

**FIRST 5 SAN MATEO COUNTY COMMISSION
 PROGRAM, OPERATIONS AND PLANNING (POP) COMMITTEE MEETING**

On September 16, 2021, the Governor signed AB 361, which amended certain provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act (Government Code section 54950, *et seq.*) to allow for local agency legislative bodies to conduct their meetings remotely either telephonically or by other electronic means under specified circumstances. Thus, pursuant to Government Code section 54953(e), the First 5 San Mateo County Commission POP Committee meeting will be conducted via remote conferencing.

DATE: October 4, 2021
TIME: 4:00 – 5:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

Online: <https://smcgov.zoom.us/j/95649457628>

Phone: +1 669 900 6833, Webinar ID: 956 4945 7628

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Ken Cole, Sandra Phillips-Sved (Chair), Nancy Magee

PUBLIC MEMBER: Harvey Kaplan, M.D.

STAFF: Kitty Lopez, Michelle Blakely, Myra Cruz

AGENDA		
1.	Adopt a resolution finding that, as a result of continuing COVID-19 pandemic state of emergency, meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees (See Attachment 1a. and Attachment 1b.)	Phillips-Sved
2.	Approve October 4, 2021 Program, Operations and Planning Committee Meeting Agenda	Phillips-Sved
3.	Approve the September 13, 2021 Program, Operations and Planning Committee Meeting Minutes (See Attachment 3)	Phillips-Sved
4.	Revisiting Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025 Race, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (REDI) and Other Key Reflection (See Attachment 4)	Lopez/Blakely
5.	Program Highlights - Resilient Families (See Attachment 5)	Blakely
6.	Adjournment	
NEXT MEETING: December 6, 2021		

* **Public Comment:** This item is reserved for persons wishing to address the Commission POP Committee on any Commission POP Committee-related matters that are not otherwise on this

meeting agenda. Public comments on matters not listed above shall be heard at the time the matter is called.

Persons wishing to address a particular agenda item should speak during that agenda item. Speakers are customarily limited to two minutes, but an extension may be provided to you at the discretion of the Commission POP Committee Chair.

The identified times are approximate and are intended to serve as a guide to the public and all First 5 meeting attendees regarding the approximate start times for any one section of the Agenda. The actual start and end times for an agenda item may differ from the noted times.

Public records that relate to any item on the open session agenda for a regular Commission POP Committee meeting are available for public inspection. Those records that are distributed less than 72 hours prior to the meeting are available for public inspection at the same time they are distributed to all members, or a majority of the members of the Commission. The documents are also available on the First 5 Internet Web site at www.first5.smcgov.org.

Individuals who require special assistance or a disability-related modification or accommodation to participate in this meeting, or who have a disability and wish to request an alternative format for the agenda, meeting notice, agenda packet or other writings that may be distributed at the meeting, should contact Myra Cruz, by 12 Noon on Friday, October 1, 2021 at 650.372.9500 x232 and/or ecruz@smcgov.org. Notification in advance of the meeting will enable the Commission to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting, the materials related to it, and your ability to comment.

To: First 5 San Mateo Commission POP Committee
From: Kitty Lopez, Executive Director
Subject: Resolution to make findings allowing continued remote meetings under Brown Act

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution finding that, as a result of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic state of emergency declared by Governor Newsom, meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees.

BACKGROUND:

On June 11, 2021, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-08-21, which rescinded his prior Executive Order N-29-20 and set a date of October 1, 2021 for public agencies to transition back to public meetings held in full compliance with the Brown Act. The original Executive Order provided that all provisions of the Brown Act that required the physical presence of members or other personnel as a condition of participation or as a quorum for a public meeting were waived for public health reasons. If these waivers fully sunset on October 1, 2021, legislative bodies subject to the Brown Act would have to contend with a sudden return to full compliance with in-person meeting requirements as they existed prior to March 2020, including the requirement for full physical public access to all teleconference locations from which board members were participating.

