

# FIRST 5 MONTEREY COUNTY BOARD BRIEFER

**MEETING: Regular Commission Meeting – Monday, February 26, 2024**

**SUBJECT: Executive Director Report by Strategic Plan Priorities**

**POSSIBLE ACTION:**

No action to be taken.

**Commissioner Recusals: None**

**SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:**

Organized in alignment with our new Strategic Plan Priorities:

**a. Priority A: Ensure those who First 5 serves, young children and families furthest from opportunity and most impacted by systems failures, are at the center of First 5's work.**

The REDI/Community Engagement to Power work is being infused throughout all our efforts. Specific activities are identified below.

- F5MC Director of Racial Equity and Strategic Partnerships Rosemary Soto is working with the Health Department (Public Health Nursing – PHN) to implement the grant received from DHCS for Innovations 2.0 which will support infusion of local context and early childhood diversity tenets into training for Motivational Interviewing (MI) and Facilitating Attuned Interactions (FAN).  
<https://diversityinformedtenets.org/>
- As the Evaluation Department seeks to complete the School System Readiness Assessment, they are searching for county-wide data on how well systems/services are reaching ALL very young children and families and finding a lack of data. E.g., many datasets are not able to disaggregate by race/ethnicity, income, etc. or that info is not publicly available. So, we are reflecting on ways to lift that systems gap up in ways that can create positive change while also thinking about how we can make our data more easily accessible to others.
- We also continue to think carefully about language use -- avoiding 'labeling' people or communities. E.g., avoiding using the term "vulnerable" or "at-risk" when talking about people/families/communities as it makes it seem like the problem is with people, instead of systems and leaves the door open to deficit-based thinking. Instead seeking to use language like "families disproportionately affected by racism" or other framing that calls out root causes  
<https://communicatehealth.com/wehearthealthliteracy/its-time-to-retire-vulnerable-communities/>

**b. Priority B: Elevate early childhood as a priority and advocate for what families need to thrive.**

- Please review the Policy, Advocacy, and Communications Report (Item 6) for timely information surrounding state and local policy topics. In addition, here is a visual update with picture from recent events: [https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1grbTWR2K93yA\\_-6KiT\\_NQOVLBeizgXnfDGhit35BEMQ/edit#slide=id.g2ba5da329ec\\_0\\_0](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1grbTWR2K93yA_-6KiT_NQOVLBeizgXnfDGhit35BEMQ/edit#slide=id.g2ba5da329ec_0_0)
- The Children's Council/Bright Beginnings and First 5 Annual Report to the Board of Supervisors will be on March 12<sup>th</sup>. Children's Council/Bright Beginnings will be in the morning and the First 5 Monterey County report will be in the afternoon.
- This is the **Last Call** for Commissioners interested in attending the First 5 California Summit: Stronger Starts 25 years of First 5 from March 25-27 at the Oakland Marriott. Early Bird registration ends on Feb 29<sup>th</sup>, so we need to know by COB 2/26 if you would like to attend. F5MC will be

presenting on two panels. One focused on IFECMH and another on lessons learned thus far related to connecting our Funded Partners to Medi-Cal funding streams.

<https://whova.com/web/ByqAXsgt5P9d9fYm1KeWVBHXZYqjdL3P5Z2IE-126jl%3D/>

**c. Priority C: Make connections and enhance family access to integrated and collaborative services.**

- The Strong Start Partnership and the Learning Groups continue holding regular meetings to support cross-communication and coordination.

**d. Priority D: Build capacity with service providers, administrators, and families as they support young children.**

- Bi-lingual/multi-cultural Infant Family Early Childhood Mental Health (IFECMH) training continues. On Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup> the session will focus on engaging fathers.
- The 3-part Series entitled: Transformational Leadership: Supporting Staff Well Being and Program Success Through REDI and Trauma-Informed Reflective Practice and Supervision began in January. The second session will occur on Wednesday, February 21s. It is limited to about 25 participants to support opportunities for deep internal reflection and cross-agency connection. There have already been some opportunities for exercising Transformational Leadership skills related to the rollout of this training.

