

MEMORANDUM

Kathy Gallagher, Director

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To: Family and Human Services Committee
Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors Date: September 28, 2020

From: Kathy Gallagher, EHSD Director
Katharine Mason, Interim Director Community Services
Bureau

Subject: **FHS Referral #78 Community Services Bureau/Head Start Oversight with Staffing Report**

I. Overview:

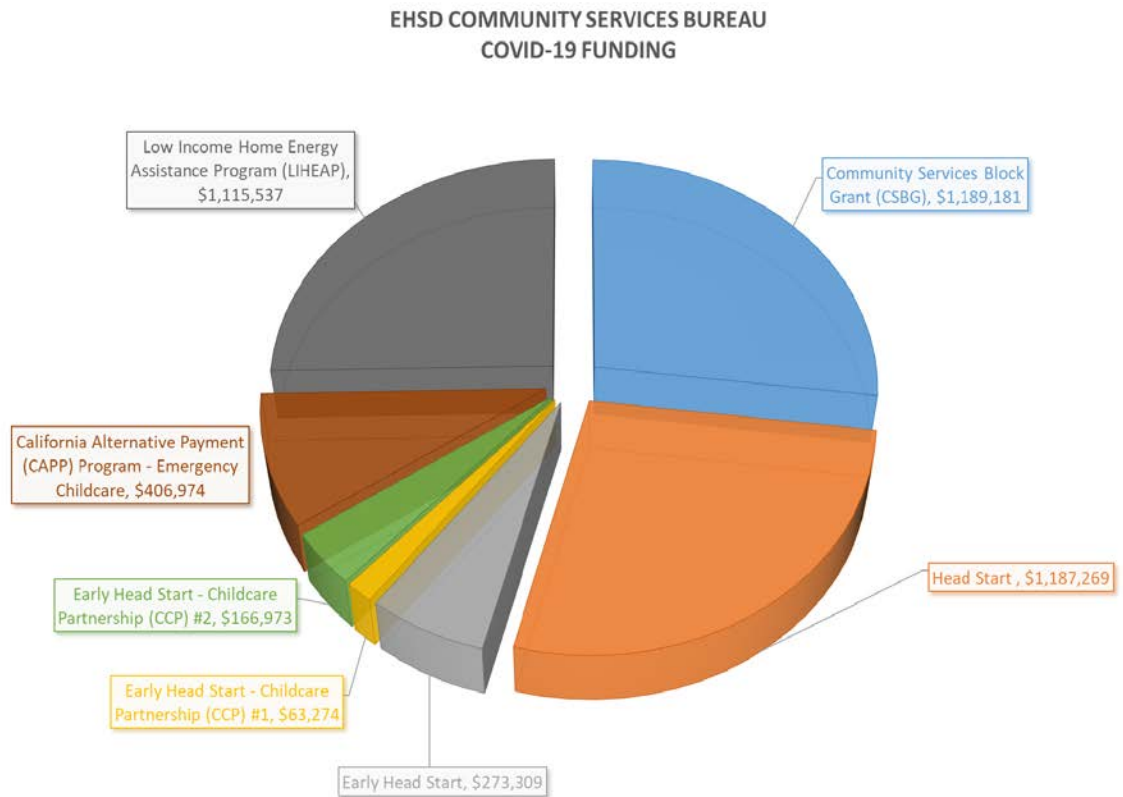
Please accept this annual update for the Employment and Human Services Department, Community Services Bureau (CSB). This memo will highlight key COVID-19 response activities, and topics and challenges that continue as areas of focus in the year to come.