On September 16, 2021, the Governor signed AB 361, a bill that formalizes and modifies the teleconference procedures implemented by California public agencies in response to the Governor's Executive Orders addressing Brown Act compliance during shelter-in-place periods. AB 361 allows a local agency legislative body to continue to use teleconferencing under the same basic rules as provided in the Executive Orders when certain circumstances occur or when certain findings have been made and adopted by the legislative body.

AB 361 provides that Brown Act legislative bodies must return to in-person meetings on October 1, 2021, unless they choose to continue with fully teleconferenced meetings because a specific declaration of a state or local health emergency is appropriately made. AB 361 allows legislative bodies to continue to conduct virtual meetings as long as there is a gubernatorially-proclaimed public emergency in combination with (1) local health official recommendations for social distancing or (2) adopted findings that meeting in person would present an imminent risk to health or safety of attendees. AB 361 is effective immediately as urgency legislation and will sunset on January 1, 2024.

AB 361 also requires that, if the state of emergency remains active for more than 30 days, the legislative body must make findings by majority vote every 30 days to continue using the bill's exemption to the Brown Act teleconferencing rules. The findings demonstrate the need for teleconferencing persists due to the nature of the ongoing public health emergency. Effectively, this means that legislative bodies must either agendaize a Brown Act meeting once every thirty days to make these findings, or, if a legislative body has not made such findings within the prior 30 days, the legislative body must re-adopt the initial findings if it wishes to conduct a remote meeting.

DISCUSSION:

Because local rates of transmission of COVID-19 are still in the "substantial" tier as measured by the Centers for Disease Control, we recommend that the POP Committee avail itself of the provisions of AB 361 allowing continuation of online meetings by adopting findings to the effect that conducting in-person meetings would present an imminent risk to the health and safety of attendees. A resolution to that effect, and directing staff to take such other necessary or appropriate actions to implement the intent and purposes of the resolution, is attached hereto.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None

RESOLUTION NO.

RESOLUTION FINDING THAT, AS A RESULT OF THE CONTINUING COVID-19 PANDEMIC STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARED BY GOVERNOR NEWSOM, MEETING IN PERSON FOR THE PROGRAM, OPERATIONS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE FIRST 5 SAN MATEO COUNTY COMMISSION WOULD PRESENT IMMINENT RISKS TO THE HEALTH OR SAFETY OF ATTENDEES

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, pursuant to Government Code section 8550, *et seq.*, Governor Newsom proclaimed a state of emergency related to the COVID-19 novel coronavirus, and subsequently, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors (“Board”) declared a local emergency related to COVID-19, and the proclamation by the Governor and declaration by the Board remain in effect;

WHEREAS, on March 17, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-29-20, which suspended suspended certain provisions in the California Open Meeting law, Government Code section 54950, *et seq.* (the “Brown Act”), related to teleconferencing by local agency legislative bodies, provided certain requirements were met and followed; and

WHEREAS, on June 11, 2021, the Governor issued Executive Order N-08-21, which extended provisions of Executive Order N-29-20 that waive otherwise-applicable Brown Act requirements related to remote/teleconference meetings by local agency legislative bodies through September 30, 2021; and **WHEREAS**, on September 16, 2021, Governor Newsom signed AB 361 into law, and AB 361 provides that a local agency legislative body subject to the Brown Act may continue to meet without complying with the otherwise-applicable requirements in the Brown Act related to remote/teleconference meetings by local agency legislative bodies, provided that a state

of emergency has been declared and the legislative body determines that meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees, and provided that the legislative body makes such finding at least every thirty (30) days during the term of the declared state of emergency; and,

WHEREAS, California Department of Public Health (“CDPH”) and the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) caution that the Delta variant of COVID-19, currently the dominant strain of COVID-19 in the country, is more transmissible than prior variants of the virus, may cause more severe illness, and that even fully vaccinated individuals can spread the virus to others resulting in rapid and alarming rates of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/delta-variant.html>); and,

WHEREAS, the CDC has established a “Community Transmission” metric with 4 tiers designed to reflect a community’s COVID-19 case rate and percent positivity; and,

WHEREAS, the County of San Mateo currently has a Community Transmission metric of “substantial” which is the second most serious of the tiers; and,