**e. Priority E: Learn together with partners and community to continuously improve the programs and systems serving families.**

- Monthly reports to DSS regarding the CalWORKs PAT program continue to be produced and submitted.
- Planning for the transition between Persimmony and Apricot 360 is in full swing. The goal is to have the transition complete by the end of the calendar year with Funded Partners beginning entering data in the new system starting in FY24/25.
- The data from the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) is showing gains since 2012 (the last time the study was conducted). Data will be shared at the meeting. See Item 1a.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

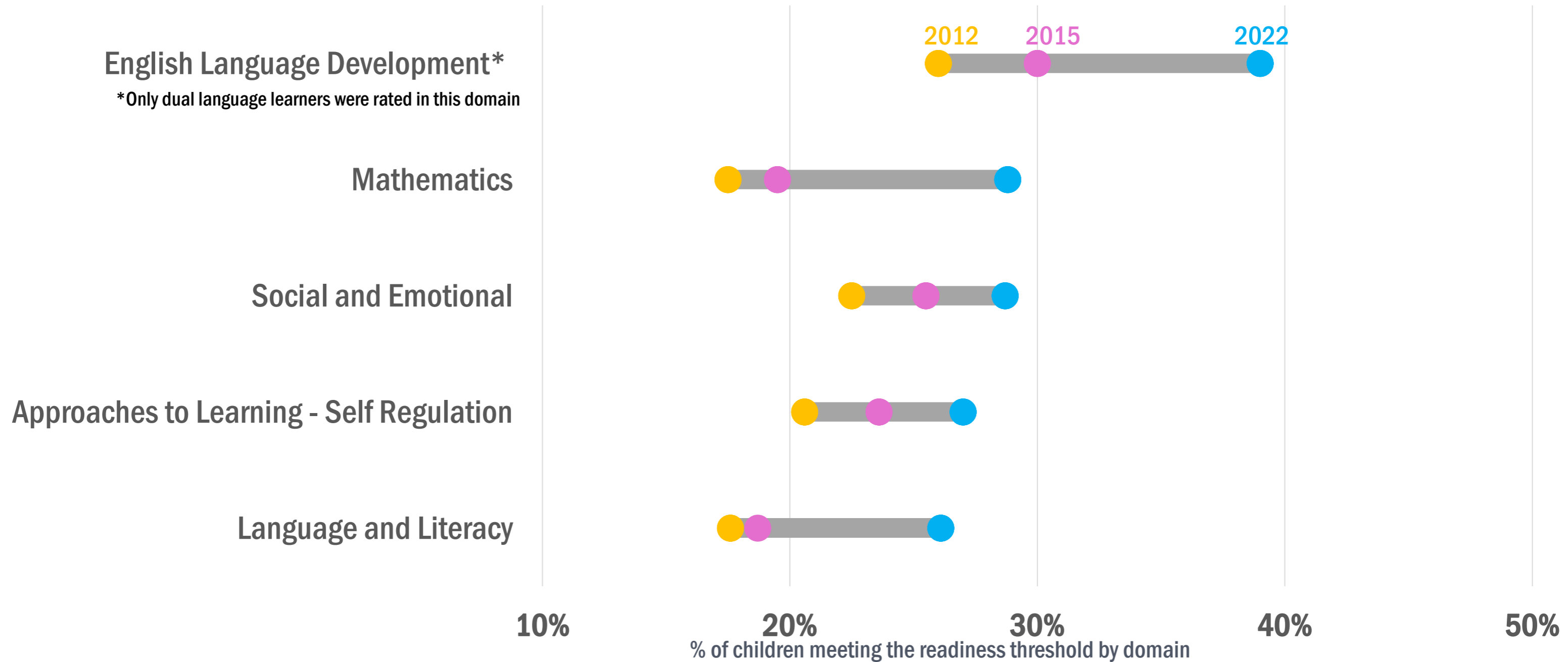
There are no immediate financial implications from this discussion.