II. COVID-19 Response Key Highlights:

- CSB provided Emergency Childcare for first responders and essential workers from April through end of June (11 weeks), serving 40 children and their families. An additional 218 children of essential workers were placed in community childcare with State-funded vouchers. These families will have first priority to enroll into an ongoing (non-emergency) subsidized Alternative Payment Program (CAPP).
- Over 1000 children enrolled in Head Start, Early Head Start and State Child Development programs received distance-learning March to present. Using a multi-layered approach, all families receive a monthly calendar of activities, detailed educational activities three times a week, regular calls and zoom meetings to maintain home-school connection, lessons and activities via CSB's YouTube channel, and "grab & go" material packets.
- CSB, the Head Start Delegate Agency, and several childcare partners re-opened regular childcare services in July with limited in-class capacity and strict infection control measures in accordance with federal, state and local guidelines specific to this pandemic. However, due to the corresponding surge in cases in the community and

the resulting need to close nine classrooms cohorts in a two-week period, CSB closed operation in August. During this four-week period management work closely with stakeholders, newly received State mandates, and the Health Services Department to refine protocols and enhance safety precautions, and in some cases at levels above suggested guidelines for the benefit of staff and children. At this time all CSB, Delegate Agency and childcare partner programs are open for in-class services except a few Family Childcare providers and two school-based centers due to campus closure.

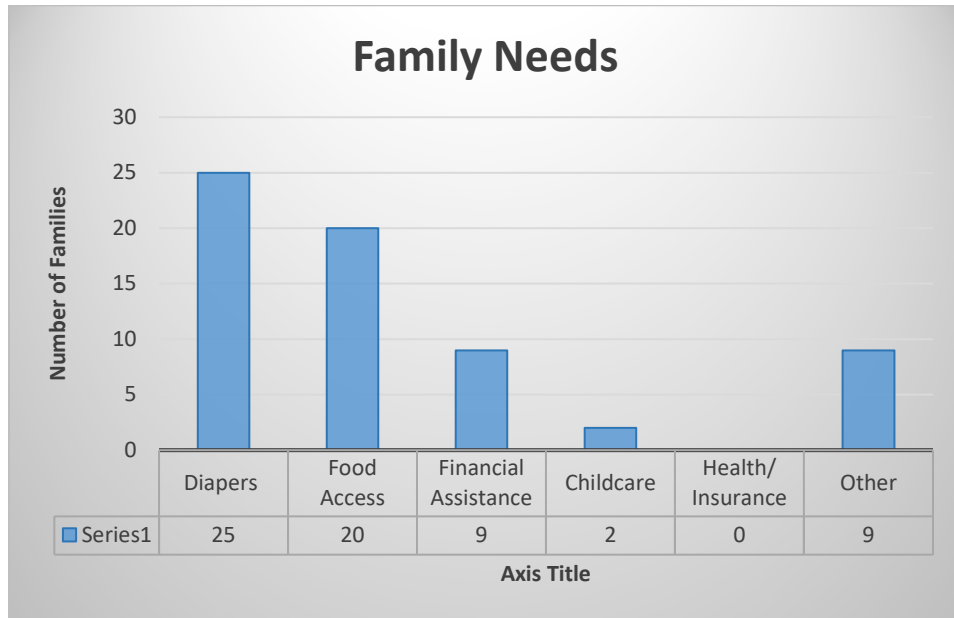
- New COVID-19 CARES Act funding to the Bureau totaling \$4,402,517



