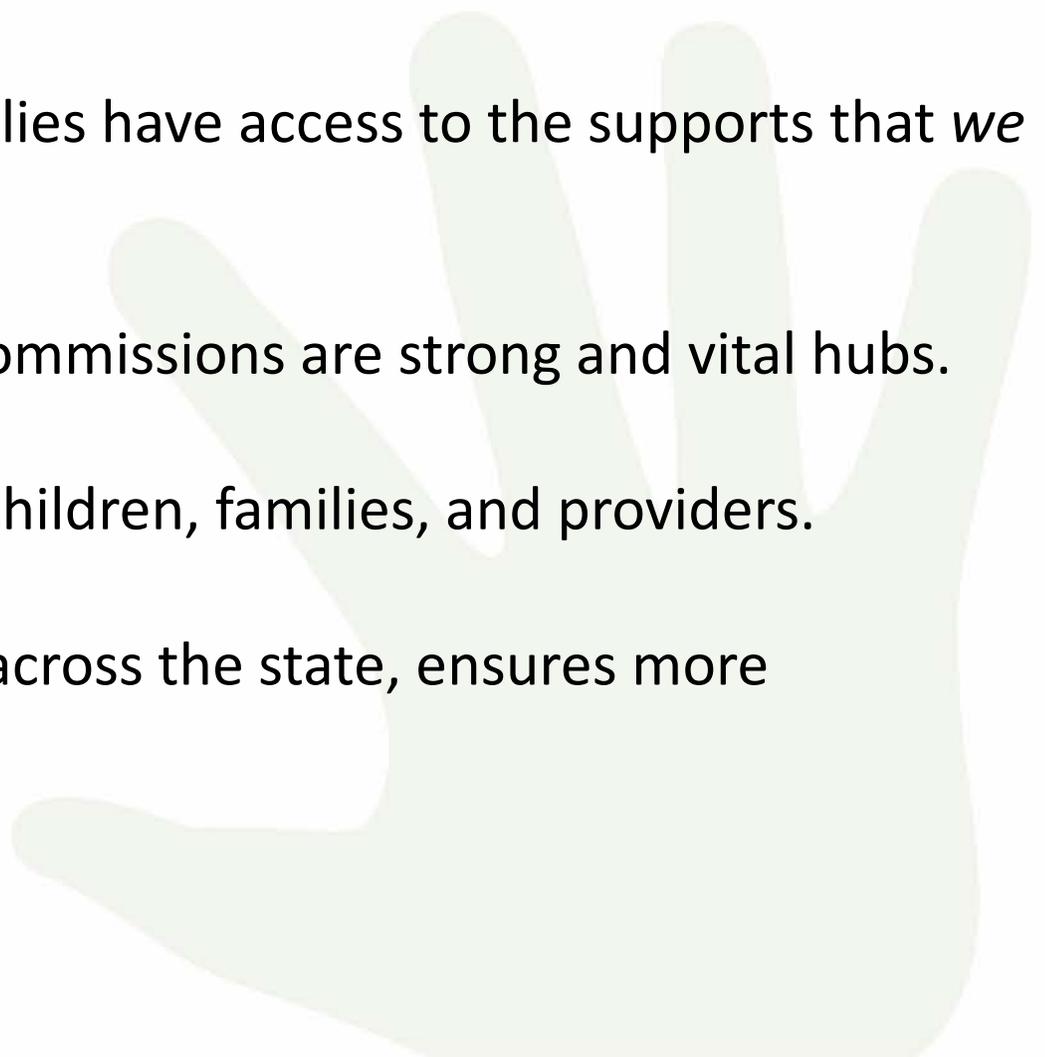
- **Build public will and awareness through mass media**
- Network and partner with “peer” government agencies
- Activate and align commissioners

# Association Resources for Commissions

- Policy and Communication
  - Convenes policy committee, tracks legislation, sponsors key early childhood bills, advocates for First 5, Advocacy Day
  - Develops and shares communications resources (Cannabis, Help Me Grow)
  - Maintains strong media and social media presence
- Training and TA for Commission Staff
  - Annual First 5 Summit, quarterly Association meetings
  - Regional networking (Central Valley)
- Coordination with First 5 CA and other CA state departments

## Our Network Goals

- **We bring our work to scale.** More children and families have access to the supports that *we know* make a difference.
- **More funding** for early childhood and First 5. Our commissions are strong and vital hubs.
- State **policies better facilitate** service provision for children, families, and providers.
- **More collaboration** across agencies and providers, across the state, ensures more comprehensive support to children and families.



One day, California's success will be measured by the wellbeing of its youngest children

