

Ready to Learn

"Every child in San Diego County will enter school ready to learn"

Commissioner Highlight: Chairman Greg Cox

Supervisor Greg Cox joined the San Diego County Board of Supervisors in 1995 to represent the First District. His district extends from the Pacific Ocean to the Otay and San Miguel Mountains, and from Mission Bay to the U.S./Mexico international border.



Throughout his tenure, Supervisor Cox has given San Diego County residents a government of which they can be proud. He has focused on innovative policymaking through efforts to create vast regional parks and end storm water pollution. He has improved the lives of the County's foster children, most notably through the creation of the San Pasqual Academy, and works to make sure that all children in the region receive proper immunizations.

Before joining the Board of Supervisors, Supervisor Cox worked in both the public and private sectors. He began his career as an educator in the Sweetwater Union High School District and was later elected to the Chula Vista City Council. He became mayor of that city in 1981. As Mayor, he was instrumental in attracting the Olympic Training Center, constructing the award-winning Chula Vista Nature Center, and enhancing the Chula Vista Harbor. He also gained experience in the private sector establishing his own consulting firm, and as the Director of Local Government in the Governor's Office of Planning and Research under Governor Pete Wilson.

Board of Supervisors Chairman Greg Cox currently serves as Chair of the First 5 Commission. As such, he is instrumental in providing leadership in the development of Commission initiatives that make a difference in the lives of children 0 - 5. Two key initiatives approved during Chairman Cox's tenure include the Intergenerational and Healthcare Access Initiatives. It is a pleasure to work with Chairman Cox!

Innovative Grants Are Now Available

In an effort to further respond to community needs, the Commission has approved a new funding opportunity through innovative grants.

An innovative grant encourages the development and application of unique direct services furthering the vision of the Commission. Opportunities can include testing a new method, replicating a best practice approach not offered in San Diego, or providing services to a new target group of children ages 0-5 and their families. An innovative project can also be a new component of an existing program, but can not duplicate, expand, or supplant a project/service already offered in San Diego. The amount of funding to any one organization is limited to up to \$75,000 in any fiscal year and excludes for-profit organizations, and funding for research, planning and capital expenses.

After requests are received, an evaluation panel will convene and review proposals, and determine eligibility for award. Generally, grant proposals will be reviewed quarterly. Grants that are recommended for funding that do not exceed \$5,000 will be approved by the Executive Director per the Commission's Signatory Authority for the Executive Director policy. Recommendations for awards above \$5,000 will be submitted for Commission approval on a quarterly basis in the month following proposal reviews.

Questions regarding the innovative grants should be forwarded to Susan Morgan, Grants and Contracts Analyst at (619) 230-6475 or e-mail at susan.morgan@sdcounty.ca.gov. Information is also available on the Commission's website.

Kindergarten Teachers Summit A Big Success!

On May 16, 2003, the First 5 Commission of San Diego hosted a Kindergarten Teachers Summit that was dynamic and engaging, while meeting the objectives of the School Readiness Leadership Team planning. The purposes of the Summit included the collection of information about the assets of successful kindergartners, the development of recommended interventions to develop the skills and characteristics of future successful kindergartners, networking by teachers across school districts, and the development of recommendations for the role of First 5 San Diego and partners. All 35 school districts that include kindergartens were invited and 22 districts chose to participate, with a total of 36 teachers in attendance. Stipends to pay for a substitute teacher for the day were given to participating school districts.



The Summit began at 9 a.m. with welcome remarks by Dr. Nora Faine, Commissioner and Chair of the School Readiness Leadership Team. Laura Spiegel, Executive Director of First 5 San Diego, welcomed the kindergarten teachers and introduced the keynote speaker. An inspirational keynote address was given by Sandra McBrayer, Chief Executive Officer, the Children's Initiative, and 1994 National Teacher of the Year. Ms. McBrayer encouraged teachers to trust their own insights and to understand that their knowledge can make an important contri-

bution to school readiness. Following the address, the facilitator for the summit, Keren Stashower, Senior Consultant with Organization Effectiveness Consultants, began the remainder of the day's activities with an overview and introductions. The teachers worked in small groups to talk about the definition of school readiness, the assets of successful kindergartners, strategies for developing those assets and the potential role of First 5 San Diego.