WHEREAS, on September 28, 2021, in the interest of public health and safety, as affected by the state of emergency caused by the spread of COVID-19, the Board issued a finding that meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees, and decided to invoke the provisions of AB 361 related to teleconferencing for meetings of the Board; and

WHEREAS, the Board also strongly encouraged other County legislative bodies to make a similar finding and continue meeting remotely through teleconferencing; and

WHEREAS, the Program, Operations and Planning Committee of the First 5 San Mateo County Commission (“POP Committee”) has an important governmental interest in protecting the health, safety and welfare of those who participate in its meetings; and

WHEREAS, in the interest of public health and safety, as affected by the emergency caused by the spread of COVID-19, the POP Committee finds that meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees, and the POP Committee will therefore invoke the provisions of AB 361 related to teleconferencing for meetings of the POP Committee.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY DETERMINED AND ORDERED that

1. The recitals set forth above are true and correct.
2. The POP Committee finds that meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees.
3. Staff is directed to take such other necessary or appropriate actions to implement the intent and purposes of this resolution.

* * * * *

**First 5 San Mateo County (F5SMC)
Program, Operations and Planning (POP)
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**September 27, 2021
Virtual Meeting Via Zoom**

Commissioners Present: Ken Cole, Sandra Phillips-Sved (Chair)
Public Member: Harvey Kaplan
Commissioner Absent: Nancy Magee
Staff: Kitty Lopez, Michelle Blakely, Myra Cruz
Public Attendee: Liz Scully

The meeting was called to order at 4:06 PM. The attendees introduced themselves.

1. Approval of the September 13, 2021 Program, Operations, and Planning Committee Meeting Agenda:

MOTION: Phillips-Sved / SECOND: Commissioner Cole. Motion approved.

2. Approval of the April 5, 2021 Program, Operations, and Planning Committee Meeting Minutes:

MOTION: Commissioner Cole / SECOND: Phillips-Sved. Motion approved.

3. First 5 SMC Racial Equity Project Update

Kitty Lopez, F5SMC's Executive Director, shared that F5SMC staff is reconvening sessions with our race and equity consultants, Adene Sacks and Johnny Manzon-Santos of With/In Collaborative, after the summer break. Meetings will be both in-person and virtually this month. The consultants are working with Commission and staff on how to center equity more deeply in our work; how to center the voices of parents and caregivers and exploring more with Commission & staff; how to show up as anti-racist warriors and allies to communities of color; and how to show up and be allies to one another. The work is still evolving, and we will be talking with our consultants about the structure of the next phase of the work.

The Committee commended the First 5 for making race and equity the focus and priority of its work.

Michelle Blakely, F5SMC's Deputy Director, shared that there will be a deeper conversation on human-centered designed work as well.

4. Build Up San Mateo County Update

Michelle Blakely provided a brief background of Build Up San Mateo County (Build Up SMC). Blakely shared that an MOU has been established with Build Up California, a statewide program based on the Build Up SMC model. Two other counties, San Luis Obispo and Riverside are also replicating the model. In addition, the state set aside \$250 million from the state budget for childcare facilities which is the first time in history. The fund will be used for building and maintenance of childcare facilities and Family Child Care

(FCC) licensed homes. Bridging Build Up SMC to early learning workforce advocacy and the program's sustainability were among the hot topics of discussion.

A Build Up SMC update will be presented at the September 27, 2021 First 5 SMC Commission Meeting in addition to a recommendation for continued operational funding from First 5 SMC for FY 2021 – 2023. Human Services Agency and F5MC jointly funded Build Up through June 30, 2021. The request will be for policy/advocacy and technical assistance support of the program.

Blakely added that the progress narrative and the Family Child Care (FCC) mini grants program one-pager are included in the packet. Gilead Sciences Inc provided funding for the mini grants program.

Commission and public made comments.

5. General Program Updates

Michelle Blakely provided updates of the following:

○ **Trauma Resiliency Informed Systems Initiative (TRISI)**

TRISI coaching has launched and is up to a wonderful start. Blakely shared that F5SMC's Health & Development Specialist, Emily Roberts, is leading the initiative with our consultants, Hamai Consulting and East Bay Agency for Children/Trauma Transformed(T2). Consultants are providing group cohort coaching with several agencies monthly and & 1:1 individual agency coaching. Coaching started in May with six agencies participating.

