



**LASSEN COUNTY**  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES COMMISSION**

Minutes, April 6, 2006, 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Annual Strategic Plan Review

Diamond Mtn. Casino Willow Room

Susanville, California

**PRESENT:** Doug McCoy, Jan Irvin, Betsy Elam, Bobby Malone, Kathy Colvin, Melody Brawley, Jeannie Huber, Kathy Page, Tom Robinson, Jaclyn Upwall, Kevin Mannel, Lillian Arnold, Jennifer West-Lucchesi, Kellie Bakes, Sarah Boxx, Laura Roberts and Dennis Wilkes

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Doug McCoy called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. upon arrival of a quorum of Commissioners.

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:** Chairman McCoy welcomed everyone to the event. Everyone introduced themselves.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** There was no public comment.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** The purpose of the meeting today is to review the strategic plan. The agenda, which is attached to these minutes and incorporated herein, was prepared by Social Entrepreneurs, consultants and facilitators of the strategic plan review day. The meeting was turned over to the facilitators.

**OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT:** Sarah Boxx and Kellie Bates reviewed the current trends and conditions evident in needs assessment results. The Power Point of their presentation is attached to these minutes and incorporated herein by reference.

**FIRST 5 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED IN 2005-2006:** Executive Director Laura Roberts presented information reflective of First 5 accomplishments. The Power Point is attached to these minutes and incorporated herein by reference.

**MISSION, GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND INDICATORS:** The existing Vision and Mission was reviewed and affirmed. Current goals were reviewed and affirmed. No changes were made. Current short-term objectives were reviewed and affirmed. No changes were made. Current indicators for measuring progress toward goals and objectives were reviewed and affirmed. No changes were made. The goals, objectives, and indicators are as follows:

<b>Goal 1: Every child prenatal through 5 will reach his or her developmental potential and be ready for school.</b>	
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
Objective 1A: All children served will progress along a continuum toward school readiness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proportion of parents/caregivers served with increased knowledge of optimal parenting practices and involvement in their child’s development and education.</li> </ul>

Objective 1B: Increased availability of quality child development programs and settings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of childcare providers participating in training and education events.</li> <li>• Proportion of children in child development settings who adapt / transition easily to school setting, separate from their parents, and are eager to learn.</li> </ul>
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**Goal 2: Families and other caregivers of children prenatal to 5 will provide optimal parenting, economic security and a healthy environment.**

Objectives	Indicators
Objective 2A: Parents demonstrate increased positive behaviors, knowledge and practices in parenting skills and healthy lifestyles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of parents/caregivers served with increased knowledge of optimal parenting practices and involvement in their child’s development and education.</li> <li>• Proportion of parents/caregivers utilizing health and wellness opportunities (e.g., New Parent Kits, classes / workshops, home visits, clinics, etc.)</li> <li>• Proportion of parents/caregivers adopting improved nutrition, health and physical activity practices.</li> </ul>
Objective 2B: All parents of babies born in Lassen County are offered home visits and a New Parent Kit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of new parents accepting home visits and New Parent Kits.</li> </ul>

**Goal 3: Every child prenatal through age five will achieve maximum health.**

Objectives	Indicators
Objective 3A: Children prenatal to 5 have access to increased opportunities and access to physical, mental and emotional health services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of eligible families who enroll, participate in, and are retained in health programs (i.e., Healthy Families, Medi-Cal, etc.).</li> <li>• Proportion of persons utilizing, and attendance rates for, physical, mental and emotional health services.</li> <li>• Proportion of children with improved health (mental, physical, emotional)</li> <li>• Number of local health service options by location throughout the county.</li> </ul>
Objective 3B: Increase enrollment of eligible children in medical/health insurance options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of children with health insurance by program at time of family enrollment / intake.</li> <li>• Proportion of children who are fully immunized.</li> <li>• Proportion of children who receive annual exams (dental and physical).</li> </ul>

**Goal 4: Establish and sustain a comprehensive, coordinated system of care for children prenatal through 5 that maximizes the efficient use of resources and minimizes duplication of services.**

Objectives	Indicators
Objective 4A: A shared vision among public and private service providers is developed that results in a comprehensive restructuring of resource acquisition and allocation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A plan for coordinated county services and shared resources.</li> <li>• A common set of goals, outcomes and indicators within participating FRCs, Home Visiting, and Oral Health programs.</li> </ul>
Objective 4B: Family Resource Centers have increased, diversified funding streams and support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amount of funds by type of source (public/private grants, fees for service, donations, etc.)</li> <li>• Proportion of discretionary funds available within each FRC.</li> </ul>

