Report from Commission Staff

November 20, 2025

## 1. Administrative Updates

Proposition 10 Tobacco Tax Distributions

- Ventura County revenues for July through September 2025 plus the Quarter 4 CECET (CA e-cigarette tax) funds total $928,952 which is 21% of the budgeted revenue with 25% of the year lapsed.
- Without consideration of the Prop 56 backfill, which is typically received in Spring, and quarterly CECET funds, base tax distributions are running 2.8% (or $24,889) higher than the prior year as of September.
    - There is variability in month-to-month distributions. While it is promising to see that an increase has been realized so far, with only three months of revenue data for the year and without Prop 56 distribution, it's too early to make any predictions about the trend.
    - Any potential decline would be mitigated when the Prop 56 backfill distribution comes in, along with the quarterly CECET funds.
- Monthly disbursements are closely monitored, and staff will report on revenues as they are received.

Open Enrollment

- Annual open enrollment period for medical/dental/vision and life insurance coverage took place earlier in November through the online platform, Ease.
- Employees elected a PPO or HMO plan through Anthem Blue Cross or Kaiser HMO, along with VSP for vision insurance.
    - There were no changes in coverage for the plans.
- The overall annual premium rate increase was under our budgeted amount of 15%.
    - There was a 10% increase overall combined for Anthem medical and dental. There was a 6% increase for Kaiser. There was no increase in Life Insurance or VSP.

## 2. Updates on Commission Initiatives

Early Childhood Programs (NfL, HMG, and WEB)

- Parent Education and Engagement
    - During the weeks between sessions, staff enrolled families into PACT, participated in professional development, and prepared NfL classroom environments for the start of the new session.
        - 269 families have been enrolled in Session 2 of the 2025–2026 PACT program, which began on November 3.
    - Program highlights include *Approaches to Learning Through Play: Sensory Exploration* workshop*, Fall Into Story Time* with PACT and Camarillo Library, and a *Healthy Together Playdate* featuring community partners Clinicas Del Camino Real and Food Share providing on-site resources and food distribution.
- Community Outreach and Collaboration
    - ECP teams continued to collaborate with partners across Ventura County to strengthen outreach efforts and connect families to essential services and early learning opportunities.
        - Recent outreach activities included hosting resource tables at community events such as the Trunk or Treat celebration hosted by Department of Social Services (DSS), a Family Resource Fair at the Tri-Counties Regional Center office in Fillmore, and PACT Open Playtime featuring an Human Services Agency Eligibility Worker to support families with benefit access.
- Fatherhood Initiative
    - On November 12, Mario Rodriguez facilitated a Fatherhood Engagement training for 23 staff from DSS.
- Training and Capacity Building
    - NfL staff are participating in the 2025 – 2027 Count Play Explore Professional Learning and Coaching Cohort hosted by VCOE Early Childhood Programs. An initial STEAM workshop focused on integrating the Arts into early childhood education.
        - Participating staff will receive coaching and will host mini-workshops for the broader NfL team to support program-wide implementation.
- Welcome EVERY Baby
    - Diaper distribution events were held at the WEB office in South Oxnard during the first week of November. More than 930 packs of diapers and wipes were distributed to families.
- Help Me Grow
    - Partnership and service coordination updates include a collaboration with the Ventura County Pregnancy Center to explore offering developmental screenings for their clients and scheduling meetings with home care providers

to support ASQ completion and follow-up resource connections.

Parent Leadership

- Parent Leader Partner Collaborations
    - Staff continue to explore collaborative opportunities with community agencies to share resources that support Parent Leadership.
        - United Parents and the Partnership for Safe Families have been identified as key community partners in advancing the work of Parent Leaders.

Early Literacy

- Oral Health Program: Book, Brush, Bed
    - Staff are partnering with Ventura County Public Health (VCPH) to implement a new program within the Neighborhoods for Learning sites. The Book, Brush, Bed initiative supports improved oral health, early literacy development, and healthy sleep habits.
        - Early Childhood and Family Support Specialists have been trained to serve as community advocates, providing education and resources to families.

Medi-Cal Initiatives

- Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Managed Care Plan Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
    - Gold Coast Health Plan MOU
        - Since signing an MOU with GCHP in August, F5VC and GCHP staff have provided detailed training to each respective organization on the MOU and organization services, developed policies and procedures to support the MOU, and are in the process of developing joint Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
    - Conversations with Kaiser Permanente have resumed on a collaborative MOU

Home Visitation Initiatives

- F5VC Home Visiting Connections: Community Engagement
    - Staff presented the Home Visiting Connections (HVC) website at the Local Planning Council (LPC) and Birth Equity Stakeholder Group meetings in October and November, as staff continue to promote the online resource with great reception and engagement

        - In October, HVC was the fourth-most-visited page on the F5VC website, with over 250 views and 188 active users.

- 2026 Home Visiting Summit
    - Planning is underway for the Second Annual Home Visiting Summit
        - Staff are currently meeting with partner organizations to gauge participation in the planning of the event, which is anticipated to take place in March 2026.

**3. County, Regional, National Updates**

Immigration Developments

- Staff continue to engage in emerging capacity-building opportunities to support families impacted by new immigration policies.
    - Staff attended a Standing in Solidarity training, "How to Support Your Clients, Families, the Communities You Serve, and Yourself When Impacted by ICE Raids and Deportation."
        - This training offered practical, culturally responsive strategies for supporting undocumented clients, their families, and the broader community.

Uplift Child Care Coalition

- Staff are participating in a cross-sector, region-wide coalition Learning Community, collaborating with six counties to strengthen child care as a vital part of an equitable and thriving Central Coast economy.
    - The coalition is focused on four key areas: growing the child care workforce, expanding child care facilities, promoting employer-supported and subsidized child care, and improving centralized resources to help families navigate their child care options.

First 5 Association (F5AC)

- The Choose Children 2026 campaign will launch on December 3 to educate and engage candidates about early childhood and First 5.
    - The campaign works to ensure that candidates for CA Governor take action and support investment and approaches that advance the well-being, care, and learning of young children, their families, and the essential workers who care for them.
    - The campaign will include a voter survey, candidate outreach, co-hosting candidate forums, etc.

## 4. Upcoming Events

First 5 Committees

- Administration and Finance Committee Meeting - Friday, December 5, 2025 at 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

## Anecdotes

Families participating in NfL programming:

*East County (excerpt from an email):*
“I participated in First 5 class with my son. I want to acknowledge Desiree for being an exceptional teacher. She pays close attention to each child, is very caring, and always offers helpful guidance when needed.”

*Oxnard Plains:*
This family has been with our program since their child was a toddler. During this past session, he joined the 21+ class and slowly became more comfortable with the routines and environment. His mother remained concerned about his limited speech and timidity with peers. The Early Childhood Family Support Specialist supported the family by recommending a new screening and thereafter, a full developmental evaluation. He was ultimately referred to and found eligible for Early Start services. By the end of the session, he had blossomed. He entered class independently, engaged with other children, and used more words.

In her survey, his mother shared:
*"I love how the teachers support my son and all the children. They’re patient, understanding, and always helpful with any concerns."*

*West County:*
One mother shared that the program helped her son “come out of his shell.” When staff first met him, he was extremely shy and would physically turn away from adults who approached. By first building rapport with his mother, and with her modeling positive interactions with others, he slowly began to feel safe and comfortable.

Over time, he became more open to staff sitting with them or joining in play. Watching him progress from turning away to dancing during circle time and waving hello as he entered the classroom was a meaningful reminder of how powerful warm, consistent relationships can be.