The information collected from the summit was categorized and a follow-up meeting on June 17, 2003 was held to prioritize and refine the comments and input. A preliminary report was completed and the School Readiness Leadership Team is using the information to determine recommended next steps for the Commission. Potential outcomes include the development of a parent-friendly definition of school readiness, outreach to parents and caregivers about kindergarten expectations, inclusion of kindergarten teachers in School Readiness Leadership Team activities, and inclusion of the early care and education community in dialogues with the primary education community. The Kindergarten Teachers Summit laid a solid foundation on which to base future recommendations and activities of the School Readiness Leadership Team. Thank you to the school districts and teachers who participated in this successful summit!

Kindergarten Backpack Program

The California Department of Education as part of the Transition to School Program developed a "Backpack Program" for preschool children. The state website (at www.cde.ca.gov/elementary/transition) lists the suggested materials to fill the backpack and a series of activities parents can engage in to utilize the materials in structured learning experiences. The concept is to facilitate the development and learning process so that when a child enters kindergarten they are ready to learn and have some experience with the materials and tools that will be utilized in the classroom.

Materials and learning activities were designed and developed by early child educators with experience in preschool education methodology. Parents

can simply purchase the materials and follow the lesson plans provided by the state. Alternatively, organizations who have a desire to assist children in their communities can build the backpacks for distribution to local preschools. Backpack materials are inexpensive and can be purchased in any office supply outlet. Pre-packaged backpacks are available from Lakeshore Learning Materials, 1-800-778-4456. Cost is between \$20 and \$50 dollars depending upon the backpack contents.

Questions on the local backpack program can be addressed to Bill Boggs, School Readiness Coordinator, at (619) 230-6481 or at bill.boggs@sdcounty.ca.gov.

School Readiness Programs

School Readiness Initiative Funded Program	Early Care and Education	Parenting/ Family Support Services	Health and Social Services	School's Capacity for Children	Program Infrastructure
Chula Vista Elementary School District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Kinder Camp +Latino Family Literacy Project +Listos para Leer +Play groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Family Readiness Advocates +Welcome Baby Kits +Preschool Tool Kits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Early Intervention Mental Health +Family Resource Center Services +Spirit of Caring Mobile Health Care Clinic +Behavior specialist, nurse, and speech therapist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Cross-training of preschool teachers in kindergarten standards +Cross-training of kindergarten teachers in preschool development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Program staff, including School Readiness Coordinator +Coordinating Council standing sub-committee +Curriculum materials, supplies, and space
Ready-Set-Learn! National School District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Parents as Teachers (PAT) +Community Based English Tutoring (CBET) +Pre-Kindergarten Academies +New child development facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Community outreach +Preschool scholarships +Expanded PAT home visitation +Expanded CBET 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +National School District Health Team +Language, Speech and Hearing Specialist +Care coordination for Family Resource Center social services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Pre-Kindergarten Academies +Staff development and professional training +School Tool Kits for parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Pre-Kindergarten Academies +Staff development and professional training +School Tool Kits for parents
San Diego Unified School District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +WestEd program +Head Start and Even Start expansion +Infant/Toddler Ctr +High/Scope Cognitively Oriented Curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Teen Parent education +Home visiting +Expansion of Even Start, PAT, HIPPY, CBET, and ESL programs +Parent University +Parenting classes +Family literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Cal-SAFE +Neighborhood House Assoc wrap-around services +Screening/referrals +Behavioral psychologist +Family Service Specialist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Preschool coach +Kindergarten transition services +Desired Results +Staff development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +ECE Instructional Leaders +Design Team +Facilities, curriculum materials and supplies +Best Practice dissemination
San Ysidro School District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +First Steps for Preschool +District Preschool +Expanded Even Start program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Family Advocates/ Home Visiting Program +Parent Institute +Por La Vida +Welcome Baby Kits +Adult school education opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Early Intervention Mental Health Care +Children and Family Resource Center for School Readiness +Psychologist and speech therapist +Screening and referral increase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Staff development and training— cross-training of kindergarten and preschool teachers +School Readiness Facilitator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Parent Advisory Committee +Parent and Community Partnership (Enhancing Family Resources) +Administrative Leadership Team
Cajon Valley Union School District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Play groups +Kinder Camp +Welcome Baby Kits +Preschool Tool Kits +Parents as Teachers program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Parent training classes +Expansion of CBET program +District ESL program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Nurse, behavioral specialist and child development assistants +Little House referrals for health and social services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +School Readiness Coordinator +Staff development and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Facilities and supplies +School Readiness Program (SRP) Advisory Group +SRP Resource Center

The local and state First 5 Commissions will be funding 8 eligible school districts in San Diego County to provide comprehensive school readiness programs. Applications for the 5 districts above have been approved and funded. For more information contact: Bill Boggs, School Readiness Coordinator at (619) 230-6481/ e-mail: bill.boggs@sdcounty.ca.gov.