**STRATEGIES: PROPOSED PROGRAMS, SERVICES AND PROJECTS:** A discussion of new reporting and tracking requirements and implications was held. In relation to the new requirements, current strategies and programs were reviewed and determined. Several modifications were made to various strategies programs were determined as follows:

Strategies	Improved Child Development	Improved Family Functioning	Improved Child Health	Improved Systems of Care
Coordinate distribution of New Parent Kits in Spanish and English with local resources and funded programs.	1	1	1	1
Work with local resources to assist in the development and coordination of training opportunities for child care providers designed to increase knowledge of child development, school readiness, and positive family interactions.	1	1		1
Create training opportunities with partners, funded programs and agencies and offer to health professionals who work with children; training designed to increase the number and variety of professional available to work with children who have expanded knowledge / understanding of healthy development, school readiness, positive family interactions, and referrals to supportive services.	1	1	1	1

Strategies	Improved Child Development	Improved Family Functioning	Improved Child Health	Improved Systems of Care
Partner with Tobacco Use Reduction project to extend information and referral services regarding tobacco cessation services (e.g., Smoker's Help Line) into the Family Resource Centers and/or other funded programs; adding new information to New Parent Kits.	1	1	1	1
In conjunction with public agencies, partners and funded programs, encourage the exploration and utilization of technology options for delivering services and training to an expanded number of clients and providers (e.g., through tele-dentistry, video conferencing, etc.). Research would also address options for enhancing/streamlining data collection and analysis processes, i.e., utilizing the Network of Care, OneEApp.	1	1	1	1
Funded programs, communities and partners provide research-based parent education-classes, workshops and playgroups designed to increase knowledge and practice of effective parenting skills, improve health practices, and link participants with schools and/or other community resources.	1	1	1	1
Partner with agencies and organizations to incorporate school readiness principles and activities into First 5 Lassen Children and Families Commission funded programs.	1	1		1
Partner with agencies and organizations to support, coach and train parents and early childhood programs in dealing with children's challenging behaviors through implementation of a Behavioral Health Initiative based on a proven service delivery model. Supports could include activities such as behavioral health specialists going into child care environments to provide on-site observation, early mental health and neurological screenings and assessments, referral, coaching, etc. by working directly with child, teacher, caregiver and parents/primary caregivers.	1	1	1	1
Partner with County Mental Health Services to monitor and respond to state regulations regarding Prop. 63 prevention and early intervention component; prepare proposals in partnership with other agencies for prevention and education services that meet regulations and community needs.	1	1		1

Strategies	Improved Child Development	Improved Family Functioning	Improved Child Health	Improved Systems of Care
Coordinate with grantees, public and private agencies, to implement county-wide home visiting and other programs (using an established model) for children prenatal through five and their families, including hard-to-reach populations.	1	1	1	1
Work with Oral Health Task Force and other partners to maintain funding for the hospital and conscious sedation treatment programs; the fluoride varnish and sealant program; training, case management, and a public awareness campaign. This includes supporting exploration of mobile dentistry services.	1		1	1
Continue implementation of CARES or other similar programs designed to increase quality, educational level, and retention of child care providers / early development programs.	1			1
Continue to encourage the development and support of a county-wide network of FRCs that offer school readiness activities, coordinated services and referrals.	1	1	1	1
Develop and implement First 5 Lassen County Children and Families Commission sustainability and fiscal leveraging plan, building on work already completed.				1
Provide technical assistance and training to funded organizations in order to implement evaluation plans, including data collection and analysis processes.				1
Establish MAA claiming plan for Oral Health, Behavioral Health, and FRC network, building on success of claiming plan for home visiting.				1
Work with other boards and agencies, as identified by the Commission, to identify and develop coordinated funding requests.				1
Sustain mini-grant program and award mini-grants that are consistent with the mission and vision, and current priorities of the Commission.	1	1		1
Partner with identified public and private agencies to				1

Strategies	Improved Child Development	Improved Family Functioning	Improved Child Health	Improved Systems of Care
develop a consolidated assessment of service needs and gaps at intervals not greater than 5 years.				

**FUND ALLOCATION APPROACH:** Current funding processes were discussed. Changes were identified as needed to comply with new audit guidelines. Funding principles, priorities, and processes were reviewed and affirmed as follows:

***Guiding Principles for Funding***

Funding decisions for all requests shall be based on the following guiding principles set by the Commission, which take into account the Commission’s desire to address the needs of the children in all of Lassen County’s Communities in an efficient and effective manner. The Principles on Equity served as the foundation for developing the 14 Guiding Principles described here.

