



**Agenda Item 4
December 2, 2015**

DATE: November 18, 2015

TO: Children and Families Commission of Orange County

FROM: Christina Altmayer, Executive Director 

SUBJECT: Upcoming Conferences Supported by the Children and Families Commission

ACTION: Receive report on upcoming conferences supported by the Children and Families Commission of Orange County and authorize Executive Director to approve related costs

SUMMARY:

The Children and Families Commission of Orange County’s business plan includes a strategic intent statement to “focus on community learning and advancement of knowledge”. One of the activities to achieve the strategic intent is to create or co-sponsor conferences using the Commission’s data and expertise related to young children and families. This report is an update on two conferences planned for 2016. These conferences provide an opportunity to highlight the importance of early investments in children as well as the leadership that the Commission has provided in identifying impactful programs that support children’s healthy development and school readiness.

DISCUSSION:

The Commission is leading the planning process for two conferences scheduled for 2016. The Early Childhood STEM Symposium is scheduled for Saturday, February 20 and the Young Children’s Summit is scheduled for the end of April. The following is a progress report for both events.

Early Childhood STEM Symposium – February 20, 2016

For the past two years the Commission, THINK Together and the Orange County Department of Education have partnered with the Children’s Center at Caltech on the Early Childhood STEM Conference in Costa Mesa. These conferences exceeded expectations with over 500 attendees from early childhood education, and organizations interested in professional development opportunities in the areas of early science, technology, engineering and math. For the next two years the Children’s Center at Caltech has moved the conference to Pasadena.

To ensure the early childhood educators in Orange County have access to professional development in the STEM fields, the Early Childhood STEM Symposium is scheduled for Saturday, February 20 at the Disneyland Hotel. The OC STEM Initiative is the lead organization for planning the Symposium with support from the Commission, THINK Together, and the Orange County Department of Education. The date was selected to follow the conference in Pasadena and complement the training for those that plan to attend both events.

With the Symposium at Disneyland, Tinkerbell will participate and highlight “tinkering” and “making”, which are core STEM components and important for teaching early learners about the

engineering design process. The University of California, Irvine Dean of Engineering, Greg Washington is the keynote speaker and will present on the vital need of early STEM education. Representatives from the Children's Center at Caltech are invited to participate and continue the partnership that has been developed.

In addition to the planning partners, sponsors for the one day Early Childhood STEM Symposium include the Boeing Foundation, Children's Home Society, and the Orange County Business Council.

Young Children's Summit

Last year the Commission approved hosting a summit focusing on young children in Orange County and using the 2015 Early Development Index (EDI) data as the foundation for the discussion and analysis of how young children are faring. Orange County is the first large county in the State to have comprehensive data on all public school children in the State. The Summit is tentatively scheduled for late spring 2016. The program will include a keynote speaker presenting on the importance of children's healthy development and the impact of their success on society. The agenda will also include panel sessions with representatives by cities and school districts sharing their experience in using EDI to inform their planning and strategies to improve outcomes for young children.

The Commission approved an agreement with the UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families and Communities to provide technical assistance and support to the cities and school districts that agree to participate in the pilot planning process using the EDI data. The Commission is working with the Association of California Cities – Orange County to engage cities in the process. The Association is hosting regular monthly technical assistance meetings beginning in January to explore how EDI data can support planning for young children within larger city and school district planning and service delivery efforts. The participating city and school district representatives are anticipated to present case studies and lessons learned for sharing with the broader community at the Young Children's Summit.

The Commission is also exploring a potential partnership with ReadyNation (readynation.org) in support of the event. ReadyNation is a business leader organization working to strengthen business through better policies for children and youth. Their focus is to educate policymakers and the public about effective investments that will help businesses compete in today's global marketplace, build a foundation for lasting economic security, and help children get on the right track to succeed in school and in life. ReadyNation was originally created in 2006 by The Pew Charitable Trusts and other funders.

Commissioner Sandy Barry is the planning committee chair, and Commissioner Sandy Pierce and the Commission's Superintendent Liaison Gregg Haulk are participating as planning committee members. Other planning committee representatives include the Orange County Department of Education, University of California, Irvine and Los Angeles, and the Association of California Cities-Orange County. The Commission previously authorized \$61,050 in October 2014 to support planning and related costs for the children's summit. Authority for the Executive Director to approve summit related costs, consistent with her delegated authority is requested.

STRATEGIC PLAN & FISCAL SUMMARY:

This program has been specifically reviewed in relation to the Strategic Plan and is consistent with all goal areas. There is no funding requested for this item.

PRIOR COMMISSION ACTIONS:

- September 2015 - Received the Fiscal Year 2014/15 Early Developmental Index (EDI) results, update on the Young Children’s Summit planning process, and adopt resolution authorizing an amendment to agreement with UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families and Communities to provide technical assistance
- September 2014 – Received Fiscal Year 2013/14 Early Development Index Results and State of Young Children in Orange County Summit Proposal

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Receive report on upcoming conferences supported by the Children and Families Commission of Orange County and authorize Executive Director to approve related costs.

Contact: Kelly Pijl