Contract Evaluation Update

The First 5 Commission of San Diego successfully closed out 59 of 60 granted organizations from the first grant funding cycle, referred to as RFGA 10034. During this very first funding cycle of the Commission, in which 60 organizations were funded through the grant process, several valuable lessons were learned, such as:

- Placing an evaluation component as an integral and primary part of the application process,
- Multiple year funding with performance/milestone payments,
- Sustaining site and technical assistance visits and,
- Developing and strengthening the relationship between the organizations and the Commission.

The lessons learned and best practices techniques are being incorporated in current and subsequent grant processes as well as with contract agreements executed by the Commission.

The Commission has approved the piloting of the Prop 10 Evaluation Data System (PEDS) with the assistance of the Independent Evaluator, Harder and Company, represented by Jennifer James; and support from the State Commission-funded coach, Richard Corral. PEDS was developed by the First 5 Commission of California to collect meaningful data and measure outcomes to determine the community impact of the funding process. PEDS is being managed under a contract through the Stanford Research Institute with a subcontract to the Corporation for Standards and Outcomes for the technical aspect of the project, and another subcontract through the University of California, Los Angeles for evaluation technical assistance and support.

Commission staff commenced conducting site visits of granted organizations to assess programmatic and fiscal performance. Results have been excellent and the visits have strengthened the partnerships between the organizations and the Commission. Ongoing site visits will continue to serve as a technical assistance and monitoring tool.

The success of evaluation in the First 5 Commission of San Diego is due in part to the commitment, dedication and perseverance of contribut-

ing members of the Evaluation Leadership Team, which includes:

- Rodger Lum, PhD; Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA)
- Roseann Myers; Commission on Children, Youth and Families
- Jodi Billingsley; HHSA
- Jackie Werth; HHSA
- Robert Moser, PhD; Catholic Charities
- Barbara Mitchell, PhD; Therapeutic Services Inc.
- Marty Giffin, PhD; Therapeutic Services Inc.
- William Armstrong, PhD; University of California, San Diego
- Kate Bradley; California State University, San Marcos
- Jeanne Gordon; Developmental Services Enhancement Program
- Madonna Carlson; Regional Perinatal Services
- Charles Jarman; Consensus Organizing Institute
- Richard Corral; University of California, Los Angeles
- Jenica Huddleston; Zetetic Associates, Inc.
- Michelle Plata; Zetetic Associates, Inc.
- Laura Spiegel; First 5 San Diego
- Denis McGee; First 5 San Diego

A new Independent Evaluator has been selected for the Commission. Harder and Company with extensive experience and expertise in community evaluations has been awarded a multi-year

contract to act as the prime contractor. Zetetic Associates will continue to work with the Commission as a subcontractor of Harder and Company. Therefore, we will be privileged to still see the familiar faces of Jenica Huddleston, Michelle Plata and Stuart Jones. Commission staff is planning to have a familiarization session soon with all granted organizations and the new program manager for Harder and Company.

For further information, contact Rick Collantes, Contract Evaluation Analyst at (619) 230-6483 or e-mail at rick.collantes@sdcounty.ca.gov.



Grants and Contracts Update

This year the First 5 Commission of San Diego has initiated three planning studies in the following areas:

- Child Health
- Pre-literacy
- Behavioral Health

The Commission's Strategic Planning Committee recommended these studies so that the Commission could allocate future resources to maximize local Prop 10 initiated services for children 0-5 and their families. Other objectives are to maximize funding opportunities, advocacy and local and State collaboration efforts.

Child Health Needs and Assets Assessment

The first planning study is supported by the result from the Implementation Plan that 'critical health issues that impact school readiness are identified and addressed'. The purpose of this study is to:

- Identify priority health issues related to school readiness for children 0-5;
- Develop research-based recommendations for strategic initiatives;
- Identify the most effective role for the First 5 Commission to make a difference in the health of children 0-5 in three to five years.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued to seek an organization to conduct this study and the Center for Health Improvement (CHI), based in Sacramento, was approved by the Commission on September 8, 2003 to complete this project.