- Comply with new state fiscal management guidelines.
- Support the principles on equity.
- Comply with administrative and in-direct cost established by the Commission.
- Allow for distributing funding equitably across the program components and priorities
- Create a level playing field amongst applicants for funding
- Support the goals and objectives of the strategic plan
- Show evidence of effectiveness in addressing the goals and objectives of the strategic plan
- Demonstrate a need for funding from the Commission
- Move toward service coordination, accessibility, collaboration and comprehensive services
- Are responsive to the diverse need of the children and families in this County
- Are supported by community input, and
- Will build on community strengths, will build capacity and will reap long-term benefits to the children and families in each of Lassen County’s communities including meeting the special needs population in our County.

Additionally, the last two principles will be applied for decision-making related to large grant requests (over \$7,500):

- Include a quality evaluation component, based on the Commission’s evaluation framework and plans
- Include an organized and professional media/outreach component

## ***Funding Priorities***

Funding will be consistent with the needs identified through the community assessment update processes, and with the goals and objectives outlined in this strategic plan. Funding priority will be given to programs and projects whose plans address the following:

- ⦿ At least one of the strategies and the related objectives and goals outlined in this plan
- ⦿ The degree to which the Guiding Principles for Funding in this plan are reflected in the proposed project, program or activity
- ⦿ Methods for ensuring collaboration and overall coordination and integration of services with existing agencies and programs, and efficient use of available resources
- ⦿ Specific plans for addressing the assessment process as outlined in the evaluation plan(s), and the degree to which the program has effectively participated in and contributed to previous evaluation efforts, and
- ⦿ The ability to leverage funds from other sources.

## ***Funding Options and Mechanisms***

There are two primary funding mechanisms used to fund the Commission's programs and projects: mini-grants and major program grants. The allocation processes for both are described below.

### ***Allocation Process***

The Commission will issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for implementing major programs and initiatives as needed. Currently funded programs, agencies and/or collaboratives (e.g., Family Resource Centers, CARES, Home Visiting, and Oral Health) will be notified through established communication methods. At the same time, the RFP will be publicized to the broader community through First 5 Lassen website, newsletters, electronic and print media, public notices and other outreach methods. Prospective applicants will be asked to submit a Letter of Interest/Intent to Apply. Where duplicate applicants or projects have been proposed, the Commission will request that those agencies, organizations or groups work together to submit a collaborative and coordinated proposal, thereby ensuring services are linked, duplicated activities are streamlined, and administrative costs are reduced.

Proposals will be reviewed and rated by external evaluators with expertise in specific areas. The evaluators will recommend projects for funding to the Commission, who will make the final funding decisions. Contracts will be awarded for a two-year period, with an option for a two additional years of funding based on satisfactory contract compliance. Each year the Commission will review available funding and update funded projects' contracts/scopes of work (SOW) as needed.

Mini-grant opportunities are promoted broadly, and may be distributed to anyone interested in applying, as long as the proposed activities and outcomes align with the vision, goals and objectives of the First 5 Lassen County Children and Families Commission. Agencies, groups or individuals interested in applying a mini-grant will need to submit an application. The funding parameters and specific guidelines and/or limitations for mini-grants is summarized here.

## *Funding Cycles*

### **Mini-grants**

Mini-grants are available on an ongoing basis throughout the year, as funding allows. Applicants may request up to \$7,500 in funding through a mini-grant application. Length of time for the mini-grant funding cycle is approximately eight weeks. A description of the application guidelines and process are contained in Appendix B. The complete application can be found on the Commission's website at: [www.lassenfirst5.com](http://www.lassenfirst5.com).

### **Major Grants**

The table below outlines the funding cycle for major grants. The cycle may be adjusted as necessary to take advantage of new opportunities or adjust for varying project lengths.

<b>RFP Process Activity</b>	<b>Tentative Schedule</b>	<b>Month in Funding Cycle</b>
RFP Released	March 1	Month one
Letters of Interest/Intent to Apply – two weeks after RFP is released	March 15	Month one
RFP Due four weeks from date of issue	First week April	Month two
Screening and recommendations by external review committee within 20 days of final submission deadline	First week May	Month three
Decision – next regularly scheduled Commission meeting, with time for public notice/posting	May/June	Month three/four
Contract development	June/July	Month four/five

During the discussion of the funding principles, Lillian Arnold indicated that she would like to see a guiding principle that everyone should be on time with their data collection and reporting. Commissioners commented that timeliness would be addressed as a contracting and performance issue rather than a guiding principle, adding that the guiding principles were broad in nature. Timeliness of a contractor's performance is a specific issue and is best dealt with in the contracting environment.

