

Monthly Meeting Highlights



Children & Families
Commission of Orange County

FEBRUARY 2011

The Children & Families Commission of Orange County's regular monthly meeting was held on Wednesday, February 2, 2011. The following is a summary of the Commission actions.

Early Math Literacy Program Reviewed

There is a growing national concern regarding the preparedness and competitiveness of U.S. children in the scholastic areas of science, technology, engineering and math. Children with early math skills correlate strongly with future school achievement; yet early childhood programs do not always challenge and extend a child's mathematical knowledge. In partnership with MIND Research Institute, the Commission has implemented and funded early math programs for preschool-aged children. Over the past two years the MIND Research Institute has been creating a developmentally appropriate approach to improve the math proficiency and program solving skills of pre-kindergarten children. The fourth and final phase of the project will continue to refine the math program for the preschool audience and make the program scalable. Additional information will be presented at the Commission's March 2011 meeting.

Funding for Critical Pediatric Health Services Renewed

In 2001, the Commission launched a ten-year initiative to expand access and improve the quality of care for children in Orange County. The investment has led to the creation and/or expansion of primary care centers in previously underserved communities, as well as the establishment of pediatric specialty centers for the treatment of asthma, metabolic disorders and a range of developmental delays, including autism. The investment has resulted in major improvements to the system of care for young children and sustainable expansion in availability of primary and specialty services. The Commission authorized execution of agreements for a scaled-down three-year funding renewal of Pediatric Health Services programs that is in line with the Commission's Long Term Financial Plan.

Commission Begins Budget Discussion

The Commission annually reviews its Long Term Financial Plan in advance of development of the annual budget to forecast and anticipate revenue trends and evaluate long-term implications of annual budget decisions. The Commission reviewed updated revenue forecasts based on First Quarter results and discussed options for a three-year budget. Additional budget scenarios will be presented at the March 2011 meeting. Additionally, the Commission received a report from the Executive Director regarding the current State Budget Proposal the reallocation of Proposition 10 fund balances from both First 5 California and the county commissions, and diverting 50 percent of the revenue for five years to fund Medi-Cal programs. Representatives from First 5 Commission's have been testifying at Senate and Assembly budget hearings on the impact of Proposition 10 resources on local health programs for children, including County of Orange's Public Health Nursing and nearly 800 jobs in Orange County.

For more information, please visit the Commission website at www.occhildrenandfamilies.com