



## Minutes: Children and Families Commission Meeting

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**Date, time, location**

September 13, 2023  
4:02 p.m.  
First 5 San Bernardino Commission Conference Center

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**Pledge of Allegiance**

Pledge of Allegiance by Chair Weinstein

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**Conflict of Interest Disclosure**

Commission members shall review agenda item contractors, subcontractors, and agents, which may require member abstentions due to conflict of interest and financial interests.

A Commission member with conflicts of interests shall state their conflict under the appropriate item. A Commission member may not participate in or influence the decision on a contract for which their abstention has been recorded.

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**Attendees**

**Commissioners**

- Diana Alexander
- Supervisor Baca Jr.
- Dr. Gwendolyn Dowdy-Rodgers
- Gary Ovitt
- Elliot Weinstein, M.D.

**Absent**

- Commissioner Ted Alejandre
- Commissioner Joshua Dugas

**Staff**

- Erika Willhite, Staff Analyst II
  - Ronnie Robinson, Section Manager, Systems and Communication
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**Changes to the agenda**

Commission Clerk, Traci Homan, read the following change to Item 4 Recommendation #2: Agreement No. should read CF24134.

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**Closed Session**

Public Employee Performance Evaluation (Government Code Section 54957)  
Title: Executive Director

**Executive  
Director's  
Report**

**Congratulations to Dr. Gwen Dowdy-Rodgers**

Black Voice News ran a story on how Dr. Dowdy-Rodgers cultivates student triumph and community unity. She made history in 2022, as the first African American woman to serve on the San Bernardino County Board of Education.

**SB 326 – MHSA Modernization Act**

In an advocacy approach, First 5s and Association took an oppose to SB326. F5SB recently reached out to our elected officials and asked them to consider an amendment to the legislation to allocate 20% of the 50% set aside for early childhood mental health, to meet the needs specifically of children ages 0-5.

Programs needed to serve children ages 0–5 are uniquely positioned to help families overcome barriers to mental health care access, mitigate future mental health concerns, and are also most likely to reach families from historically marginalized communities, including immigrant and low-income families of color.

After a call from Secretary Mark Ghaly on Saturday, F5SB moved our position from Oppose to Support. While we are disappointed that a carve out for 0-5 wasn't included, this move to a support position was prompted by a few factors such as:

1. There is a carve out for “children” age 0-26.
2. The Administration included several new amendments that called out the 0-5 population as a priority the use of ACES screenings as a way to identify children at risk for behavioral health challenges.
3. Received clarity on the technical amendments to further prioritize children.

It is important that our local behavioral health systems understand that F5SB is not trying to jeopardize flexibility in MHSA funding, and we understand the huge needs, but most important, are here to partner and help navigate the waters for maximum benefit to our County families.

**Legislative Platforms – State and Federal**

In 2021, the following statement was added to the Human Services policy section: “*Support legislation, budget actions and proposals that promote a Whole Child, Whole Family, Whole Community approach to child development*” that still exists in the platform language.

F5SB and the County's legislative platforms support the statewide efforts towards Equity, to include allocation for services for the 0–5 population as it pertains to access, economic development (as with C/C Workforce, Home Visitors, CHW's) and Safety Net Services such as with FFPSA.

Because of Medicaid expansion through the Affordable Care Act, most people leaving California jails and prisons are eligible for Medi-Cal. Still, federal law has long barred the use of federal Medicaid funds for services for people who are incarcerated. In part for this reason, when people leave prison and jail, they often experience gaps in accessing health care in their community. In early 2023, as part of the CalAIM Initiative, California became the first state in the nation to receive federal approval to use Medi-Cal to cover a targeted set of services for people leaving jail or prison in the 90 days before their release. Correctional systems can start implementing this innovative approach as early as April 1, 2024.

With regard to the SB County jails, MHN and F5SB will oversee the implementation. Insurance companies (IEHP is on board, perhaps Kaiser and Molina will be on board as well) are another way that MHN is helping. Supporting these efforts ensure a smooth process for persons being released from jail, as there was no direct communication between the health insurance providers and the jail previously.

FAITHS, a local organization, offers a postpartum and pregnancy support program for recently released women through its aftercare component by providing ongoing coverage and treatment for around 32 women each month who require it after being incarcerated. Most women give birth following their release from imprisonment or prison. For this reason, coverage must be continuous. FAITHS is looking for more financing to assist this effort because it isn't enough to meet the needs. F5SB intends to discuss with them and learn how through the MHN Network we can help identify additional funding support, leverage existing funding, braid funding, and otherwise help bridge the gaps.

#### **Help Me Grow – Inland Empire (HMG-IE)**

To ensure that there are no gaps in the required early developmental screenings for children enrolled in Head Start, as was discussed at the most recent Shared Governance meeting, F5SB is requesting approval of the ongoing HMG-IE Initiative. This initiative aims to better coordinate and bridge the relationship between Loma Linda University Children's Hospital, HMG-IE, and our local PSD.

#### **Promoting Literacy**

At the San Bernardino County Board of Education meeting, Karen Scott, Dr. Dowdy-Rodgers, Ted Alejandro, and Heather Smith presented an in-depth presentation on Footsteps2Brilliance (FTB) to the attendees and public.

Great investment, great results as we continue to collaborate on improving literacy as indicated by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading scores and in support of the Countywide Vision – Vision to Read initiative.

F5SB will be at the SBCSSS Annual Early Literacy Summit, at CSUSB next week where Scott McGrath and our Reach Out and Read partner will be present. The event is geared to early education providers and professionals from the education field.

