



## MEMORANDUM

Kathy Gallagher, Director

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To: Family and Human Services Committee  
Supervisor John Gioia, Chairperson  
Supervisor Candace Andersen, Member  
Date: October 12, 2017

From: Kathy Gallagher, EHSD Director

Subject: FHS Referral #78 Community Services Bureau/Head Start Oversight (Consent Item)

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Please accept this oversight report regarding the operation of the Employment and Human Services Department Community Service Bureau (CSB) and its programs. This memo compliments CSB's annual report sent to all Board offices in July 2017. Community Services remains a leader in the field and is known throughout the country for its innovation and technological advances. This memo outlines CSB's accomplishments and special projects as well as some challenges as we move into 2018.

### **Accomplishments and Special Initiatives**

#### ***Early Care and Education Services***

- Head Start, Early Head Start, and California Department of Education funding allowed CSB to provide services to 2,326 children directly and to 878 children through alternative payment vouchers.
- In March 2017, CSB was awarded funding to increase the number of Early Head Start children from 383 to 573 – an increase of 190 much need spaces for infants and toddlers. This next round of funding was in addition to the \$1.1 million received in 2015 to support 72 infants and toddlers through a partnership with the Childcare Council.
- New Head Start Performance Standards were released for the first time since 1975 and were successfully integrated into all program systems and services. The new standards allow programs the flexibility to develop and support programs based on community need. The Board was updated in November 2016 on the critical changes impacting the program.
- In the 2016-17 Program Year:
  - 100% of children had health coverage
  - 100% of children had a medical home
  - 100% of children were up-to-date on immunizations
  - 95% of preschool children had dental exams with 87.4% of children needing dental treatment receiving it

- 11.3% of children enrolled had certified disabilities, exceeding the federal mandate that 10% of children enrolled have disabilities
- A new Head Start Apprenticeship training program is underway whereby participants will earn 12 core units in early childhood development in 18 weeks. This exciting partnership with the YMCA of the East Bay and Contra Costa College will support students in a cohort environment to receive transferrable courses while receiving on-the-job training.
- Three senior managers successfully completed the UCLA Anderson School of Management Head Start Fellows program, a prestigious program designed to develop exemplary leaders in the Head Start community and beyond.
- In an effort to fully support our staff and families, CSB has embarked on several initiatives to deepen the work we do in the community.
  - CSB is proud to be part of the community-wide effort to become trauma-informed. All staff and partners have participated in Trauma Informed Training 1.0 and several staff is now poised to be part of a train-the-trainer model for 2.0 with the intent to deepen staff's understanding of trauma and employ best practice strategies.
  - In partnership with Children's Hospital Oakland, CSB has adopted Reflective Supervision as a means to fully support staff in working with families. Through reflective practice, we are able to support the staff to be the best they can be with the families we serve.
  - CSB has begun implementation of CSEFEL Teaching Pyramid in 5 preschool classrooms at Bayo Vista, GMIII and Riverview. The Teaching Pyramid is a comprehensive approach designed to help educators promote social-emotional competence, address challenging behaviors in young children, and develop safe and nurturing group environments for all children. This approach will complement the "Second Step" social-emotional curriculum that has been used widely in all CSB classrooms.

**Bureau-wide Strategic Initiatives:** The following bureau-wide priorities were developed this year:

- CSB will develop systems and programs to facilitate increased staff competencies and effective teams to ensure a strong and motivated workforce that can meet the current and future needs of our communities.
- CSB will identify, develop and implement technology solutions so that CSB is fully streamlining processes, enabling reduced staff time on traditional paperwork and maximizing human capital.

***Community Action Program Services:***

- Ten subcontractors targeting three priority areas of need (employment, housing, and nutrition) served 3,053 residents with a variety of services designed to ameliorate poverty.

- Seven low-income residents participated in a Student Intern program and receive on-the-job training with pay to learn how to be exceptional clerical assistants – 100% of them have achieved full-time employment.
- The Low Income Energy Assistance Program service at total of 5,679 households.
- The Economic Opportunity Council hosted a roundtable to create a coordinate system of care among the subcontractors and to gather success stories to share in an effort to preserve funding.

### **Challenges Ahead:**

***Aging Facilities:*** Most of CSB’s facilities are over 10 years old and are in need of repair; and in some cases, replacement. The Brookside Center, serving 75 children is one such center. Results from tests conducted over the past year and a half have identified contamination in the soil on and around the center grounds as a result of two inactive underground pipelines. In some areas within the center, the residuals in the air exceed ESL (Environmental Screening Level) standards for residential homes. Also of concern, is the growing vagrant population around the center which has resulted in several encampments close to the entrance of the center and even a fire that was set near the playground last year. Brookside is also housed between two active railroad tracks operated by BNSF Railway.

CSB’s Las Deltas Center, serving 36 children housed at the Contra Costa Housing Authority in North Richmond, is slated to be sold and potentially demolished. We have been informed that we will need to vacate within the next year.

Additionally, several of CSB’s modular and stick buildings, purchased and built in the early 2000s, are beginning to wear, requiring costly repairs such as foundational work, roof and floor replacements, playground resurfacing and other repairs necessary to maintain health and safety standards.

***Flat Funding:*** Head Start and Early Head Start are not expected to get any funding increases, and the Community Services Block grant has been reduced by 1% (and was slated for elimination in the President’s “Skinny Budget”).

- The cost of doing business as a county agency continues to rise, while funding is flat. Mandated COLAs for staff are unfunded and other costs continue to climb.
- Head Start childcare slots reductions become necessary to cover the rising cost of doing business – reducing the number of child care slots impacts the child’s school readiness outcomes and makes it harder for parents to go to work and stay at work.
- CSB only receives \$153,000 in county general funds.

### ***Adequate Staffing***

- Staffing our classrooms with qualified teachers continues to be a struggle with a current 25% vacancy rate. Teachers are leaving our program to go to the school districts, which offer higher pay for the same qualifications.

**Support Needed:**

In closing, it is important to note that for every dollar invested in high quality care and education, there is a \$14 return on that investment in savings in down-stream costs and economic gains made over the lifetime of the children served. This is a wise investment and one of which the county can be very proud. This county's program is one of high quality: CSB's annual client satisfaction survey shows a 99% satisfaction rate with our services and CSB centers continue to rate 4s and 5s on the 5-point QRIS (Quality Rating and Improvement Scale – aka Quality Matters) rating scale. Each year, our child and family outcome measures shows that children and their families leave our program ready for school. Investing in our neediest children both at the state and the local levels is necessary. We urge our local legislators to advocate for funding and the resources necessary to continue providing quality care.