Pre-literacy Planning

The second planning study is supported by the result from the Implementation Plan that 'community resources for children and families are linked and coordinated'. The purpose of this study is to:

- Develop a long-term plan for pre-literacy activities in San Diego County which emphasizes improved provision and coordination of pre-literacy services;
- Recommend the most effective role for Prop 10 to make a difference in pre-literacy over the long term.

An RFP was also issued to identify an entity to perform this project and The Fromm Group was approved by the Commission on September 8, 2003 to conduct the study.



Behavioral Health Planning

The third planning study also is supported by the result from the Implementation Plan that 'community resources for children and families are linked and coordinated'. The purpose of this study is to formulate a plan for linking, coordinating and enhancing behavioral health services for children 0-5.

Professionals and parents have highlighted the need for countywide access to coordinated behavioral health services for children 0-5. The plan will both recommend what steps the Commission can take to support and coordinate a system of early child behavioral health care as well as roles that the Commission can play in the areas of advocacy and funding. Due to the broad-based nature of this issue, understanding and building on other local and State initiatives, and leveraging other funds will be key emphases of this planning study.

In evaluating the most effective way to conduct this study, the Commission learned that County of San Diego Health and Human Services (HHSA) had initiated a similar effort. To build on the efforts of HHSA the Commission approved a contract on July 7, 2003 with Chris Walsh, who was providing services for HHSA, and has established the Early Childhood Mental Health Committee, as well as established contacts with State and national experts on this issue.

The community will have opportunities to participate in providing input and information for these planning efforts via community forums, surveys, interviews or other venues. When the opportunity arises, take the time to offer your valuable technical expertise, knowledge and experiences. Your input will affect the recommendations that will go to the Commission to consider once the studies are complete. The Commission will use these recommendations to establish future priorities for children 0-5 in our community.

For further information on the planning studies, contact Grace Young, Grants and Contracts Manager at (619) 230-6474 or e-mail at grace.young@sdcounty.ca.gov.

Technical and Professional Advisory Committee (TPAC) Member Highlight:

George J. Cameron, Ed.D

Dr. George J. Cameron has served the National School District for 31 years: 12 years as Superintendent and the remaining years as an Assistant Superintendent, district administrator, principal, and teacher.



He is currently the senior superintendent in the County of San Diego and also serves on the Adjunct Faculty of the Educational Leadership Department at San Diego State University. In this capacity, he teaches post-graduate studies in Educational Administration.

Dr. Cameron is active in community affairs and serves as a Board Member of Catholic Charities, South Bay Community Services, and the South Bay YMCA organizations. He is also a member of the Sweetwater Kiwanis Club and serves on the San Diego County Commission on Children, Youth and Families.

Through his dedication, he has been awarded the Champion for Children Award, Local Hero of the Year Award, Author E. Hughes Career Achievement Award, Kiwanian of the Year Award, Hispanic Vision Award, and several other awards.

Dr. Cameron has been an active and valued member of the First 5 Commission of San Diego Technical and Professional Advisory Committee (TPAC) since 2000. Within this capacity, he also serves on the School Readiness Leadership Team. His dedication and commitment has been instrumental in implementing the Commission's vision for school readiness. It is a pleasure to have Dr. Cameron on our advisory team!

Did you know...

October is Child Health Month

November is Good Nutrition Month and National Adoption Month

New Commission Initiatives

At the regular meeting of the Commission on July 17, 2003, Pam Smith, County of San Diego East Regional Manager and Director of Aging & Independence Services, informed the First 5 Commissioners that an "army of retirees are available in this county to provide support for children and families." She cited projects in our community where the lives of seniors and children have been brought together through intergenerational efforts. Programs are able to increase services to children by tapping into these resources. On July 25, 2003 the Commission released a funding notice for ***Building the Capacity of Programs for Children 0-5 Using Intergenerational Approaches***. In the first year \$1.1 million is available to fund the expansion of current programs serving children from the prenatal stage to age 5 by adding or expanding an intergenerational component. All interested organizations were required to submit an 'Intent to Apply' form to the Commission to be able to complete a full application. Funding to support these efforts will range from \$50,000 to \$125,000. Awards are targeted for December 2003. The Commission has approved \$4 million to be invested into this three-year initiative.

