



DIANNE JACOB

CHAIRWOMAN
SUPERVISOR, SECOND DISTRICT
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

April 22, 2009

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Strategic Planning Team members:

I would like to thank each of you for your time and commitment to the First 5 2009-14 strategic planning process. I regret that I have a conflict and cannot be there in person to help kick off this final phase of the strategic planning process. This is important work and a major undertaking which is especially critical during these uncertain financial times.

As you know, the Commission had a strategic planning workshop in February. My purpose today is to provide you with my vision and suggested direction for the First 5 strategic plan as you finalize your work. It is really summed up in these key points.

Narrow the focus. There is no question that funding for First 5 will decline, regardless of May's special election. The Commission cannot continue to fund its current range of activities. We must carefully consider what we can and should fund as we move forward to serve children 0-5 years old.

Data driven. The selection of the Commission's core programs should come from an examination of community needs, with consideration of the current and potential investments from other funding sources.

Outcomes and Results. Over the past six years, the Commission moved to funding broader initiatives with specific targets and we have learned a lot. Only programs with proven results should be considered for continued support. Only strategies that are truly proven by evidence should be proposed. It is now time to fund fewer programs, those with the greatest documented potential for improving outcomes for children

Administrative Efficiency. As a result of the national financial situation and the State's budget crisis, many families are under stress. For public accountability, we must strive to maximize the dollars spent to provide services for children and families. Programs with high overhead costs or that require high Commission staff overheads may need to be redesigned. Now, more than ever, we must invest in direct services to children and families.

Fiscal Responsibility. A joint examination of results and costs will move us toward identifying the true return on investment for First 5 projects and the children of San Diego

This is a challenging but critical assignment for the future of First 5 San Diego. If we plan well, we can preserve a safety net and prepare children for an improved quality of life. I thank you for all your work and dedication to this project and to serving San Diego County's youngest residents.

Sincerely,

DIANNE JACOB
Chairwoman

DJ:th

cc:

First 5 Commissioners: Mr. Nick Macchione, Dr. Wilma Wooten, Mrs. Carol Skiljan, Mrs. Charlene Tressler