LuCretia Dowdy, our F5SB Communications Engagement Specialist, was acknowledged for reaching out to Safe Kids Worldwide, a monthly resource report that was shared with our stakeholders, that gives information about product and food recalls that could constitute a risk and/or could affect the health and well-being of our youngest children. As an example, there was a recall in August for **Go Healthy Probiotics for Infants**, Toddlers and Kids due to the potential to introduce foodborne illness. Another example was a warning issue advising consumers to immediately stop using the **La-La-Me Infant Loungers** because they do not comply with mandatory federal safety standards for infant sleep products, posing a suffocation risk and fall hazard to infants.

F5SB has reconnected with the Consulate of Mexico and will be partnering for a Health and Resource Fair on October 15, 2023.

The F5SB Kids Safe Summer campaign was led by Kimberly VandenBosch and covered by Channel 7 news, in partnership with the San Bernardino County Sheriff's department that stressed never to leave a child in a hot car.

More information to follow for the Gift a Kid a Book campaign.

Item No.	CONSENT
1	<p>Approve Minutes from August 2, 2023 Commission Meeting.</p> <p>Motion by Commissioner Baca, Jr., and seconded by Commissioner Alexander to approve the Consent Items.</p> <p>Without further comment or objection, motion carried by unanimous vote.</p>
2	<p>Approve Contract SI041 with Loma Linda University Children’s Hospital in the amount of \$1,128,762 retroactive to July 1, 2023 for Fiscal Years 2023-2025 for the Help Me Grow Inland Empire initiative.                      (Presenter: Iffat Quazi, Staff Analyst II, 252-4275)</p>
3	<p>Approve Subrecipient Monitoring Policy 23-01 for Federal Awards.                      (Presenter: Peiyong Yang, Section Manager, Accountant III, 252-4278)</p>

Item No.	DISCUSSION
4	<p>1. Approve the following Agreements with Riverside County Children and Families Commission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Agreement No. CF24130 for the provision of services in the amount of \$1,684,067 retroactive to August 1, 2023, for Fiscal Years 2023-2025, awarded through First 5 California for the IMPACT Legacy RFA to support Quality Start San Bernardino.</li> <li>b. Agreement No. CF24134 for Professional Services for \$196,000 retroactive to August 1, 2023, for Fiscal Years 2023-2025 to support the Quality Start San Bernardino data system through the Region 9 Hub for the First 5 California IMPACT Legacy Initiative.</li> </ul> <p>2. Authorize the Executive Director to execute Agreement Nos. CF24130 and CF24134 with Riverside County Children and Families Commission subject to any non-substantive changes and review by County Counsel.                      (Presenter: Erika Willhite, Staff Analyst II, 252-4262)</p> <p><b><u>Discussion</u></b>                      None</p> <p><b><u>Public Comment</u></b>                      None</p> <p>Motion by Commissioner Ovitt and seconded by Commissioner Dugas to approve Item 4.</p> <p>Without further comment or objection and with no public comments noted, motion carried by unanimous vote.</p>
5	<p>Approve Contract IC053 with Health Management Associates, Inc. in the amount of \$143,870 for September 13, 2023 through March 31, 2024 to provide an assessment of current pediatric health conditions and synthesizing available Medi-Cal, public health, and other data to inform identification of gaps and barriers in access to care.                      (Presenter: Ronnie Robinson, Section Manager: Systems &amp; Communication, 252-4255)</p> <p><b><u>Discussion</u></b>                      None</p>

	<p><b><u>Public Comment</u></b> None</p> <p>Motion by Commissioner Alexander and seconded by Supervisor Baca, Jr., to approve Item 5.</p> <p>Without further comment or objection and with no public comments noted, motion carried by unanimous vote.</p>
6	<p>Authorize the Executive Director to coordinate with San Bernardino County Human Resources Department and assigned Human Resources Officer to recruit an Administrative Supervisor I position to better meet the business needs of First 5 San Bernardino.                  (Presenter: Karen E. Scott, Executive Director, 252-4252)</p> <p><b><u>Discussion</u></b> None</p> <p><b><u>Public Comment</u></b> None</p> <p>Motion by Commissioner Baca, Jr., and seconded by Commissioner Dowdy-Rodgers to approve Item 6.</p> <p>Without further comment or objection and with no public comments noted, motion carried by unanimous vote.</p>

Item No.	INFORMATION
7	<p>Receive information on approval of employment contracts entered into by San Bernardino County upon request of the Children and Families Commission for San Bernardino County with the following individuals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Robert Mente as Staff Analyst II</li> <li>b. Arminda Lowenstein as Accountant III</li> </ul> <p>(Presenter: Karen E. Scott, Executive Director, 252-4252)</p>

**Public Comment**                      None

**Commissioner Roundtable**                      Commissioners collectively thanked Karen Scott and the F5 team for doing a great job and all that they do. Commissioner Baca, Jr., gave a brief overview of the FAITHS program and thanked F5 for supporting the program. Vice-Chair Alexander suggested F5 should connect with Gilbert Ramos, who has Medi-Cal staff stationed at different jail locations. Commissioner Dowdy-Rodgers mentioned how LuCretia Dowdy is at community events promoting F5. Commissioner Ovitt mentioned that Chaffee College has a program similar to FAITHS called the Turning Point Program for the California Institution for Women and the California Institution for Men in Chino. He also welcomed the new F5 staff members.

The next Commission meeting will be held on the fourth and last Wednesday of the month, October 25, 2023 at 735 E. Carneige Drive, Suite 150, San Bernardino. The meeting adjourned at 4:38 p.m.

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**Next Meeting**

***Wednesday, October 25, 2023  
3:30 p.m.***

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**Attest**

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Elliot Weinstein, M.D., Chair

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Traci L. Homan, Commission Clerk

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