The project focuses are supporting organizations in developmental stages in becoming more trauma and resilience focused Principles include Peer support, Trust & Transparency, Safety, Voice, Self-Agency and culture and gender identity. The only requirement to participate is that the organization must be a child and family-serving organization supporting children 0 - 5. Further, each staff organization was encouraged to complete an assessment addressing areas/ the principles above which includes HR and client service practices. This is an evidence-based tool that the University of Michigan used. Kitty Lopez added that our race & equity work complements the TRISI work.

○ **Early Identification and Intervention Environmental (EIIE) Scan**

Blakely shared that Emily Roberts and Cheryl Oku have been spreading the word of the EIIE scan and meeting with local First 5's from other counties such as San Francisco & Marin and local partners to address approaches and barriers to support children and families. The EIIE scan provides a landscape of early identification and linkages of services from birth to five. It highlights barriers and suggested recommendations for policy work and direct service interventions that that can address barriers. A presentation will be made at the HMG National Conference this year in partnership with the F5 Center.

○ **Family Story Mini Project**

F5SMC has been working with Silicon Valley Community Foundation for the Family Story Mini Project. The Mini Family Story Project consisted of small focus groups and individual interviews via zoom with parents talking about their experiences; there were over 40 parent participants; videos, testimonials, conversations, and feedback was elicited over the course of 12 months. F5SMC is working with its communications firm to edit these videos and testimonials. Parents provide good information for the

organizations and policy makers to consider. The Family Story Mini Parent Project-Perspectives, a written overview, will be shared.

The Committee commented on the power of parent's voices.

6. Other:

- Harvey Kaplan shared the Trauma-Informed Pediatric Course in November.
- Michelle Blakely explained the functions of the POP Committee for the public attending.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm. The next meeting is scheduled on October 4, 2021.

Date: October 4, 2021

To: First 5 San Mateo County Program, Operations & Planning Committee (POP)

From: Kitty Lopez, Executive Director

Re: Revisiting First 5 San Mateo County Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025 Race, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) and Other Key Reflection

ACTION REQUESTED

No Action. Discussion on Review First 5 San Mateo County Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025 and updates addressing Race, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI)

BACKGROUND

2020-2025 Revised Strategic Plan: After a comprehensive strategic planning process, the 2020-2025 Revised Strategic Plan was developed and adopted by the F5SMC Commission on October 22, 2018. The community was engaged throughout the process with the Commission during a significant portion of the Commission meetings through table top discussions and audience participation (**Click the link for the [First 5 San Mateo County 2020 – 2025 Strategic Plan](#) or See Attachment 4A, 2020 – 2025 Strategic Plan Executive Summary**). The approved Strategic Plan's approach inspired by social determinants of health and Bronfenbrenner's ecological model is relevant today given the current events affecting the physical health, emotional health, economic vitality and equanimity with systems supporting young children and families.

Strategic Plan Implementation Plan (SPIP): On October 28, 2019, the Commission approved the SPIP, strategies and funding allocations, for FY2020 through FY2023, supporting the implementation of the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan. For the duration of the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, F5SMC will focus on three primary community roles: Strategic Financial Investor, Community Partner in aligned efforts, and as a Community Leader to advocate for the prioritization of young children and their families in decision making processes.

The review First 5 San Mateo County Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025 is needed to ensure that Race, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) are reflected in the Plan.



First 5 San Mateo County **Strategic Plan**

July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Vision

Success for every child.

Mission

First 5 San Mateo County promotes positive outcomes for young children and their families through strategic investments, community leadership, and effective partnerships.

Desired Outcomes

The First 5 San Mateo County Commission (F5SMC) adopted the following desired outcomes to guide its efforts during the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan:

1. San Mateo County will give priority to young children and their families
2. Communities provide a safe and healthy environment for young children
3. Children have access to high-quality early care and education settings
4. Families feel connected to and supported by their communities and able to nurture their children's health and development
5. Children have healthy attachments to their parents and caregivers
6. Children have access to and are utilizing appropriate health care services to meet their health and developmental needs





Prioritizing San Mateo County's Young Children

The First 5 San Mateo County Commission strives to create conditions that will allow all young children in San Mateo County to thrive.

