



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
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Santa Barbara, CA 93101
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2015 APR 31 AM 8:17
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

15-00391 0512-D6

Department Name: CEO
Department No.: 012
For Agenda Of: May 12, 2015
Placement: Departmental
Estimated Time: 45 minutes
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer
Director(s)
Contact Info: Terri Nisich, Assistant County Executive Officer (568-3400)
SUBJECT: A Snapshot of Poverty Report Status Report

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a. Receive status report on County department's efforts regarding use of data, findings and focus areas provided within the 2013 Poverty Report: *A Snapshot of Poverty in Santa Barbara County* and;
- b. Direct the Inter-Agency Policy Council (IAPC) Department Directors to return to the Board of Supervisors in March of 2016 with an update on outcomes related to poverty indicators and progress on focus areas.
- c. Determine the above actions are exempt from environmental review per CEQA Guideline Section 15378(b)(5), since they are a government activity that does not involve a commitment to a specific project that may result in a potentially significant effect on the environment.

Summary Text:

On September 10, 2013 the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors received a presentation and filed the 2013 Poverty Report: *A Snapshot of Poverty in Santa Barbara County*. At that time, the Board directed the CEO to work in conjunction with appropriate departments to utilize data, assess findings and focus areas, and incorporate information as appropriate in program and budget development processes. This agenda item will address the efforts that have taken place since the release of the Poverty Report.

The Poverty Report has been widely disseminated throughout the community by the Department of Social Services. Presentations were provided to a broad group of public and private stakeholders and

targeted presentations were made to the Adult Aging Network, the Kids Network, First 5, the Human Services Inter-Agency Policy Council (IAPC), and the Human Services Commission. The goal of each presentation was to make the service agencies aware of the findings of the report, provide additional data and analysis on targeted demographic groups, and encourage use of the data as appropriate in the development of overall programming, budgeting, and services.

The Department of Social Services has been a liaison providing additional information to community agencies and leading discussions with Boards and Networks to utilize the Poverty Report to generate population and location specific strategies which will better serve the community. Some examples of these liaison efforts are highlighted below:

- The Workforce Investment Board used the Poverty Study as part of the “economic analysis” portion of the Five Year Strategic Plan that was submitted and approved by the State last year. The Youth Council had a Retreat in late June 2014, and during the planning for the coming year’s program (who will be served, etc.) the Poverty Report was one-source of data.
- The KIDS Network Executive Committee and KIDS Network General Membership have reviewed the report and developed priorities and recommendations with a focus on mitigating the effects of poverty for children and families. Member agencies are focused on stabilizing families, helping them meet basic needs, and developing effective partnerships to streamline access to resources.
- The Adult and Aging Network (AAN) has used the Poverty Report as a springboard to dive further into the disabled adult and senior population data indicators. The AAN is interested in mapping additional population specific senior data, including using the Senior Resource Guide distributed annually by the Area Agency on Aging to map services by category to determine population specific gaps in services.

There have been numerous requests for information and presentations by the community regarding the poverty report given by the Social Services Department. Below is a list of the requesting entities and focus area of the presentation or information request.

Requesting Entity	Request or Focus Area of Presentation
Healthy Lompoc Coalition	Request to get more specifics on the Lompoc non-profits who participated in the stakeholder survey.
KIDS Network Executive Committee	General report overview presentation with child/youth specific poverty and indicator data.
Adult and Aging Network	General report overview presentation with disabled adults and senior specific poverty and indicator data.
City of Guadalupe via Supervisor Farr’s Office	Requested information specific to Guadalupe in preparation for a meeting with City representatives. This included US Census limitations and “underreporting” and provided specific report page references to Guadalupe references to indicators of distress.
Foundation Roundtable	General overview given and provided suggestions for funders to incorporate questions into grant applications that address the issues addressed in the Report and opportunities to support

