

**Agenda Item 3  
December 3, 2014**

DATE: November 14, 2014  
TO: Children and Families Commission of Orange County  
FROM: Christina Altmayer, Executive Director   
SUBJECT: Young Children' Summit Progress Report

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**SUMMARY:**

A proposal for a Young Children's Summit in Orange County was presented to the Children and Families Commission in September 2014. The objective of the Summit is to promote awareness of the readiness of young children in Orange County for school, and identify and educate policy leaders on successful strategies that are being employed by communities and school districts to promote school readiness. By August 2015, for the first time, the Early Development Index (EDI) data will be collected for 100 percent of the kindergarten students in Orange County public schools. The Summit will provide a forum to present the data collected through the EDI process and to highlight communities that are actively using this data to address the needs of their children. The Commission will be coordinating the development of the 2015 Conditions of Children Report and will connect the release of the report with the Summit (see Agenda Item 4). This agenda item is a progress report on the Summit planning process that will showcase the EDI data.

**DISCUSSION:**

The Early Development Index (EDI) is a population-based, validated measure of school readiness and healthy development used to assist in understanding the early learning needs of young children in Orange County. The EDI includes five key domain areas: Physical Health and Well Being; Social Competence; Emotional Maturity; Language and Cognitive Development; and Communication Skills and General Knowledge. The evaluation tool assesses how children are developing by the time they reach school age, and supports analysis of the community factors that influence children in their first five years of life.

The implementation of EDI is on track to have data on 100 percent of all kindergarten students in Orange County public schools by August 2015. This marks an important milestone for understanding how ready children are for school and will be the largest collection of this type of data nationally. The data is not intended as an individual assessment of children, but rather a population measure to be used by policy makers to inform decisions and change systems to improve children's outcomes. The Young Children's Summit is intended to provide a forum for city, school, and community leaders to receive the data, foster discussion, and provide a better understanding of how this data can assist them in supporting the healthy development and school readiness of children in their community.

Former Senator and State Secretary of Education, Marian Bergeson has agreed to be the honorary chair of the Young Children's Summit. Commissioner Sandy Barry is the Chair of the Steering Committee, and the first official meeting was held in November. Commissioner Sandy Pierce is also on the Steering Committee with the Greg Duncan, University of California Irvine School of

Education Professor; Max Gardner, United Way Executive Director; Gregg Haulk, Huntington Beach City School District Superintendent and Superintendent Liaison to the Commission; Jeff Hittenberger, Orange County Department of Education Chief Academic Officer; Lacy Kelly, Association of Orange County Cities Executive Director; Todd Priest, Curt Pringle & Associates; and Neal Halfon and Lisa Stanley, UCLA Center for Healthier Children.

The Steering Committee agreed that a successful Summit will result in a stronger community understanding of the importance of early learning that can inform policy discussion to support healthy development and school readiness for all children. To achieve success, the Steering Committee recommended working with three to five cities and school districts in advance of the Summit and to provide technical assistance on how the EDI data can be effectively employed as a planning tool. The results from this process will be case studies presented by city and school district representatives at the Summit. The case studies are expected to include examples of successful city and school district programs that are positively impacting the community in the domains evaluated through the EDI process.

The Summit logistics remain unconfirmed as smaller planning groups meet to develop effective strategies to engage the audience of city, school, and community leaders. The Summit may begin with a series of meetings that culminate in a Summit that will feature panel presentations that interpret the data and model policies that are working. The next steering committee meeting will be scheduled for January 2015. In the meantime, the sub-planning groups will be meeting to refine the program, agenda, and plans to work with community representatives.

At the October meeting, the Commission approved redirecting a portion of the administrative cost savings (\$61,050) to be set-aside in the evaluation budget for the Young Children's Summit. In addition to Commission funding, requests will be made to community partners and local foundations to support the Summit. An update on the venue, dates, and budget for the Young Children's Summit will be presented to the Commission in early 2015.

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

The recommended action has been specifically reviewed in relation to the Commission's Strategic Plan and is consistent with applicable goals. There is no funding request associated with this agenda item.

#### **PRIOR COMMISSION ACTION:**

- October 2014 – Approved budget amendments and adopted resolution approving the amended annual operating budget for FY 2014/15
- September 2014 – Approved plans to host the State of the Young Children in Orange County Summit in fall 2015

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Receive the Young Children's Summit Progress Report

**Contact:** Kelly Pijl