



Meeting Minutes – January 17, 2017

I. CALL TO ORDER

Lisa Leavitt, Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at First 5 Marin at 5:31 p.m.

Commissioners Present

Lisa Leavitt MD – *chair*
Kristen Seatavakin – *vice chair*
David Bonfilio
Sister Joan Hanna
Gabrielle Philippe-Auguste
Heather Ravani

Commissioners Excused

Amy Eisenmann
Supervisor Katie Rice
Juan Rodriguez

Staff Present

Amy Reisch
Michelle Fadelli

Guests

Kelly Bass Seibel, Chair First 5 Sonoma
Jill Casey, Luminare Group
Angie Dillon-Shore, Executive Director First 5 Sonoma
Melissa Guerrero, MCOE
Lael Lambert, Marin HHS
Michele Rogers, First 5 Sonoma
Raquel Rose, MCOE
Ann Wakely, League of Women Voters of Marin County

II. MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Leavitt asked if there were changes, additions or corrections to the commission minutes for the last meeting on November 15, 2017.

Motion/Second: Bonfilio/Hanna

The minutes of November 15, 2017 were unanimously approved.

III. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Hanna attended the Marin Communications Forum event on “Making Ends Meet in Marin.” She said the speakers were great, as well as the printed document.

*Commissioner Bonfilio said the event and the publication were talked about at a recent North Bay Leadership Council event; the content also resonates with Sonoma County folks.

Sister Joan also noted that she missed the November forum on “Health Issues with Cannabis,” but that she was able to watch the video. (See: <https://youtu.be/JXEkx5XH558>)

Commissioner Lisa Leavitt announced that it was the last meeting for commissioner **Heather Ravani**, who is retiring after 30 years with the County of Marin. Lisa thanked her for her dedicated service to the children and families of Marin. Heather replied that she has seen a lot of awful things over the years, but there are very good people doing wonderful work. She added that, “kids are always in my heart.” Executive director Amy Reisch presented Heather with a glass plaque to commemorate her nine years of dedicated service on the commission.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

The report had been distributed and **Amy** added that Help Me Grow planning had continued over the holidays.

V. COMMISSION DISCUSSION

1. **Results and Update “Kindergarten Student Entrance Profile” Pilot Program** – Raquel Rose from the Marin County Office of Education (MCOE) presented an update on the pilot of the “Kindergarten Student Entrance Profile” (KSEP) assessment (funded by First 5 Marin). In an effort to determine if KSEP would be workable and valuable countywide, MCOE recruited ten kindergarten teachers from a variety of schools and classrooms to use the KSEP system to assess their students skills upon kindergarten entry and to provide feedback on the tool. (Teachers were paid a stipend of \$500 to complete the assessments on all their students.)

Melissa Guerrero from MCOE reviewed the preliminary work she did with the teachers. A total of 191 students from four school districts were assessed. Following that, the teachers responded to a series of questions about KSEP. 60% indicated they would be willing to complete the assessment for all their children; 40% indicated they were willing “with conditions” (for example, doing the assessment at the beginning of the school year as it is intended to be used).

The recommendation from MCOE, if funding is available, is to announce the program county-wide this spring with an orientation meeting, and to provide more in depth training in the summer.

Raquel noted that there are about 2700 kindergarteners in public school, in an estimated 135 classrooms. She added that Sonoma County spent about \$300,000 on KSEP; for Marin County, she estimates \$150,000 to \$200,000—for staffing, training, stipends, materials and supplies, and the purchase of a database.

- **Sister Joan** asked how long it took to complete each assessment. Raquel replied that after three weeks of “observations,” they allowed about one week for the assessments to be completed. She estimated that the actual assessment—six social-emotional questions and six questions regarding cognitive skills—takes only 3 to 5 minutes per child. It was agreed that this would take longer at the beginning of a new school year when students were new. (In this trial of the KSEP system, assessments were conducted in November, many weeks after school had started and teachers were already familiar with their students.)