To this end, the Commission serves three primary community roles: Strategic Financial Investor, Community Partner in aligned efforts, and as a Community Leader to advocate for the prioritization of young children and their families.

This combination of focused financial investments and systems-level work enables the Commission to maximize declining revenues and take advantage of expanding partnership opportunities to achieve positive outcomes for children, families, and the community.

Core Values & Guiding Principles

We believe that our work must:

- Support the whole child within the whole family
- Build connections between the many systems that serve young children and their parents and caregivers
- Embrace the importance of fathers and male role models in the healthy development of children
- Promote positive early development and focus on prevention and early intervention
- Include children of diverse abilities
- Respect and engage parents and families
- Honor cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity
- Appreciate strengths
- Enlarge community capacity

In our work on behalf of young children, we strive to:

- Create value
- Promote equity
- Foster excellence
- Demonstrate effectiveness
- Achieve sustainable change



Supporting a Community Approach

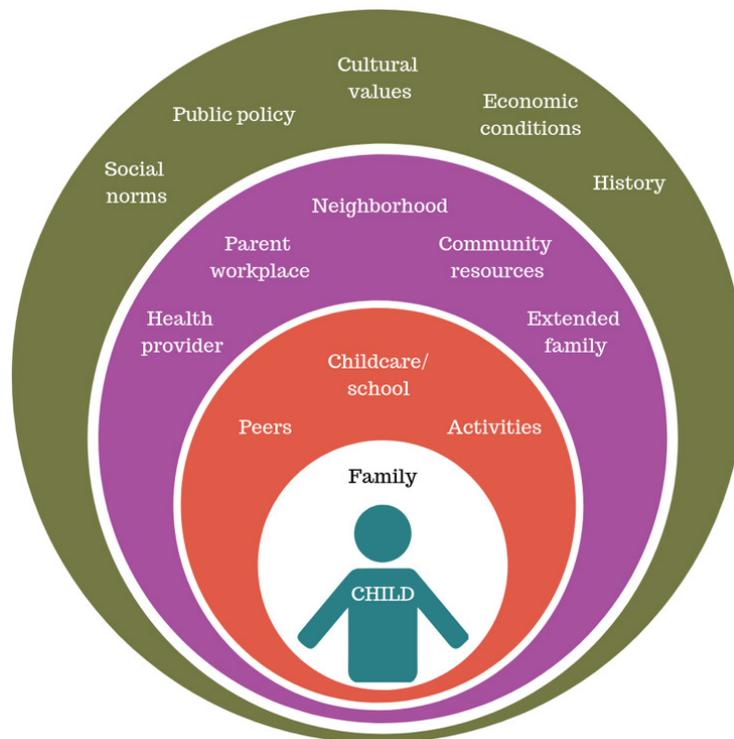
Prioritizing young children and those who care for them is especially important in light of the stark inequalities of opportunity in San Mateo County. Although it is one of the wealthiest regions of the nation, the cost of living here is high, making self-sufficiency a struggle for many families.

Lasting improvements to the well-being of San Mateo's youngest residents are possible when the community understands the importance of supporting young children and their families and works together to mobilize resources.

This effort requires common understanding, shared ownership, willingness to change, and commitment to opportunity for all children. First 5 San Mateo County supports a community-wide effort through:

1. Leadership on early childhood advocacy and policy development
2. Multidisciplinary community partnerships
3. Community education to increase understanding of the importance of the early years and build public will to invest in young children

Our approach to supporting children's success is aligned with Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, which was first published in 1979. This theory emphasizes environmental factors as central context to development. In this approach, the child is at the center of what can be visualized as concentric circles including other systems and influences, such as family, community, and public policy.



These factors influence the health, cognitive and social-emotional development, well-being, and long-term success of children and their caregivers. Each child's development and opportunity to thrive is thus shaped by the distribution of and access to resources and power. Understanding the complexity of achieving health and well-being, we strive to work broadly and proactively to create, support, and sustain the social, physical, and economic conditions for children's success.