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*Francine Rodd, Executive Director*

# Upward Trend in Children's Readiness Across All Domains

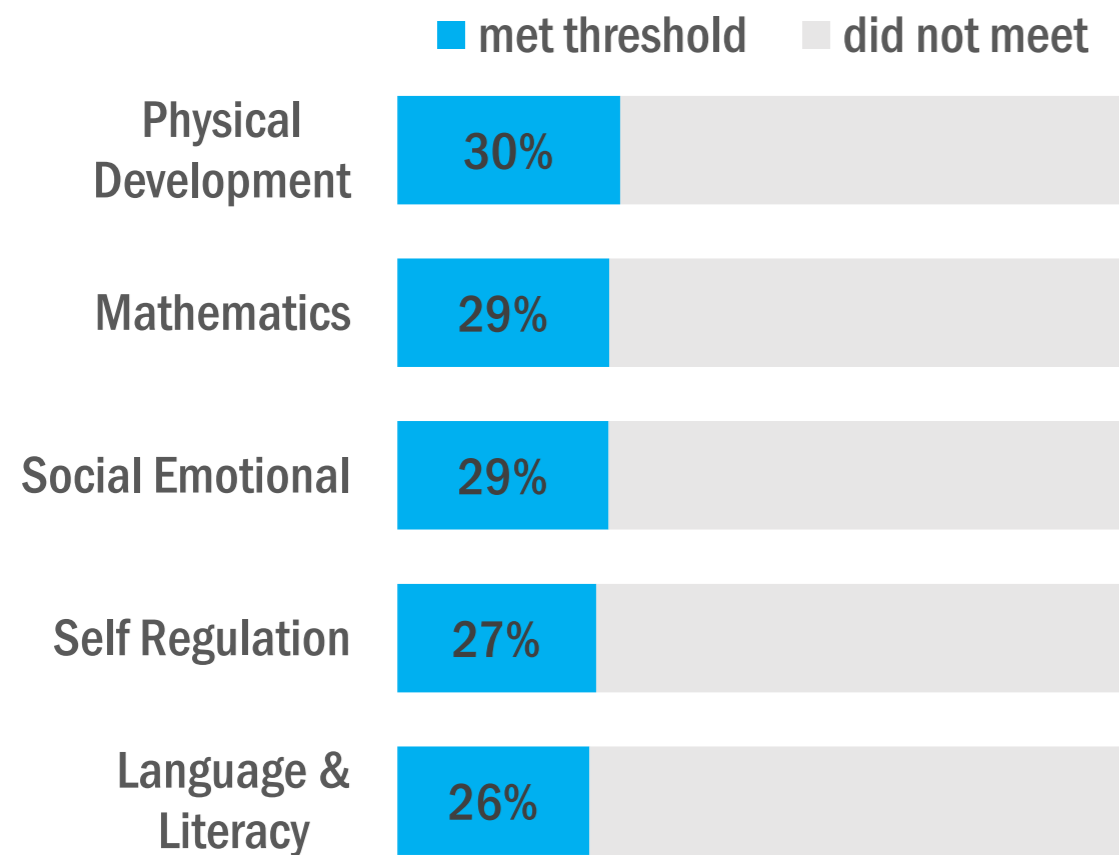
Children in 2022 were more likely to meet the readiness thresholds across all domains than children in 2015 and 2012. The DRDP-SR was used in 2012 and 2015; the DRDP-K was used in 2022. 2012 and 2015 scores were converted to domain scale scores for comparison to 2022. See technical appendix for the differences between the SR and K versions of the DRDP.



