SUBJECT:

RECOMMENDATION (PROVIDED AS INFORMATION):
This memo is provided as information for the Board’s consideration at the July 9, 2020 Board of Commissioners Meeting. First 5 LA staff recommends that at the September 10, 2020 Commission meeting, the Board approves the following:

- Amend a Strategic Partnership with Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) for an amount not to exceed $18,000,000 through June 30, 2023 for a total project cost not to exceed $21,937,059;
- Amend Strategic Partnership with El Monte Central School District (EMCSD) for an amount not to exceed $115,000 through June 30, 2023 for a total project cost not to exceed $264,840;
- Amend Strategic Partnership with Mountain View School District (MVSD) for an amount not to exceed $115,000 through June 30, 2023 for a total project cost not to exceed $201,529;
- Amend Strategic Partnership with Rosemead School District (RSD) for an amount not to exceed $115,000 through June 30, 2023 for a total project cost not to exceed $199,176;
- Amend Strategic Partnership with Pomona Unified School District (PUSD) for an amount not to exceed $90,000 through June 30, 2021 for a total project cost not to exceed $244,481.

Funds for FY 2020-2021 are included within the First 5 LA FY 2020-2021 Programmatic Budget under County Systems Building: Kindergarten Readiness Assessment which will be presented to the Board for approval in July 2020. Beyond FY 2020-21, funds will be pulled from the assigned fund balance which will be brought to the Board of Commissioners for approval in June of the corresponding fiscal year. At the time of budget approval, requested resources will shift from the Assigned resource category of the fund balance, dedicated for broad Strategic Plan purposes, to the Committed category, amounts dedicated for a more specified purpose.

BACKGROUND:
Population-Level Measurement of School Readiness (Formerly KRA):
In November 2019, the board approved the 2020-2028 Strategic Plan. This strategic plan reaffirms First 5 LA’s commitment to expanding a population-level measurement of school readiness in support of systems level change. In particular, First 5 LA is prioritizing expansion in Best Start geographies and ensuring data collected is used in community decision making.

The goal of the initiative is to support communities in collecting, sharing, and interpreting data from the EDI to drive community action. The EDI is a population-level tool which provides insight into young children’s readiness for school, as well as highlights population wide vulnerabilities in five development areas including: social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, communication skills, and physical health and well-being. The EDI measures a student’s school readiness three to eight months after kindergarten entry. The instrument is a reflection tool administered by kindergarten teachers. Once data is collected, school districts in partnership with a local community agency engage teachers, community members and other stakeholders in understanding the results and developing strategies for targeted improvement. Objectives of the strategy are also to strengthen the capacity of
school districts and community agency staff to utilize the EDI to support policy and systems change and to build the capacity of community stakeholders to utilize EDI data to advance and inform community action.

Since the Board approved this initiative in 2017, school readiness data has been collected on 21,724 students from nine different districts/communities (see Appendix A for details). Each of the school districts recommended for an amended Strategic Partnership successfully participated in EDI implementation over the last three years. For example, in LAUSD four local districts and over 175 schools have participated in EDI implementation. The district has used EDI data to lead efforts to align early education efforts through “articulation meetings” with teachers, principals, and school-site parent representatives. Based on the needs identified in EDI data analysis, the district has lead parent trainings to support school readiness in topics like Self-Management and Foundational Reading Skills. Within the district, the team of EDI specialist have collaborated with local district organizational facilitators and the district’s Department and School of Mental Health to identify community need and develop appropriate community partnerships to provide necessary resources.

As EDI is typically collected every three years, amending these strategic partnerships for a renewed cycle of EDI data collection, analysis, and community engagement will: 1) contribute to the amount and richness of data collected; 2) deepen communities’ understanding of child wellbeing by providing opportunities to compare data and outcomes across the last three years; and 3) build upon the successes and lessons learned of the first stage of the initiative to refine implementation of the project. A key lesson of the first complete cycle of this initiative is the importance of engaging multiple local stakeholders. We have seen that the EDI is most successfully used as a tool to drive community action when a collaborative group of community stakeholders, including local municipal leaders and community-based organizations, are involved from the beginning of the process. Pomona Unified School District is an example of this success. Pomona Unified School District has successfully collaborated with the Pomona’s Promise Collective Impact group to use EDI data as a catalyst to drive local action. For example, the collective impact group is using the EDI data to target a new “Mommy and Me” program to neighborhoods with the highest proportion of vulnerable children and to tailor the topics of the Mommy and Me trainings based on EDI data. First 5 LA will continue to work across departments to engage and convene these multiple stakeholders from the beginning the initiative. Our most recent population-level measurement of school readiness initiative in Long Beach, approved by the Board in February 2020, is an example of this approach: our Communities, Community Relations, and ECE Departments worked in partnership with the Long Beach School District, Mayor’s Fund for Education, and Health Department to bring the EDI to Long Beach. These partners will continuously be engaged in each stage of the project. Amending these partnerships will allow each district, in partnership with community stakeholders, to participate in a new round of data collection and refine their approach to supporting community action.

