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**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



FROM: Executive Office

SUBMITTAL DATE:
October 27, 2008

SUBJECT: Status Report from Childcare Pilot Project Exploratory Committee

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors receive and file the attached report, and consider allocating funds to an employee childcare pilot project during 2009-10 budget hearings.

BACKGROUND: The Childcare Pilot Project Exploratory Committee was formed in September, 2007, and a status report on its activities appeared on the June 3, 2008 Board of Supervisors agenda. At that time, the committee was directed to focus efforts on a pilot project in the downtown Riverside area that would involve the impending closure of Grant Elementary School.

Since that time, the committee has met regularly and had discussions with staff from the Riverside Unified School District and the Wylie Center (the current day care provider at Grant School). The preferred concept under discussion involved the County and First Five Riverside funding the expansion of the Wylie Center to accommodate additional children. Those additional childcare slots would then be offered to County employees at a discounted rate. Variations on this concept were considered.

(continued)

Kathryn Field
Deputy CEO

Departmental Concurrence

FINANCIAL DATA

Current F.Y. Total Cost:	\$0	In New Year Budget:	n/a
Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	\$0	Budget Adjustment:	no
Annual Net County Cost:	\$0	For Fiscal Year:	n/a

SOURCE OF FUNDS: n/a

Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
Requires 4/5 Vote	<input type="checkbox"/>

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

By:
Gary M. Christmas

County Executive Office Signature

- Dep't Recomm.: Consent Policy
- Per Exec. Ofc.: Consent Policy

Managers at the Wylie Center seemed receptive to the proposal, and offered to pursue re-licensing for an additional 60 to 120 children. The expanded capacity would be provided in modular structures similar to those already in place at Grant School, which is within walking distance of the County Administrative Center. The Wylie Center would also be required to pursue accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

The Riverside County Childcare Consortium offered to conduct an evaluation of the pilot project. A component of the evaluation would be the quality of the day care experience for children. Another component of the evaluation would allow the County to determine the extent to which the project was useful in retaining or recruiting employees, and which modifications, if any, might improve participation or operations.

County Counsel was consulted about potential risks of such a project. The informal opinion was that this would be similar to the childcare benefits offered without legal challenges by other public and private employers now. Such an arrangement is not considered a gift but rather an employment benefit or recruitment tool. While some employees working outside the Riverside metro area might be displeased at their inability to participate, consideration of other child care options throughout the county would be part of the evaluation process at the end of the project.

A pilot project budget of \$300,000 was developed. It was hoped that some funding might be obtained through First Five Riverside. However, at this time, their program funds have been committed to other projects. Full support with County discretionary funds is an option, but must be weighed against other priorities under these challenging financial conditions.

Therefore, it is suggested that the committee be directed to return to the Board of Supervisors at the June, 2009 budget hearings, with a funding proposal that may or may not include contributions from partners such as First Five Riverside. At that time, the Board will have an opportunity to prioritize various funding requests. In the meantime, regular meetings of the committee would be suspended.