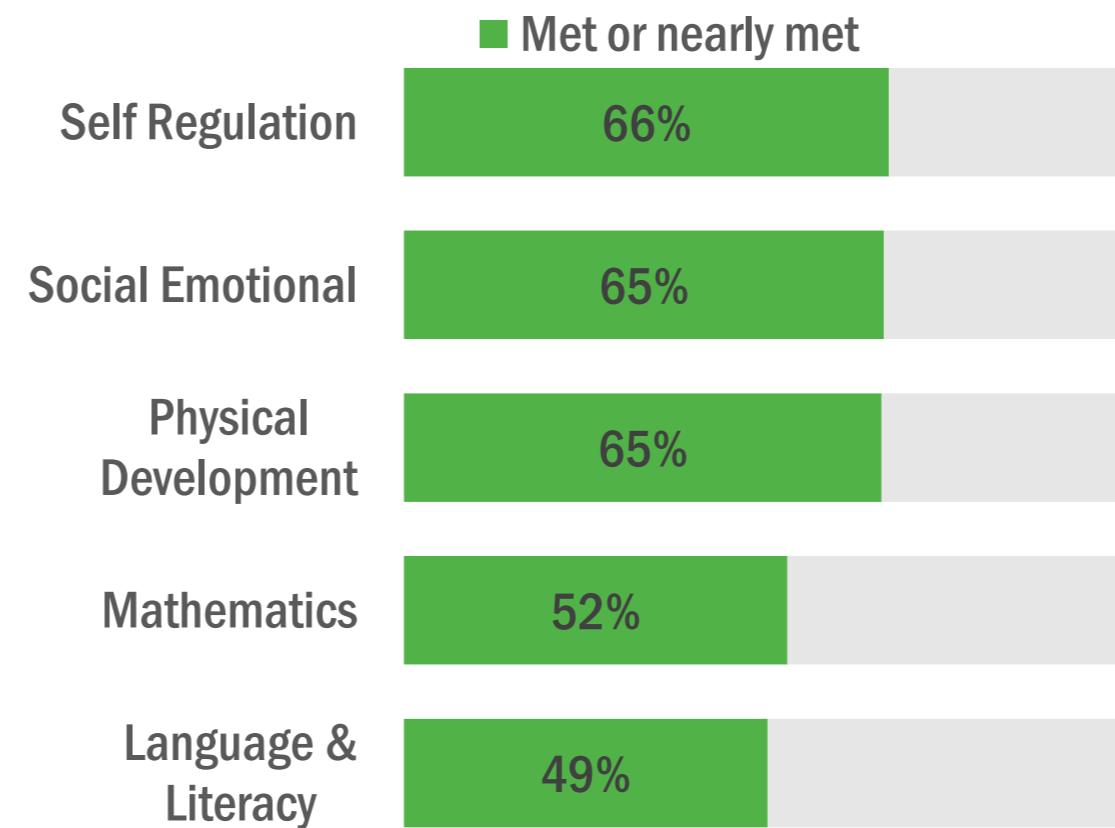
# Yet, very young children and their families in Monterey County need much more support ITEM 1a

One-quarter to nearly one-third of children in 2022 **met the readiness threshold**, depending on domain.

The physical development domain was added in 2022.

