Report from Commission Staff
January 16, 2025

1. Administrative Updates

Welcome Courtney Pyle, Program Manager

- Courtney has a Master of Science in Health Promotion and is a Certified Health Education Specialist. She has six years of experience leading, developing, and implementing Public Health Programs, most recently as a Senior Program Development Specialist at CenCal Health. Previously she worked as a Senior Health Educator at Santa Cruz County Public Health.

Proposition 10 Tax Distributions

- Ventura County revenues for July through November 2024 total $1,477,991, which is 31% of the budgeted revenue with 42% of the year lapsed.
- Without consideration of the Prop 56 backfill, which is typically received in February or March, and quarterly CECET funds, base tax distributions are running 11.3% (or $188,048) lower than the prior year as of November.
    - This decrease will be mitigated when the Prop 56 distribution and quarterly CECET funds are received.
    - There is variability in month-to-month distributions. Staff will continue to closely monitor monthly disbursements and will report back regularly.
- The long-range financial plan is updated annually to consider actuals and any adjustments for new revenue projections.

Request for Proposals (RFP) for Auditing Services

- A Request for Proposals (RFP) for audit services was issued on November 15, 2024, to conduct the Commission's annual financial and compliance audit. Bids are to be submitted for a five-year period, beginning with FY 2024-25.
    - Five proposals were received by the January 15, 2025 due date.
- Following the Commission's vendor selection procedures, proposals will be independently scored and then evaluated by a review committee. For this proposal, the reviewers will be comprised of a subset of the Administration/Finance Committee and staff to formulate a vendor selection recommendation for consideration by the full Committee.
    - Subsequently, the recommendation for contract award will be brought forward for approval by the Commission in February.

CalAim/Medi-Cal

- The Department of Health Care Services released a finalized MOU template between First 5 Commissions and Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans, with the goal of strengthening collaboration and improving the coordination of care for families with young children.

- Staff began discussions with Gold Coast Health Plan and Kaiser Foundation Health Plan to finalize and sign the MOU.

2. Updates on Commission Initiatives

Neighborhood for Learning (NfL)

- Parent Education and Engagement through workshops, playgroups, and meet-ups.
  - Examples include a monthly Family Meet-Up Day that focuses on the agricultural history of Santa Paula, parent education on coping with stress during the holidays and toilet training, and science activities such as experimenting with melting snowmen.
  - Rio NfL site hosted a clothing swap and diaper distribution with 111 participants, and a winter event which had 154 participants.
- Community Outreach and Collaboration
  - NfL staff participated in outreach and collaboration opportunities with community partners including the Agriculture Museum in Santa Paula, Interface, Camarillo Library, Oxnard Main Library, Albert Solis Library, Moorpark Library, United Parents and Ventura County Medical Center.
    - As an example, this included discussions with United Parents about co-hosting events at the Fillmore Drop-In Parent Center.
- Fatherhood Initiative
  - *Music and Movement with Mario* was hosted at the Moorpark NfL; 21 families with 23 children attended.
    - Families rocked out to Kryptonite by 3 Doors Down, made drums and noise makers, danced, and sang with their children.
- Parent Advisory Groups (PAG)
  - NfL staff hosted 2 PAG meetings which included discussion of family experiences with NfL services and planning for upcoming NfL events.
- Welcome Every Baby (WEB)
  - The WEB team is actively engaged in supporting families with infants in the broader Oxnard community.
  - Since November 2024 the WEB team has distributed diapers to 167 families and 298 children.

Help Me Grow

- HMG staff were selected to be on the national Planning Committee for the HMG National Annual Conference scheduled for July 2025 in Connecticut.
- HMG staff presented to the VCMC Family Medicine Residents earlier this week about F5VC and the importance of early identification and referral.

Parent Leaders

- Due to sunsetting funding, the Parent Leader Network (PLN), an initiative of the Center for the Study of Social Policy, has come to an end.
  - F5VC Parent Leaders have participated in the PLN since its onset in 2018, engaging in leadership and advocacy opportunities at the national level.
- We celebrate the accomplishments of the PLN and F5VC Parent Leaders, including the development of the Manifesto for Race Equity and Parent Leadership and the Manifesto 2.0 "Parent Edition.
- F5VC staff continue to work with Parent Leaders on the Parent Leader Handbook and are identifying new opportunities for Parent Leaders at the local level.

3. County, Regional, National Updates

First 5 Association (F5AC)

- Association membership dues formula and approach has been updated to create more equity between counties, realize core funding support for the Association's operating budget, and recognize the changing needs of members, the costs of service, and maintaining the Association's value-add.
    - New F5VC dues will be $32,910.92 (previously $15,847) effective July 1, 2025.
- Choose Children 2026
    - To position early childhood issues and First 5s, Association is partnering with several state organizations to implement Choose Children 2026 (CC26) – a campaign to engage and educate candidates for California Governor running in 2026.
    - Association will act as the central operations partner and is currently hiring for a Campaign Manager.

Governor Newsom releases State Budget

- Presented a balanced budget with a modest $363 million surplus.
- Many variables could impact the state budget revenues such as potential federal policy changes, volatility in the stock market, reemerging inflation, and delayed tax deadlines based on the wildfires in Los Angeles County.
- Budget proposes continued support of families and providers through the protection of key investments in Early Learning and Care:
    - $3.9 billion for implementation of Universal Transitional Kindergarten (UTK), of which $1.5 billion will fund classroom ratio reduction from 12:1 to 10:1 students-to-adults.
    - $7.1B to maintain California Department of Social Services-administered child care and development programs.
- The January budget is a placeholder until the May revision when there is a better understanding of state revenues.
- See attached joint press release.

Media Coverage (see attached)

- VC Star on 11/30/2024, "Guest Column: Celebrating 25 years of First 5 Ventura County"

Upcoming Events

First 5 Committees

Administration / Finance Committee Meeting - Friday, February 7, 2025 at 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.