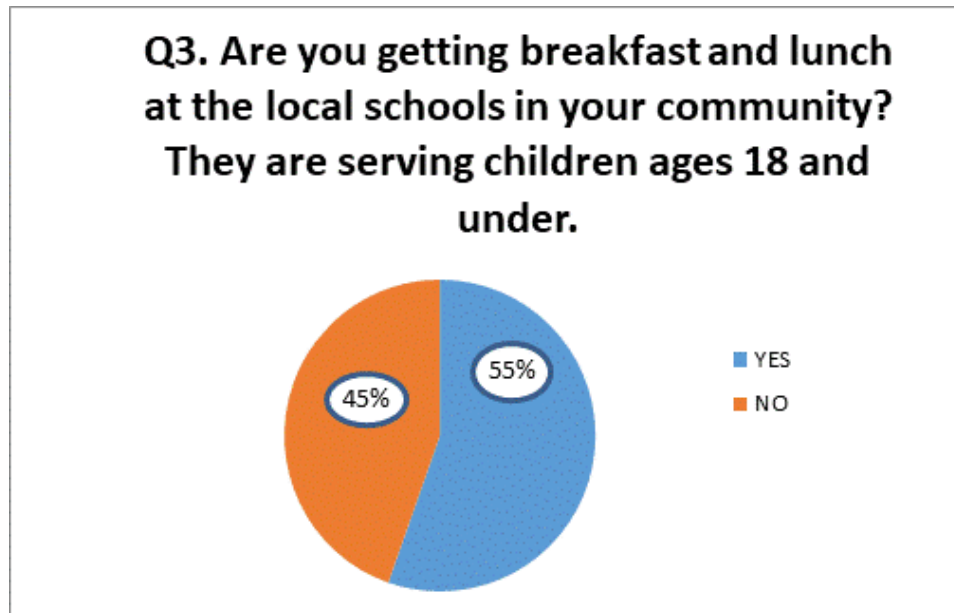
- These funds are being used in a variety of ways where stipulated by the specific funder. Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds are directed by the Economic Opportunity Council to support the community with stable housing, mental health services and food security. Head Start and Early Head Start funds are used to support facility modifications, purchase of PPEs and cleaning supplies, conduct specialized cleaning, and purchase of materials, supplies and equipment used for distance-learning and on-site services. CAPP funds are supporting extended childcare services for essential workers, up to five months as needed. Low-income Home Energy Assistance (LiHEAP) funds are used to expand services, with priority to those impacted

by unemployment and Vulnerable Populations defined as elderly individuals, disabled individuals or children age five and under.

- To support enrolled families, the Comprehensive Services Team re-tooled their approach and developed new strategies and resources to meet families' needs based on data collected from a newly established Family Resources Hotline and from survey responses. The Family Support Hotline showed the highest needs were in rental assistance, food resources and diapers.



The survey showed that families were unaware that schools were offering free breakfast and lunch to all children and their siblings.



- In response, a weekly “grab & go” distribution of diapers, wipes and formula was implemented along with a resource blast on text messaging, emailing, and Facebook of school-based and community food distribution sites. Phone call follow up was made to ensure the families were getting their needs met, averaging 245 calls per day. Use of technology has been maximized by greater use of Facebook and conducting monthly parent meetings and Policy Council meetings via Zoom. A survey on communication preferences revealed that phone calls were the first preference followed by Facebook. The survey also revealed that 72% of parents were not aware of the CSB YouTube Channel that has abundance content for distance learning, healthy cooking, and story time. By virtue of survey, they are now better informed.
- Like all other County buildings, CSB’s offices and centers have been equipped with distance markers, postings and front desk barriers where necessary. Childcare centers have additional precautions in place due to the increased risk involved in congregate care. In alignment with federal, state and local guidance, these precautions include health-screening checks for all staff and children upon arrival, strict maintenance of small stable cohorts of staff and children that do not co-mingle with other cohorts, and additional PPEs such as smocks and face shields for teaching staff.
- To support staff morale and well-being CSB significantly increased wellness activities and information for staff. Examples include: twice weekly wellness emails focused on mental health and holistic wellness, trauma-focused survey to identify staff needs and areas of concern, and EAP presentation to managers/supervisors and facilitated group discussions with staff in need.

III. Ongoing Challenges:

- At this time in-class services and cohort sizes are limited as required by local Health Department and Community Care Licensing. As a result, CSB and its childcare partners are able to serve 48% of enrolled children in-class, while the remaining children continue to receive distance learning services as described above. CSB is closely monitoring any changes in these requirements so that in-class services can be expanded as soon as permissible and safe.
- **Teaching staffing shortage:** CSB continues to hover at a 10% shortage in our teaching positions, primarily in positions working with infants and toddlers and the Associate Teacher classification, as well as Teacher Assistant Trainees and Food Service

Transporters. The key reasons for the shortage remain the same as presented in October 2018:

- ~ High cost of living in the Bay Area. Many of our staff struggle to make ends meet.
- ~ Staff migration: Our greatest staffing shortage is in West County. Staff are moving out of the county or farther east.
- ~ Transitional Kindergarten and other subsidized programs in the area.
- ~ Nation-wide shortage: programs throughout the state/ nation are experiencing teacher staffing shortages.