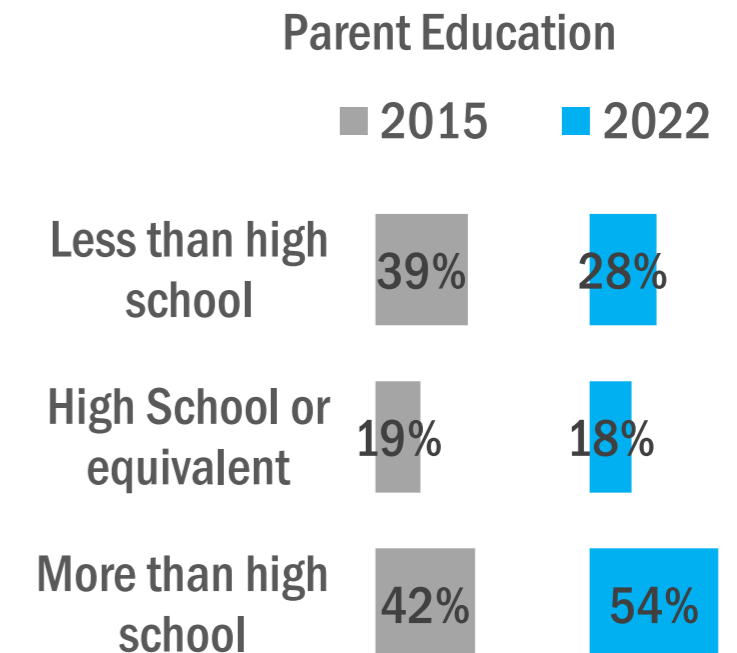
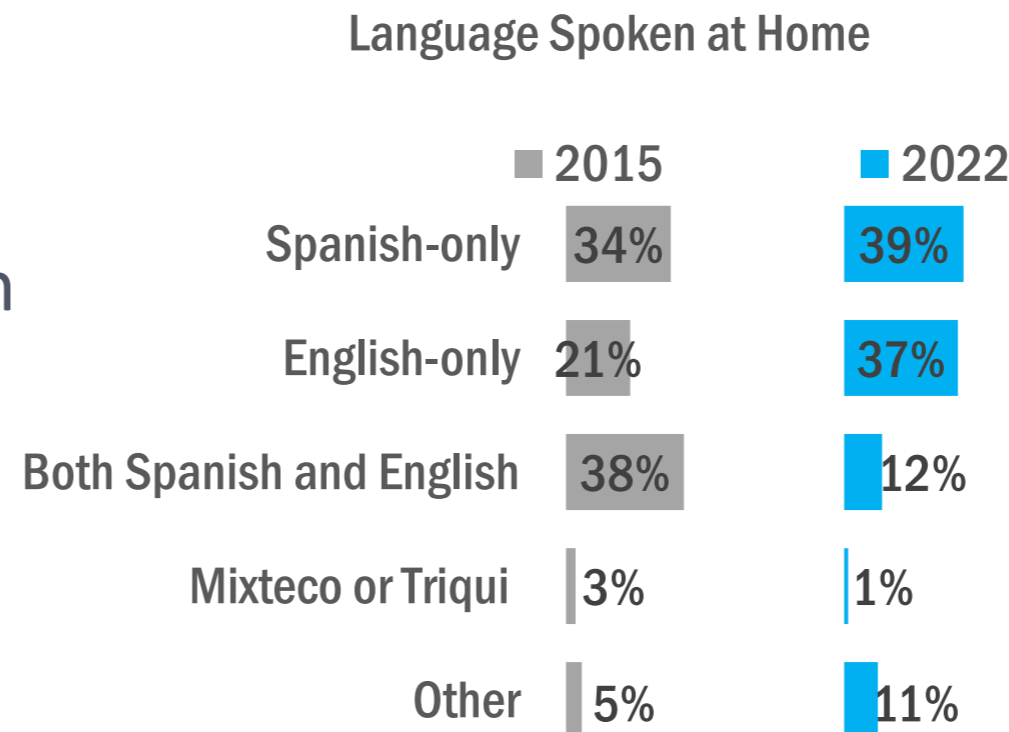
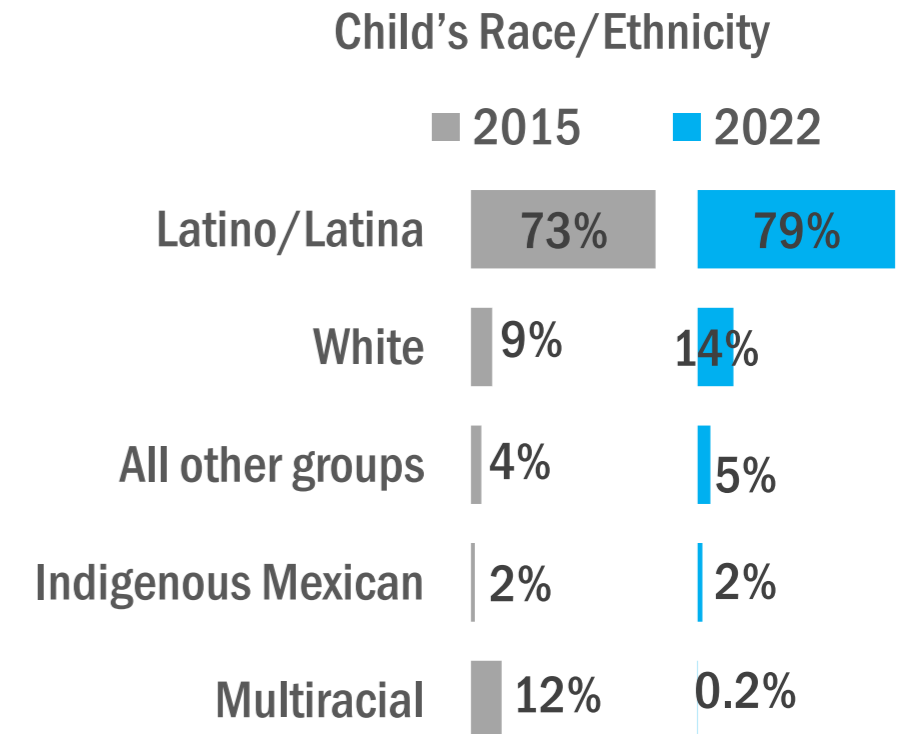
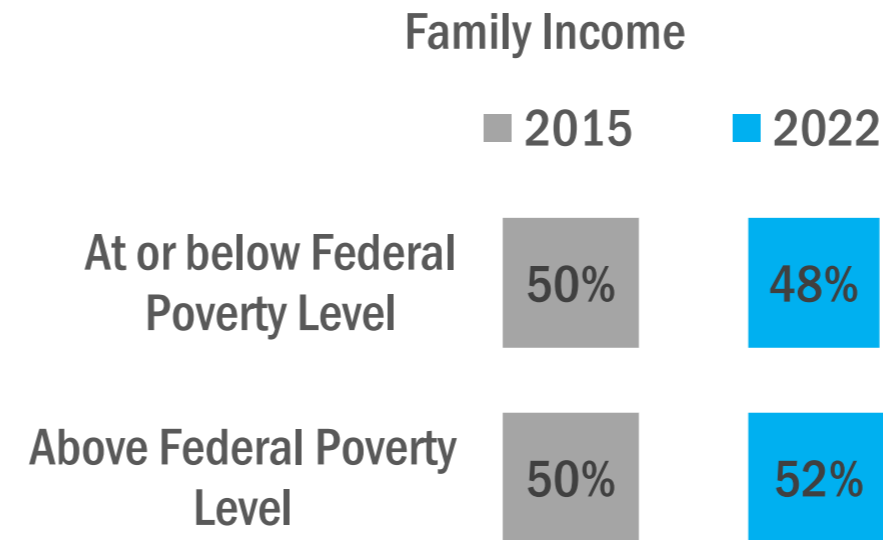