Raquel added that, to be successful, the goal is to get a commitment from teachers and from schools. MCOE would offer two in-person trainings, and to be flexible they would make a video or webcast available for those unable to attend (but that in-person was highly preferable).

-**Commissioner Bonfilio** asked whether anyone learned something new to use with a student or about a student. Melissa indicated that a number of the teachers said they had. Amy noted that it would be even more valuable to have information from the assessment early in the school year.

-**Commissioner Leavitt** asked about the overall goal. The goal is one universal tool in the county to assess skills and performance upon entering the school system. That can inform a teacher's instruction for the child and document the individual needs. Aggregate information can also be provided to the community. They also anticipate important and valuable information from the parent surveys.

-**Sister Joan** asked about the connection to "quality improvement" programs in preschools. Raquel replied that KSEP is not intended to judge preschools or pre-K providers on their programs. Preschools will not be named. There would be aggregate data on pre-K attendance/experience in general.

-**Commissioner Leavitt** asked about sustainability, and ongoing needs, costs and funding. It was noted that it is difficult to ask schools or school districts to fund the program while still in the pilot stage. We need to build interest and willingness (and a successful pilot program could help with future funding). MCOE and Amy will continue working with Marin Community Foundation on their potential support.

-**Angie Dillon-Shore**, executive director of First 5 Sonoma, complimented the use of a small-scale pilot program. She noted that Sonoma began kindergarten assessments using the "DRDP" system, which was not well-received. They switched to KSEP in the second year, and designed their own parent survey.

She added they want the K-12 schools to embrace pre-K. She noted that Sonoma still gives teachers \$500 stipends to complete the KSEP assessments for all the students in their classrooms. 20 out of 40 school districts are currently on board.

- **Kelly Bass Seibel**, chair of the First 5 Sonoma County Commission, added that we want to know if kids were prepared when they arrived at kindergarten—which will tell us how much it will take teachers to bring them up to speed. The takeaway message in Sonoma County was that "3 out of 5 children are not prepared for kindergarten."

-**Angie Dillon-Shore** added that they worked hard on messaging, and emphasized that kindergarten preparedness is an equity issue.

-**Commissioner Bonfilio** asked how many students in Sonoma's 20 participating school districts were involved. Angie said it was about 2100 children.

-**Angie** added that their costs were about \$200,000 with a great deal of staff time from the coordinator at First 5 Sonoma County.

[**Raquel Rose** added that two years ago, MCOE had two experienced teachers try out the "DRDP" assessment. It is very extensive and time consuming, and they were overwhelmed. They suggested, if it had to be used, to only use the social-emotional questions.]

Next steps: MCOE would bring a formal, detailed proposal back to the commission in February, requesting funding of up to \$200,000.

-**Amy** requested that it include suggestions for funding by community partners.

-**Raquel** suggested a three-year plan.

- Sister Joan and Lisa** also asked that it address sustainability.
- Heather** emphasized that partnership is important.
- Commissioner Bonfilio** also asked for detail on how many school districts would participate in years one, two and three.

The motion to request a full proposal from the Marin County Office of Education for the implementation of a three-year assessment of kindergarten readiness using the Kindergarten Student Assessment Profile (KSEP) was unanimously approved.

Motion/Second: Hanna/Seatavakin

2. **Report on First 5 Funding for Victims of the Sonoma/Napa Fires** – Angie Dillon-Shore, executive director of First 5 Sonoma, offered her heartfelt thanks for First 5 Marin’s donation of \$50,000 to support First 5 Sonoma’s work with young children and their families who have been displaced and traumatized by the recent firestorms. She noted that First 5 Marin and the First 5 Association of California were the very first to offer assistance. She added that, as an executive director responsible for a budget, she knows how generous it was to make such a significant donation.