Requesting Entity	Request or Focus Area of Presentation
	standardized data collection systems.
Orfalea Foundation	Provided woman specific data to the Orfalea Foundation for their published report on the “Status of Woman in Santa Barbara County.”
Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council	General report overview presentation with senior specific information.
KIDS General Membership	Brief overview of report findings and discussed KIDS priorities using ideas generated by the Executive Committee.
Santa Barbara Fund Grant Making Committee	Brief overview presentation of report findings.
All Saints-by-the-Sea Episcopal Church Outreach Committee	General report overview presentation with Cleveland School area poverty and indicator data.
UCSB California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA)	General report overview to educate UCSB students who were going to be conducting a low-wage worker survey about the high needs areas and issues facing low-wage working families in the South County.

Background:

On January 17, 2012, the Board of Supervisors directed Social Services staff to hire a knowledgeable consultant to partner with the department to conduct a countywide poverty assessment to analyze how well county resources and services are strategically aligned to areas and populations of greatest economic need and to make recommendations for improvement. The poverty assessments primary objectives were to:

- Access the community needs and identify geographic pockets of poverty.
- Provide an in-depth look at the characteristics of those living in the areas of high poverty to get a better sense of service gaps, causes, and impacts of poverty.
- Complete a service inventory and determine gaps in services.
- Recommend targeted priorities on how the County, other government agencies, community based organizations and foundations can better partner to enhance critical social safety net infrastructure and reduce the effects of poverty.

The report included the following components:

- An overview of Santa Barbara County’s population and geography (Section I).
- Data analysis and mapping of 44 indicators in the areas of: poverty, employment, income, education, public benefits, housing, transportation, childcare, and health (Sections II, III, and the Appendix).
- A survey distributed to 460 local public agencies, foundations, service providers, and public officials to understand how well services, resources, and program capacities align to meet greatest needs; challenges faced by low-income residents and providers who serve them; and recommendations for helping more residents move out of poverty (Section IV).
- Stakeholder interviews of 16 public and non-profit leaders to enrich and explain the data findings (Section V).
- Recommendations to improve service delivery, resource alignment, and—ultimately—outcomes for Santa Barbara County’s most vulnerable residents (Section VI).

Key findings and service gaps from the report included:

- High poverty areas: Santa Barbara County's high poverty areas (18 census tracts in which 20% or more residents are living below 100% of the Federal Poverty Thresholds) are located in clusters of census tracts in Santa Barbara, Santa Maria, Lompoc, and Isla Vista.
- High poverty areas have 24 percent of the County residents but 53 percent of all County residents living in poverty.
- High poverty areas have 61 percent of all County children who are in poverty. The Santa Maria high poverty area has 33 percent of all County children living in poverty.
- Affordable housing, child care availability, education, family-sustaining wages, access to transportation and health care are major needs and barriers for those living in high poverty areas.
- Significant service gaps exist in Lompoc, Santa Maria, and Guadalupe.

Based on the assessment findings and national best practice research, seven focus areas were identified:

- Pursue holistic approaches.
- Establish poverty reduction goals and track progress using standardized data collection.
- Improve service delivery infrastructure and efficiency.
- Address unmet needs in North County and Lompoc.
- Improve allocation of existing resources.
- Expand targeted, impactful public programs.
- Address affordable housing, economic, and workforce development and public transportation.

Activities undertaken to respond to the findings and recommendations represented within the focus area are detailed in the full report (A Snapshot of Poverty – Progress Report and Key Actions to Date) as Attachment A and listed in Attachment B.

In order to determine how to best implement the various findings and address key focus areas of the report, the Inter-Agency Policy Council (IAPC), which is comprised of leadership from the Department of Social Services, Public Health, Alcohol Drug and Mental Health Services, Child Support Services, First 5, and Probation; met on multiple occasions to discuss a collaborative approach to identifying and implementing County specific aspects of the report. The IAPC team recommended key poverty indicators to track progress over time. The IAPC further worked collaboratively to develop both the 2014 and 2015 fiscal year budget functional group pages to ensure that addressing poverty was prominently featured in the mission, goals and objectives for Health and Human Services Departments.

