

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY BOARD AGENDA LETTER



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
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Santa Barbara, CA 93101
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Agenda Number:
Prepared on: 12/24/01
Department Name: County Administrator
Department No.: 012
Agenda Date: 1/15/02
Placement: Departmental
Estimate Time: 15 Min
Continued Item: NO
If Yes, date from:

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Santa Barbara County Child Care Planning Council
Flo Furuike, Chair

STAFF CONTACT: Judy Sandoval, Administrative Analyst
568-3403

SUBJECT: Transfer of Program Quality Improvement Project from Santa Barbara County Education Office to Santa Barbara County, Office of the County Administrator

Recommendation(s):

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Approve the transfer of the Program Quality Improvement project and fiscal management from Santa Barbara County Education Office to Santa Barbara County, County Administrator's Office, Office of Early Care and Education effective February 1, 2002,
- B. Adopt the attached Personnel Resolutions adding one Early Care and Education Program Quality Improvement Coordinator position (Range 602) and one Office Assistant Senior position (Range 439) effective January 07, 2002.
- C. Approve attached Budget Revision establishing budget appropriations for Program Quality Improvement project from unanticipated revenue in the amount of \$751,174.

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:

The recommendations are primarily aligned with the Board's strategic plan goal no. 7 – A Community that Fosters the Safety and Well-Being of Families and Children.

Executive Summary and Discussion:

History

In July 2000, the Santa Barbara County Children and Families Commission (Commission) awarded a three year, \$1.975 million dollar grant to the Santa Barbara County Child Care Planning Council (Council), as lead agent of a collaborative. The grant was to be used to establish an Office of Early Care and Education for Santa Barbara County.

The Office of Early Care and Education has been established and consists of two programs –Early Care and Education (ECE) and Program Quality Improvement (PQI). The ECE program is administered by an ECE Coordinator and is under the administration of the Santa Barbara County Administrator’s Office. Its responsibilities are to increase the quality, accessibility, quantity and affordability of childcare in Santa Barbara County. Additionally, the program is responsible for the collection of data to support efforts to reach this goal; act as a clearinghouse of information on early care and education; and, work with government, business, providers and the community to expand the County’s early care and education capacity.

The Program Quality Improvement project is administered by a PQI Coordinator and is currently under the Child Development Program of the Santa Barbara County Education Office. The PQI project provides funding and support to help early care and education programs make quality improvements. Additionally, the PQI project is charged with the development of a pilot project to help eight early care and education programs gain national accreditation. A broader parallel program promoting targeted quality improvement through self-study and peer facilitation and a program to promote the training and retention of providers is called Steps to Quality.

Accomplishments

Over the past fourteen months both programs have made outstanding progress. The ECE program has been awarded an additional Planning Grant of \$29,000 for, and is in the process of, evaluating land use barriers to childcare permitting in the County and in the 7 cities. Data, information and resources on Early Care and Education have been gathered; creating a countywide clearinghouse that has been accessed by over 75 community members since July 2001. A website has been developed, addressing the childcare issues of parents, providers and employers. Involvement of the business community in childcare issues is being garnered through outreach, focus groups and a countywide economic childcare summit.

The PQI project completed its first round of stipends for FY 00-01 with awards to over 409 eligible applicants ranging from \$135 to \$1,320 each, with an additional \$250 supplement to applicants using bilingual skills or holding a BA or higher degree, for a total award of over \$360,000. The second round of stipends for FY 01-02 has been completed and approximately 200 applicants applied. The PQI Coordinator and its committee have completed screening applications for both Steps to Quality and Accreditation programs. Eight programs have been selected for accreditation and fifty-one programs have been selected for Steps to Quality.

The PQI program has been able to leverage state matching funds to increase stipend awards (twenty-five percent of the Commission stipend award) along with stipend funds from a grant under AB212. AB212 is a

California state bill that was passed and is being administered through the California Department of Education.

Request

During the past fourteen months, the Council has had the opportunity to evaluate the program structure. It has been recognized that both programs would run with greater efficiency if they were co-located. This would allow for overlapping of supervisory duties and a greater share of clerical support and use of resources, and reducing duplication of material goods.

With the concurrence of Michael F. Brown, County Administrator, and William Cirone, Superintendent of Santa Barbara County Education Office, the Santa Barbara Children and Families Commission and the Santa Barbara County Child Care Planning Council have approved this transfer. It is requested that the Board of Supervisors also approve the transfer of the Program Quality Improvement project from Santa Barbara County Education to Santa Barbara County, Office of the County Administrator, Office of Early Care and Education effective February 1, 2002.

Mandates and Service Levels: This program is not mandated.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts: The Program Quality Improvement project is funded by a multi-year grant from the Santa Barbara Children and Families Commission to the Santa Barbara County Child Care Planning Council, State Match from the State Children and Families Commission, and a grant from California Department of Education to the Santa Barbara County Education Office. There are no general county funds supporting this program.

The Office of Early Care and Education and the Early Care & Education Coordinator are located in the County Administration Building, and the Program Quality Improvement project is currently located at Hope School District Office. Both programs share a rented office in Santa Maria and take turns staffing the office throughout the week to provide a north County presence. With the requested transfer, the two PQI staff members will be relocated in available office space with the Early Care and Education program.

Special Instructions:

Please provide Judy Sandoval, Administrative Analyst, Office of the County Administrator, three copies of the Minute Order.

Concurrence:

Auditor-Controller
County Counsel
County Administrator
Santa Barbara County Education Office