-Angie noted that trauma care and child care were the biggest immediate needs following the fires. Immediately after the fires, they provided food for healthcare employees (who were working very long shifts) and child care for county employees (whose providers had lost their homes and/or were displaced) so they could continue to do their jobs and contribute to recovery efforts.

-**Michele Rogers**, First 5 Sonoma commissioner and director of the Early Learning Institute, thanked commissioners and said they are using the funding to provide trauma support. They have teams available for consultations and early interventions; donated funds allow them to be responsive. They are seeing 600 children per month. She noted that expressions of trauma have been seen: when leaving school and preschool, which seemed like safe places in contrast to having lost family homes; when leaving family and “homes” and returning back to school after the winter break; and on the first foggy day, which many young children confused with smoke and fires. She added that trauma will continue as clean up continues, at the one year anniversary and beyond.

-**Commissioner Bonfilio** asked about school attendance in Sonoma. There are many issues related to the numbers of students in schools, including: families who have moved away and may be coming back, or won’t be coming back; families who have moved out of the area and are commuting back to original schools, but may not continue doing that; and children who are “refusing” school and don’t want to go back. Some schools are actively “recruiting” because they have lost so many students; other schools (out of the area) may be overwhelmed with too many students. (There are other issues that impact attendance, such as landlords “bumping” tenants out causing some students to leave and others to arrive as new students.)

-**Commissioner Ravani** said, “There are times to think like a bureaucrat and times to think with your heart.” She commended her fellow commissioners for giving so generously.

-**Commissioner Seatavakin** announced that in her work with Marin County’s emergency preparedness program she has been working on emergency preparedness planning for child care providers. She said she would be happy to share her work with Sonoma County.

-**Michele Rogers** added that they had enormous needs to provide for the children who were being sheltered after the fires. They had food but also needed diapers and toys, among many other items. She also said, “We weren’t ready.”

3. **First 5 Marin’s Annual Report for 2016-17**

Michelle Fadelli, Manager of Public Policy and Communications, presented the commission’s annual report to the community for fiscal year 2016-17. The report includes statistics on the children in Marin County economic information about Marin families, information about school readiness with a spotlight on early childhood education, information about children’s health with a spotlight on “Adverse Childhood Experiences” (ACEs), information about First 5 Marin’s community outreach and education, a fiscal summary for 2016-17, and a spotlight on upcoming work with the “Help Me Grow” program.

Michelle will be distributing hard copies of the report to our community partners.

VI. FINAL COMMENTS

Michelle Fadelli announced plans for the next Marin Communications Forum events for 2108, including: a forum (on Internet access, technology addition, cyber-bullying, social media and personal safety) with **Common Sense Media** (February 26th), “**Race Counts**” with the Advancement Project in March, “**Childhood Poverty and the Safety Net**” with the Public Policy Institute of California in April, and “**Childhood Mental Health and Wellness**” in May. She is also speaking with the Latino Community Foundation about presenting, and is scheduling a forum on “Anti-Bias Education” with MCOE in August.

Amy Reisch noted that she is participating on the “Rise Together” Power of Nine and Early Education committees, a project of the United Way. The focus of their work is much like MarinKids: advancing policy and advocacy for early childhood education, housing and family income support. In addition to these committees, there is a Communications committee for the 9 county bay area trying to coordinate the messaging for all of the early education initiatives. he

Commissioner Bonfilio asked about upcoming ballot measures. Amy responded that several counties are planning or exploring funding proposals for children, including: Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco and Santa Clara.

Amy will look into preparing a chart illustrating the various initiatives and committees.

Amy also provided an update on First 5 Marin’s annual policy breakfast, which will take place on Friday, May 11th at the Embassy Suites Hotel.

VII. ADJOURNMENT – Commission chair Dr. Lisa Leavitt adjourned the meeting at 7:16 p.m.

NEXT SCHEDULED COMMISSION MEETING:

Wednesday, February 21, 2018

5:30 p.m.

First 5 Marin conference room

1050 Northgate, Suite 130, San Rafael, CA