



**Agenda Item 1**  
**April 6, 2016**

**DATE:** March 28, 2016

**TO:** Children and Families Commission of Orange County

**FROM:** Christina Altmayer, Executive Director 

**SUBJECT:** The Bridgespan Group

**ACTION:** Receive an update on The Bridgespan Group's assessment of the Children and Families Commission.

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**SUMMARY:**

At the February meeting, the Children and Families Commission of Orange County approved contracting with the The Bridgespan Group to update its 2008 review of the Commission's goals, investment portfolio, and evaluation processes; and provide recommendations regarding how the Commission could increase the impact of its efforts. This agenda item provides background on The Bridgespan Group's proposed process to conduct the updated assessment and develop recommendations to continue the Commission's impact and strategies for the future. The assessment findings and recommendations will be presented by Bridgespan at the June 2016 annual planning meeting. Mike Perigo, a partner at The Bridgespan Group, will present at the April meeting and provide an overview of their recommended approach.

**DISCUSSION:**

In fiscal year 2007/08, the Commission engaged The Bridgespan Group to conduct a comprehensive strategic assessment including a review of the Commission's goals, investment portfolio, and evaluation processes; and to develop recommendations regarding how the Commission could increase the impact of its efforts. The Bridgespan report has greatly informed the Commission's work for the past eight years and prompted changes to the Commission's funding and program strategy to:

- Increase the Commission's focus on the neediest children, where such focus was possible.
- Direct a greater proportion of the Commission's resources toward early learning needs.
- Improve the evaluation system, including a shift from outputs to outcomes where possible.
- Shift a greater proportion of the Commission's funding to catalytic funding (vs. operational or sustaining funding), particularly given the declining nature of the core revenue stream.

The Commission has made significant progress on these recommendations. There has been a shift in focus as the Commission has received grant awards to impact high-impact early learning initiatives, and the Commission has made significant strides in shifting toward a catalytic funding approach. In addition, the Commission has developed a stronger set of outcome measures, including

the support of the universal administration of the Early Development Index (EDI), a kindergarten readiness assessment, for children in kindergarten across Orange County.

Recognizing the progress made to date, The Bridgespan Group scope of services will provide:

- An independent perspective on the progress made on the 2008 recommendations.
- Recommendations as to how the Commission might further extend its impact, with a particular focus on options for best leveraging the value of the universal EDI assessment.
- A report to the Commission during the June annual planning meeting with findings and recommendations.

The project plan will include the following tasks:

- Review the major initiatives and investments made over the past several years – in general and vis-à-vis the 2008 recommendations – leveraging the counsel of Commission staff.
- Interviews with Commissioners, select grantees, and local experts for feedback on the Commission's strategy, portfolio, and future opportunity set.
- A series of interviews/discussions with Commission staff to understand the past and current opportunities and challenges that influenced prior investments and the current portfolio. Several Commissioner interviews have been scheduled for immediately prior to and after the April Commission meeting.
- An in-depth evaluation of the Commission's investment in the Early Developmental Index (EDI) with a focus on understanding how other places have leveraged the EDI or similar assessments, interviewing current users of the EDI, and interviewing select early childhood experts to develop a set of considerations and options tailored to the Orange County context.

The scope of services will result in the following specific deliverables:

- A brief written assessment of progress made relative to the 2008 recommendations and a refreshed set of recommendations. This may be in the format of an outline, report or PowerPoint slides.
- Specific options and recommendations regarding actions the Commission can take to realize the full potential of the EDI in Orange County.
- An oral presentation of the assessment and recommendations to the Commission at the June planning meeting. Mike Perigo is scheduled to present The Bridgespan Group findings and recommendations at the June annual planning meeting. He will be available to participate throughout the morning's discussions.

#### **STRATEGIC PLAN & FISCAL SUMMARY:**

This agenda item does not include a funding request.

**PRIOR COMMISSION ACTIONS:**

- February 2016 - Adopted resolution authorizing agreement with The Bridgespan Group for an updated organizational assessment and recommendations
- March 2009 - Received the Bridgespan Implementation Progress report and provided direction to staff
- December, November, October 2008 – Received Bridgespan Implementation Update
- June 2008 – Received Bridgespan Group Portfolio Assessment

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Receive an update on The Bridgespan Group's assessment of the Children and Families Commission.

**Contact:** Christina Altmayer