Focus Area: Quality Care and Education

Early learning settings play a critical role in nurturing children’s social, emotional, and cognitive development. Supporting a continuum of high-quality early learning, beginning in infancy and with smooth transitions into toddler care, preschool, and elementary school, is a priority for the Commission.

STRATEGIES FOR INVESTMENT:

- 1 Support formal quality improvement in early learning settings
- 2 Expand access to early learning settings/environments for children with special needs

Focus Area: Healthy Children

Access to medical care for prevention, early detection, and treatment of physical, developmental, and mental health needs during the first five years is critical to children’s long-term well-being. Additionally, improving the conditions where children live, play, and go to school can help them thrive.

STRATEGIES FOR INVESTMENT:

- 1 Increase oral health access and utilization
- 2 Build early mental health systems and infrastructure improvements
- 3 Integrate systems for children with special needs and their families

Focus Area: Resilient Families

Children do well when cared for by supportive families, which, in turn, do better when they live in vibrant and supportive communities. Valuing today’s varied family structures, cultures, and languages is key to working effectively with parents. The more we create effective parent partnerships, the more stable foundations we create for lifelong learning and success.

STRATEGIES FOR INVESTMENT:

- 1 Provide intensive support for families with multiple risk factors
- 2 Promote parent connectivity and support networks
- 3 Build capacity and family engagement

History

Research shows that children’s brains develop more during the first five years than at any other time. What parents and caregivers do during these first years can make a profound difference in a child’s development and impacts the rest of a child’s life.

Based on this research, in 1998 California voters passed Proposition 10, the California Children and Families Act, which adds a 50-cent tax on all tobacco products to fund programs and improve systems to better the lives of children from the prenatal stage through age five. As a result, the First 5 San Mateo County Commission was established in 1999.

Since its inception, First 5 San Mateo County has invested more than \$120,000 million in local programs and has served over 63,000 children from birth through age five.

Each year, more than 8,000 parents and primary caregivers receive F5SMC services

First 5 San Mateo County has invested more than

**\$120,000
million**

in local programs

Served over

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from birth
through age five



First 5 San Mateo County Commissioners

Commissioners Who Adopted the Strategic Plan

Pam Frisella, Public Member, Commission Chair
 Louise Rogers, Chief, San Mateo County Health, Commission Vice-Chair
 Anne E. Campbell, County Superintendent of Schools
 David J. Canepa, Board of Supervisors
 Nicole Pollack, Director, San Mateo County Human Services Agency
 Michael Garb, Public Member
 Rosanne Foust, Public Member
 Neel Patel, M.D., Public Member
 Sandra Phillips-Sved, Public Member

2020 Current Commissioners

Louise Rogers, Chief, San Mateo County Health, Commission Chair
 Sandra Phillips-Sved, Public Member, Commission Vice-Chair
 Nancy Magee, County Superintendent of Schools
 David J. Canepa, Board of Supervisors
 Ken Cole, Director, San Mateo County Human Services Agency
 Alexis Becerra, Public Member
 Rosanne Foust, Public Member
 Pam Frisella, Public Member
 Neel Patel, M.D., Public Member

First 5 San Mateo County Staff

Kitty Lopez, Executive Director
 Michelle Blakely, MA, Program and Planning Director
 Khanh Chau, MBA, CPA, Fiscal Management Analyst
 Myra Cruz, Administrative Secretary III
 Jenifer Clark, Research and Evaluation Program Specialist
 Karen Pisani, Family Support Program Specialist
 Emily Roberts, MSW, MPH, Child Health and Development Program Specialist
 Mai Le, MPH, Program Associate III
 Mey Winata, Fiscal Office Specialist

The 2020-2025 First 5 San Mateo County Strategic Plan was adopted October 22, 2018.