**EVALUATION APPROACH:** Kellie Bates presented information concerning the new statewide evaluation framework. Discussion was held concerning any necessary changes in order to improve results and comply with the new evaluation framework. Evaluation objectives and strategies were developed as follows:

### *Objectives*

There are three primary objectives for evaluation:

- Determine the effectiveness of programs, services and systems supported by Proposition 10 funds.
- Increase providers' capabilities to evaluate services.
- Provide continuous information to the Commission and the community on the status of services of young children and their families in Lassen County and meet the Statewide Evaluation Framework Requirements.

## *Strategies*

In order to achieve these objectives the Commission is instituting protocols for collecting, analyzing and reporting on outcome data on a regular basis from both mini-grants and major funded programs.

Mini-grant recipients will be evaluated at the conclusion of the project, and will be expected to provide data and information specific to the purpose of the funded request. Standard templates or report formats will be provided to the grantees in order to simplify the reporting and analysis functions, both for the grantee and the Commission staff.

Evaluation is essential to ongoing system improvements and ensuring services are consumer-oriented and easily accessible. Major funded programs and initiatives will be evaluated according to the process described below and outlined in more detail in each of the specific evaluation plan documents.

First, the Executive Director will work with a contract evaluator, the funded programs (Family Resource Centers, Home Visiting, Child Oral Health, CARES, Behavioral Health etc.) and the Commission to implement evaluation plans which identify and clearly articulate the program/initiative inputs, activities outcomes, indicators/performance measures, reporting expectations and milestones. The ongoing evaluation process will also result in enhancement to existing data collection tools and/or development of some additional tools over time.

Grantees will be expected to use the data collection tools and templates developed through the evaluation design process to capture program data on a daily and/or weekly basis. Data will be synthesized and reported on according to the key indicators or performance measures selected by the grantees and documented in the Scope of Work, that align with the Commission's strategic goals, objectives and indicators (see the "Goals, Objectives and Indicators" section of this plan). A common aspect of all evaluation processes is the inclusion of customer and/or client feedback, whether through focus groups, surveys, or other avenues.

Currently funded major grantees will report quantitative and qualitative data (quadrants 1 through 4 in the evaluation plans) throughout the contract period. New major grantees will be expected to report quantitative data during the first six months of their contract period as they learn to use the evaluation tools and templates. After that, the new major grantees will also report data and outcomes in all four evaluation quadrants throughout the remainder of the contract period.

Specific program data will be input monthly by each grantee into the PEDS system, First 5 Lassen evaluation tools and templates or other systems as identified by the Statewide Evaluation Framework or First 5 Lassen. Additionally, a program data summary will be provided to the First 5 Lassen County Children and Families Commission Executive Director monthly, along with a brief narrative report. A standard template for this report will be provided to the grantees by First 5 Lassen County Children and Families Commission so that grantees' information can be easily summarized for presentation to the Commission and community members. The monthly report is specifically designed to capture information about progress, including what's working well and where the grantee is experiencing difficulties. This will provide First 5 Lassen County Children and Families Commission staff and the contract evaluator information necessary to help the grantee "course correct" in a timely manner. The report includes program data and a narrative describing the results and progress by each outcome area.

On a quarterly basis, major grantees will be expected to include updates to their project budget and the number of persons served and services delivered. Again, a standard report template will be provided for grantees to use.

Once a year, Commissioners will visit with major grantees either at the various sites or in a community forum in order to learn first-hand how the programs and services are being delivered, and what results the grantees are seeing. This is an opportunity for the Commissioners to ask questions and learn more about the communities' efforts on behalf of First 5 Lassen County Children and Families Commission goals and to gain a broader understanding of the issues and efforts than what might be communicated in written reports.

The evaluation reports will be used by the staff, Commission and community members during the annual strategic plan review process to identify opportunities for improving child health, school readiness, family strengthening, and service delivery systems.

**NEXT STEPS:** A draft Strategic Plan for 2006-2007 will be developed from this review process and presented to the Commission for consideration at their May 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. After the draft is approved for presentation at public forums, the forums will be scheduled during May. Needed corrections will be made and the document will be presented to the Commission for public hearing and adoption at the June 1st meeting.

**ADJOURN:** The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura J. Roberts  
Executive Director