

Memorandum

TO: ALL CHILDREN ACHIEVE
COMMITTEE

FROM: Jane Light

**SUBJECT: EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION
UPDATE**

DATE: January 30, 2006

Approved

Date

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee accept this six-month update of the Early Care and Education Strategic Work Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Early Care and Education work plan details strategies for the five goal areas identified in the Early Care and Education Strategic Plan for 2002 – 2006. Outcomes for the first half of this fiscal year are detailed in the Outcomes section of this report. We will be updating the current Strategic Work Plan, which expires in July 2006. Efforts are now under way by the Early Care and Education Commission and staff to recruit a team of community leaders, educators and public officials to draft a new Strategic Plan. Your recommendations and involvement are welcome as this team is formed.

ANALYSIS

As the Strategic Work Plan is reviewed and updated, it may be impacted by the potential loss of two Early Care and Education staff positions that are grant-funded. The loss of these positions will limit staff support for office operations and child care facility development, which is staff intensive.

OUTCOMES

The Early Care and Education Work Plan is focused on supporting the mission that all children enter school with the foundation needed for personal, academic and social success. In addition, it is our belief that our work should support the well-being of the whole child through efforts that nurture children and enable parents to be their child's first teacher.

Work Plan Accomplishments: Following are accomplishments in the past four months:

Goal Area I: Increase the number of accessible and affordable quality early care and education spaces to meet the needs of San José families.

- Recommendations will be presented to the Redevelopment Agency Board in mid-February to fund five new projects, a feasibility study, and a one-time augmentation for a current project. Projects are detailed below. A balance of \$570,000 remains for investment in one or two future projects.

	<u>Recomm. Funding</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>	<u>Spaces</u>	<u>Open Date</u>
San Juan Bautista Child Development Center, Inc. <i>Cassell Elementary School, Alum Rock Head Start classroom at San Juan Bautista Center</i>	\$150,000 \$250,000	\$289,440 \$408,233	50 50	Apr. '06
Charities Housing w/Estrella Family Services <i>Affordable housing complex preschool</i>	\$500,000	\$1,012,000	48	July '07
Kidango <i>Head Start Classroom for Arbuckle School, Alum Rock</i>	\$410,670	\$620,500	24	Sept. '07
National Hispanic University <i>Build a child care teaching facility</i>	\$1,000,000	\$3,000,000	30 +130	Spring '06 Spring '07
MACSA Youth Center <i>Conduct a feasibility and water table study</i>	\$25,000	\$400,000	Poss. (40- 50)	unknown
San Jose Day Nursery <i>Augment funding to assist with construction increases</i>	\$144,000	\$3,736,000	No added spaces	June '06
SUBTOTAL	\$2,479,670	\$9,466,173	332	

- A contract is nearly complete with the County Office of Education to create a new Smart Start San Jose program at the San Antonio School in the Alum Rock School District. The city will contribute \$457,109 towards the purchase of a new modular building that will provide two Head Start classrooms.
- In order to have a more accurate and current analysis of the number of children in San Jose needing licensed care outside the home, the Library Department commissioned a study by Godbe Research, who interviewed 400 parents or caregivers and 193 child care providers in the Fall of 2005. The study was released by the Mayor at a press conference on Monday,

January 30th at the Estrella Family Services Smart Start Center. Copies of the Executive Summary are included in today's packet and can be accessed on the Library website at: http://www.sjlibrary.org/services/early_care/smartstart/news_events/index.htm

Goal Area II. Facilitate education and professional development on how to start, operate, and/or work in high quality early care and education programs.