In the next three years of this initiative, we also plan to use lessons learned to refine several elements of the training, coaching, and support provided to EDI partners by UCLA, including improving the accessibility and legibility of data by creating interactive and publicly-facing data platforms and creating EDI policy briefings and/or Advisory Groups to ensure the thoughtful use of EDI results for several groups of children at increased risk of poor outcomes, namely children who are Dual Language Learners (DLL) and young boys of color. The goals of these briefs will be to help policy makers and local EDI partners understand: 1) how to interpret EDI results for these special populations to ensure the data are used in a thoughtful and culturally-sustaining way; 2) cautions about (and strategies to avoid) the misuse of data; 3) the assets that exist for DLL children and young boys of color and their communities that should be acknowledged, supported and reinforced; 4) risk and protective factors for these children; and 5) Best practices around effective strategies to support these children.
In summary, amending these Strategic Partnership will advance EDI data collection and saturation countywide (while prioritizing the work in our Best Start geographies) and support a refined strategy of engaging community around EDI data to support community action and systems change work.

Pursuant to the Procurement Policy, Strategic Partnerships of $75,000 or more in a fiscal year must be presented to the Board for approval. Staff is requesting amendment of a Strategic Partnerships with LAUSD, El Monte Central School District, Mountain View Central School District, Rosemead School District, and Pomona Unified School District to comply with this policy.

GOVERNANCE GUIDELINES #5 AND #6 (SUSTAINABILITY AND LEVERAGING):
The following outlines how First 5 LA and KRA will address the implementation of the sustainability and leveraging components of the First 5 LA Governance Guidelines approved by the Board in March 2014.

Sustainability – Without population-level school readiness data, communities, school districts, policy makers and politicians have limited means to evaluate the impact of interventions over time to improve child wellbeing and understand whether the services and resources they provide for young children and their families are meeting community needs. By using EDI data, school districts and communities can identify areas that need to be strengthened to aid young children in their growth and development. The EDI data and its requisite analyses serve as a critical tool in ensuring that the proper resources and services are utilized and/or established. Additionally, EDI data can be utilized to advocate for additional early care and education resources for school districts and municipalities. While the EDI data collection requires initial funding from First 5 LA, it is expected that school districts and communities will begin to recognize that the EDI is a cost-effective tool, that when invested in, supports local decision-making and effectively informs local policy making, including priorities set through the Local Control Action Plan (LCAP) for districts. Further, First 5 LA’s demonstrated support of a population-level school readiness measurement system in LA County has the potential to serve as a catalyst to attract other First 5 Commissions and funders interested in leveraging resources to advance a statewide school readiness data system.

Leveraged Resources – Strategic Partnerships with LAUSD, EMCSD, RSD, MVSD, PUSD will leverage several resources including:
- Utilization of the existing expertise of school districts and communities that have already implemented the EDI and are at the point of data utilization and collecting new EDI data.
- In-kind support of school districts

JUSTIFICATION:
This Strategic Partnership meets the criteria below:

☐ The Strategic Partnership can provide specific resources needed by First 5 LA to implement an approved program or initiative in a manner or on a scale that makes the Strategic Partnership more cost effective than resources provided through a competitive solicitation; or

☐ The Strategic Partnership can implement an approved program or initiative more expeditiously than resources provided through a competitive solicitation; or

☒ The Strategic Partnership can provide a demonstrated level of ability or expertise that is only available in the community through the proposed Strategic Partnership; or

☐ The Strategic Partnership provides an opportunity to leverage First 5 LA funds to produce additional funding for the program or initiative or service.
The proposed Strategic Partnership is aligned with the adopted Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Partnership can provide a demonstrated level of ability or expertise that is only available in the community through these proposed Strategic Partnerships:
First 5 LA’s population-level school readiness strategy involves supporting the collection and use of data using the EDI. Given that the EDI can only be completed by kindergarten teachers, the successful implementation of this project is dependent upon the involvement of school districts. In most communities, the lead agency for the EDI implementation is a school district. In each of the Strategic Partnership, the proposed school district is the only entity within the community that has the capacity and authority to collect data from kindergarten teachers.

Amending these Strategic Partnership is in the best interest of the Commission because: (1) The EDI is administered by school districts who can use collected data to inform policy and systems change; (2) It will continue to leverage ongoing momentum for use of the EDI in Los Angeles County; (3) It will support the school districts’ ability to leverage EDI data to support systems change in the community.

The proposed Strategic Partnership is aligned with the adopted Strategic Plan:
The proposed amendments to Strategic Partnerships are aligned with Strategic Priority #2 and Strategic Priority #3 of the newly adopted 2020-2028 Strategic Plan. EDI data allows First 5 LA to advance and build upon community experience. School readiness data supports stakeholders and community partners to connect, maximize and coordinate public resources, and build local assets and relationships. The EDI informs community planning, activates partners, spurs innovation, and promotes advocacy for improved learning environments for children. Additionally, EDI data expands First 5 LA’s influence and impact. The amended Strategic Partnerships with LAUSD, EMCSD, MSD, RSD, PUSD will continue and expand the use of the EDI and the data collected by these partners will inform our work, demonstrate progress, build public will, and help to strengthen our advocacy role.

NEXT STEPS:
Staff anticipates returning to the Board for action on the amended Strategic Partnerships at the September 10, 2020 Board Meeting and present contracts for Board approval if the amounts are over $75,000.
### Appendix A

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<th>Site</th>
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<th>Projected FY2020-2021</th>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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