First 5 San Mateo County
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 San Mateo, CA 94402
 650.372.9500 www.first5sanmateo.org



Date: October 4, 2021

To: First 5 San Mateo County Program, Operations & Planning Committee (POP)

From: Kitty Lopez, Executive Director

Re: Review and Discussion

- **Program Highlights: Resilient Families**
-

ACTION REQUESTED

Review and Discussion

- Program Highlights: Resilient Families

BACKGROUND

Program Highlights are provided as brief illustrations of the work addressing the Commission's Strategic Plan 2020-2025 in the focus areas of: Quality Care and Education, Healthy Children, Resilient Families, and Policy, Advocacy and Communications.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Resilient Families:

Systems-Level Fatherhood Initiative Update/Possible Shift:

As you may recall, in 2020 the Resilient Families Review Panel recommended that F5SMC drive a systems-level father engagement initiative. The recommendation was in response to receiving many Resilient Families proposals that contained father-involvement systems elements that touched the father-serving system but were not cohesive across organizations and lacked a tangible outcome. Family Support Program Specialist, Karen Pisani, identified two key grantee partners to help design and drive the initiative (one from IHSD and the other from StarVista), both of whom had lived experience as fathers of young children and professional experience successfully engaging fathers.

While Karen, the IHSD partner and the StarVista partner met several times and identified promising approaches/strategies to support the father-serving system in our county, several conditions have now coalesced that warrant a pause in the work and possible shift in focus. One of those conditions is the departure of both partners from their positions with IHSD and StarVista, and therefore, their departure from the initiative work. Additionally, we acknowledge that the landscape in which families work, live, and try to thrive has vastly changed since the Resilient Families Review Panel Recommendation.

Therefore, F5SMC staff will explore ways to broaden the systems-level work in the Resilient Families Focus Area so that in addition to fatherhood, it also addresses emerging issues such as: the impact of COVID and how it has further marginalized certain families; the need for more mindful equity approaches and how that reflects on the family serving system; the trauma of uncertainty coming from COVID that has hit families of young children especially hard; and "resiliency fatigue" that the family-serving providers are experiencing. This is not an abandonment of the systems-level fatherhood work, but rather a strategic broadening of effort so that the Initiative is in-tune with real-time issues facing families and the system serving them. We will keep you updated as we explore how best to move forward.

Friday Café Planning, Progress, and Praise:

Planning: On August 31st Karla Rodriguez and Soodie Ansari of the SMCOE, hosted the Friday Café Advisory Board meeting. The advisory board met to provide input into the fall series of Friday Cafes. A theme emerged rather quickly around the angst and stress felt by family support providers regarding the transition back to in-person work/school amidst the ongoing, ever-changing COVID-19 pandemic. Many providers are experiencing vicarious trauma not only from working so closely with families and young children who have faced COVID-related hardships, but also from working closely with families affected by the CZU fire, job loss, housing challenges, etc. The group resonated with the concept that “it’s ok not to be ok” so as part of the Fall series, Friday Cafes will unpack the emotional cost of transitioning back while supporting providers to reengage. September’s Friday Café, “Navigating the Transition Back to In-Person Connections”, was held on September 24th via zoom with 50 participants.

Progress: In addition to helping plan Friday Cafes, Program Specialist, Karen Pisani, is also looking into ways to more fully evaluate the effectiveness of Friday Cafés along with Research & Evaluation Specialist Jenifer Clark. We know from post-Café evaluations and anecdotal evidence that Friday Cafes are popular and are serving their intended purposes: to bolster the family engagement network in our county while creating a restorative and educational experience. (Providing training/capacity building for family engagement providers as well as opportunities to network, collaborate and coordinate were identified needs in ASR’s 2016 report, “Pathways to Improve Family Engagement in San Mateo County”, and in F5SMC’s 2019 Family Engagement Provider Survey). Although Friday Cafés are not yet considered an evidence-based practice, local quantitative evaluations of these models (which include World Cafés, Parent Cafés, and Father Cafés) have demonstrated promising results, qualitative findings are compelling, and a national evaluation of the Parent Café model is currently underway. Friday Cafes are emerging as a promising practice – they have been an impactful part of the growing (and much needed!) Family Support Network – and we hope to capture the program’s impact more fully through a local evaluation of our efforts.

Future Friday Café dates: October 29th, December 3rd, January 28th, February 25th, March 25th, April 29th and May 27th, and will be conducted via zoom until further notice. Please join us!