- With funding from a Federal Earmark grant, Smart Start has contracted with DeAnza College to provide a child development course for more than 35 child care providers employed at Smart Start San Jose locations during the Winter Quarter. The course, titled "Curriculum Development for Early Educators," is focused on inclusion methods for children with special needs and managing problem behaviors. Participants are able to get college credit and use these credits towards a degree. A spring course will be offered on creativity and play.
- Site visits to evaluate existing Smart Start San Jose programs were conducted in the Fall as part of the annual compliance review process. Each program conducted a self-assessment based on Smart Start quality standards and categories from the ECERS rating scale. Reviews were completed the end of December. All programs met compliance requirements.
- More than sixty participants are actively enrolled in the ten-month Family Care Training program which trains low-income women how to own and operate a family home care business. Nearly 75% of the participants are Latino and four are Vietnamese. The training program, which begins in August and ends in May, features a core series of monthly child development courses taught by UC Davis Extension that are supplemented with more than 50 other workshops that participants can choose from in order to complete 75 hours of professional development credits. This year Smart Start is partnering with Silicon Valley Economic Development to offer more business-related training.
- Several Early Care and Education staff members are working on the development of a training series of four workshop topics on early literacy and learning that will be presented to interested Smart Start center staff members and parents in the Spring.
- In an effort to build a sense of community and continued learning among the 26 Smart Start San Jose programs, we will be hosting the 2nd Annual *Smart Start Conference* for parents and early educators on Saturday, May 6th with the theme, "Learning through Adventure."

Goal Area III: Create a public awareness campaign so that the public is knowledgeable about early care and education programs.

- Public awareness is raised in a variety of ways. Reaching families who most need to know about the importance of early childhood development is often challenging. Working in collaboration with the Stepping Stones program and Franklin McKinley Educational Foundation, the Smart Start Resource Teacher and Books for Little Hands Literacy Specialist began in November to offer weekly Preschool Activity workshops at Solari Center for

parents, exempt caregivers and their young children. These two teachers present fun, hands-on learning activities that demonstrate other things to do with children besides watching TV. They learn activities for large and small motor development, cognitive development, the arts and early literacy skills. Parents have expressed a great deal of gratitude for the time, attention and fun ideas they have received to help their children learn and grow.

- In an effort to show parents the value of reading to their children, the Smart Start San Jose centers at Washington Elementary School and Overfelt High School are participating in a *Reach Out and Read* project to bring books to parents and young children when they attend their well baby visits at the School Health Clinics on campus. During the holidays, the number of parents bringing their children for visits has been low, but the numbers are expected to increase in the winter and spring.
- Planning for the *Month of the Young Child* during April is underway and the theme for the Children's Faire has been selected: "Ready, Set, Play." Recognition of Family Care providers will be a major focus for this year's Outstanding Contributor awards. The Children's Discovery Museum is leading the effort to create and collect children's creative artwork, which will be displayed throughout the City. Branch libraries are taking a more active role in promoting Month of the Young Child events in their locations during April.

Goal Area IV: Increase political and community advocacy for early care and education.

- The Early Care and Education staff continues to support the work of the Early Care and Education Commission in its role of identifying community needs and advocating for early childcare needs. At the November meeting, the E3 Institute and First 5 Commission staff made a presentation about the local Preschool for All research using geomapping and their planning process. At the December meeting, the Executive Director of United Way made a presentation about their community needs study identifying factors influencing sustainability. These presentations reinforced the growing partnership between the City and these agencies to collaborate in our efforts to address the needs for quality care and education in San Jose.
- Staff members attended a variety of community group meetings, including the Partnership for School Readiness, the Silicon Valley Read Aloud Collaborative, and Young Readers – Future Leaders in order to partner with other agencies to promote early education efforts. One such event was a very festive *Festival of Books* sponsored by the Read Aloud Collaborative partners at the Children's Discovery Museum on Oct. 16, 2005.

Goal Area V: Integrate the City of San Jose's Early Care and Education Strategic Work plan with local, state and national initiatives in order to leverage and increase resources and ensure a comprehensive child care delivery system.

- Leslie Shelton is participating as a member of the County First 5 Preschool for All Implementation Planning Team, which has been convened by the E3 Institute to help guide and further develop plans for local implementation of the local Preschool for All Initiative.

- The Books for Little Hands staff and librarians at Tully and Alum Rock library branches are participating in the second year of the Arts Enrichment Initiative coordinated by the E3 Institute with FIRST 5 funding. In addition to providing assistance in recommending books and materials to teaching artists, the two branch libraries will each host an artist in residence at their library for weekly program activities over a six to eight week period beginning this spring.
- The Early Care and Education staff members continued to participate in quarterly teleconference calls sponsored by the National League of Cities to discuss early childhood education efforts with other cities throughout the nation.

COORDINATION

The Early Care and Education Services staff continues to coordinate efforts with the San José Redevelopment Agency and Early Care and Education Commission to carry out the Strategic Plan.

JANE LIGHT
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