IV. Staffing Issues – Successful Outcome:

- March 2020 Human Resources completed the Salary Study requested by this committee. Eight classifications were recommended for varying levels of salary increases to bring wages up to livable and competitive levels: Teacher Assistant Trainee, Child Nutrition Food Service Transporter, Community Services Building Services Worker, Associate Teacher, Infant-Toddler (IT) Associate Teacher, and Child Nutrition Worker I, II and III.

Class Title	CCC Salary	Mean	Median	CCC % above/below mean	CCC% above/below median
Teacher Assistant Trainee	\$2,484	\$3,081	\$3,081	-24.03%	-24.03%
Child Nutrition Worker I-Project	\$2,738.94	\$3,465	\$3,828	-26.51%	-39.77%
Child Nutrition Food Service Transporter-Project	\$2,738.94	\$3,334	\$3,581	-21.73%	-30.74%
Community Services Building Services Worker-Project	\$2,897.60	\$3,757	\$4,143	-29.67%	-42.98%
Child Nutrition Worker II-Project	\$2,990.87	\$4,010	\$4,010	-34.06%	-34.06%
Associate Teacher	\$3,023	\$3,216	\$3,291	-6.38%	-8.87%
IT Associate Teacher	\$3,023	\$3,072	\$3,006	-1.62%	0.58%

Child Nutrition Worker III-Project	\$3,231.02	\$4,012	\$3,989	-24.18%	-23.46%
Teacher	\$4,073	\$3,859	\$3,895	5.25%	4.38%
IT Teacher	\$4,073	\$3,695	\$3,680	9.27%	9.65%
Master Teacher	\$4,327	\$4,382	\$4,382	-1.27%	-1.27%
IT Master Teacher	\$4,327	\$4,382	\$4,382	-1.27%	-1.27%

- CSB is in the process of implementing the recommended increases and has secured Quality Improvement (QI) funds from Office of Head Start to support salary increases.

PROGRAMS	QUALITY IMPROVEMENT (QI)
EHS-CCP	\$104,540
Head Start	\$359,366
Early Head Start	\$113,826
Total QI Funding	\$577,732
First Baptist Head Start	\$ (47,181)
QI Funding available	\$530,551

Total Budget for Teacher Salary Increase	\$ 651,633
Shortage covered by Base Grant	\$ (121,082)

V. Moving Forward:

- Replacing CSB’s central kitchen:** We have secured a space at 303 41st Street in Richmond. The building will require a seismic retrofit before the kitchen is constructed. The construction drawings for the project started in August 2020 and include structural work such as a new roof diaphragm, wall supports and new openings for the entry points. In addition, this make-ready phase includes a fire sprinkler system, and in-floor utility work. Construction is expected to begin in October 2020 and will start with demolition of the existing interior. Concurrently, the kitchen build-out construction drawings are underway. The project’s tenant improvement phase includes new interior walls, new plumbing, gas and electrical utilities, remodel of an interior ramp, new HVAC equipment, and new exterior ADA

ramps and parking. The kitchen construction will start in April 2021 and includes kitchen appliances, office/cubicles spaces and bathroom upgrades.

- **Continued investment in our staff:**
 - ~ Growing our own through Teacher Apprentice and LINKED programs in partnership with Contra Costa and Diablo Valley Colleges.
 - ~ Advocating for national, state and local investment in the workforce.
 - ~ Marketing and advertising in new and innovative ways.
 - ~ Retention strategies that focus on staff competencies, trauma informed practice, staff wellness, reflective supervision and practice and recognition programs.

- **State review year:** We anticipate a Contract Monitoring Review by California Department of Education (CDE) sometime in 2020-2021 program year, held over from 2019-2020 due to pandemic. The Contract Monitoring Review consists of family data file review, classroom observations, attendance records, child portfolios, inventory records, site licensure and staff development program.

- We continue to be the largest high quality childcare provider in the county.