The attached report references many of the initial actions taken within each of the seven focus areas identified within the Poverty Report. Serving the most vulnerable and providing a safety net of services for those in greatest need, inclusive of those experiencing poverty, is at the core of services provided by many County Departments. This report focuses on key opportunities seized as a result of the *Snapshot of Poverty Report* to improve core functions as well as new programs and services developed to address report findings. A dashboard or an easy to read, graphical presentation of the current status (snapshot) and historical trends of progress pertaining to poverty reductions indicators is under development. This tool will provide the County with an “at a glance” representation of trends, grounded in the baseline information of the Poverty Report, and measure change pertaining to each of the areas measured. Information for the reports will be gathered from county administered and partner programs, as well as state and federal agencies.

At the State level, California's poverty rate continues to rank among the highest in the nation. Recognizing that poverty undermines the success of the health and human services programs administered by all counties, the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) has formed a Poverty Working Group aimed at exploring policies and key strategies to reduce poverty in all communities. The CSAC Executive Committee directed CSAC staff to convene a Poverty Working Group (PWG) to examine ways in which counties can have an impact on poverty in communities.

During the initial March 26, 2015 convening of the PWG, CSAC staff presented a draft poverty plank for discussion and proposed to add it to the CSAC legislative platform. Every two years, the CSAC Board of Directors adopts a CSAC Platform. The draft CSAC platform plank is provided in Attachment B. Presently, Daniel Nielson Director of the Department of Social Services attends the Poverty Work Group. At the completion of the CSAC review and adoption process, the County of Santa Barbara may also wish to consider pursuing a legislative plank related to poverty reduction as a component of the 2016 Legislative Platform development process.

Performance Measure:

The report contains a subset of baseline indicators to be tracked consistently over time in order to gauge the success of various anti-poverty efforts. In order to relate progress back to the findings and statistical indicators, to the extent possible, the information will be gathered demographically and geographically. The goal is to collect data in high poverty areas identified, regionally, and countywide, and to further compare data to state and national data. Findings and the dashboard referenced above will be updated every two years. Based on a review of indicators referenced in the Poverty Report, county services, state, and national data historically gathered, the following indicators are suggested for tracking at this stage. These include:

- Adults in Poverty
- Children in Poverty
- Employment/Unemployment Rate
- Jobs created and Saved
- Median household income
- Educational attainment
- Dropout rates
- Kindergarten readiness
- Cal Fresh usage
- Cal Works Usage
- WIC Enrollment
- Access to mental health services
- Securing child support payments collected, distributed, % growth
- Free and reduced lunch program usage with in schools
- Affordable housing units created, preserved
- Housing placements
- New or expanded affordable transportation resources
- Access to health care services created or preserved
- Rate of health insurance coverage (adult/children)
- Annual Issuance of Disability Insurance and paid family Leave.

- Premature years of life lost (weighs death of younger people more heavily)
- Affordable child care spaces and after school programs created or preserved
- Educational and training placement opportunities created or preserved
- Felonies and Misdemeanors

Fiscal Analysis:

<u>Funding Sources</u>	<u>Current FY Cost:</u>	<u>Annualized On-going Cost:</u>	<u>Total One-Time Project Cost</u>
General Fund			
State			
Federal			
Fees			
Other:			
Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

Narrative:

Key Contract Risks:

N/A

Staffing Impacts:

Legal Positions:

FTEs:

Special Instructions:

Attachments:

- A. A Snapshot of Poverty – Progress Report and Key Actions to Date
- B. At a Glance – Activities by Focus Area Chart
- C. CSAC Poverty Plank
- D. Baseline Poverty Indicators Dashboard

Authored by:

Terri Nisich, Assistant CEO

CC:

Daniel Nielson, Director Department of Social Services