On August 4, 2003 another new initiative was identified and approved by the Commission. Executive Director Laura Spiegel stated that "readiness for school is optimized by good health care." Ideally in our community every San Diego child should have medical insurance, stay insured and have a 'medical home' for preventive care and treatment. Yet in 2001 in San Diego County an estimated 29,000 children under 6 were uninsured and approximately 22,000 of these children were eligible for Medi-Cal or Healthy Families. The Commission has approved \$6 million over two years for the ***Healthcare Access Initiative***; the goal of this initiative is to increase and sustain enrollment into the above health insurance programs, provide support in navigating and utilizing care, and enhance public awareness and education about healthcare resources for children 0-5. One entity will be selected per region and awards are targeted for December 2003. The Child Health Needs and Assets Assessment Study is a component of this initiative as well.

First 5 San Diego

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Greg Cox

Board of Supervisors

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Nora Faine, M.D., M.P.H

Member-at-Large

Rodger G. Lum, Ph.D.

Health and Human Services Director

Nancy L. Bowen, M.D., M.P.H

Public Health Officer

Executive Director

Laura Spiegel

First 5 Commission of San Diego

First 5 Commission Meetings

Commission meetings typically take place on the first Monday of each month from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

TPAC meetings typically take place on the third Monday of each month from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Quarterly TPAC meetings held in conjunction with Community Conversations begin at 1:00 p.m.

Meetings are open to the public.



Check the Commission's website for potential location and time changes.



Did you know that health insurance is available to lower income children at low or no cost? To help a family enroll their child, have them call the San Diego Kids Health Assurance Network (SD-KHAN) at 1-800-675-2229.

Reversing Civic Isolation

Grassroots leadership development is a vital component in promoting the health of our region. The Consensus Organizing Institute (a First 5 San Diego contractor) and UCSD Extension are currently teaching a course called "Knowing and Organizing Your Community: Reversing Civic Isolation." The 11 session course, designed to identify and develop neighborhood resident leaders who want to make a positive difference in their communities, started July 10 and runs through September 18. Plans are in the works to replicate this course at least one more time in the next six months.

The 23 current students live in City Heights, El Cajon, Golden Hills, Oceanside, and San Ysidro. These bright and motivated resident leaders are learning about regional issues, our civic process, a community organizing process, and strategies for community engagement. Interviewing a civic leader and developing a neighborhood action plan are the two key assignments that students must complete. UCSD Extension is providing graduating students with 4 units of academic credit. After the course is over, students will execute their neighborhood action plans with the support of community organizers from the Consensus Organizing Institute.

The class has been a tremendous success thus far and has generated enthusiastic feedback from both students and guest lecturers. Enrolling in the course was free to students, though they were interviewed and screened for commitment and skill level. Because of the enthusiastic feedback, Consensus Organizing Institute and UCSD Extension are looking at ways to continue this successful effort. For information about future classes, please contact Charles Jarman at 619-299-9528 ext. 15.

Upcoming Events

Grantee Meetings

Quarterly Grantee Meetings are held at the Al Bahr Shrine Auditorium located at 5440 Kearny Mesa Road, San Diego, CA 92111 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The upcoming meeting dates are:

September 25, 2003
January 21, 2004
March 24, 2004
June 23, 2004
September 22, 2004

Presentations

The Commission office has PowerPoint slides, videos and handouts available to help you with Prop 10 related presentations. Topics Include:

- The Purpose and Promise of Prop 10
- Early Brain Development
- School Readiness
- Community Engagement

For more information, contact Martha Garcia, the Civic Engagement Coordinator at (619) 230-6476.

Grant Writing Training

October 22nd and 23rd, 9am to 5pm

Al Bahr Shrine, 5540 Kearny Mesa Rd., San Diego, CA 92111

Lunch will be provided

The focus of this two day training is on developing and implementing long-range sustainability funding, with some emphasis on school district issues. Some topics covered will be documentation needs, grant attachments, developing good relations, budget formatting, evaluation, research, and simple and complicated grant letter writing. The training is focused for grantees participating in the School Readiness Initiative, and those participants have priority. Any remaining spaces are open to First 5 grantees on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority given to smaller organizations. If you would like to register for the training, please contact Lynda Mills at:

lynda.mills@sdcounty.ca.gov or at (619) 230-6482

February 2004: Intergenerational Initiative Kickoff Event! (date to be determined)



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