Two-thirds of children in 2022 **met or nearly met the readiness threshold** for self-regulation, social emotional development and physical development.



# Demographics of Sample

Children in the 2022 and 2015 samples had similar levels of family income. In 2022, there was a larger percentage of children speaking English only and a smaller percentage of children speaking both Spanish and English at home. There was also a larger percentage of children speaking a language other than Spanish, English, Mixteco or Triqui than in 2015. There was a larger percentage of children of parents with more than a high school education in 2022 than in 2015.



# DRDP-K Domains

## Desired Results Developmental Profile-Kindergarten (DRDP-K)



Approaches to learning/Self-regulation



Physical development



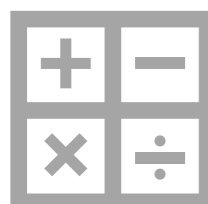
Social and emotional development



English language development



Language and literacy development



Cognition, math and science

# What to Know about the DRDP-K

It consists of 33 research-based items called “measures” that collapse into the six readiness domains.

They were completed by teachers for children in the study based on observations of children’s relevant skills, knowledge and behaviors during their time in the classroom.

It’s a strengths-based assessment that considers the wide range of typical development by offering positive descriptors of children’s knowledge and skills across a broad continuum of development and learning

It’s aligned to the California Preschool Learning Foundations and the Common Core Standards.

# What to Know about the DRDP-K

It's a **criterion-referenced assessment** rather than norm-referenced. The levels described for each DRDP measure and domain are based on research on developmental sequences rather than an average score or rating for an age group. Each child's learning and developmental progress are assessed relative to research-based criteria or levels in a progression rather than compared to the average learning and developmental progress of a large group of children (the ASQ is an example of a norm referenced assessment; when we say a child is in the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile for height—that's a norm referenced assessment).



**COG: MATH 1: Classification**

Child shows an increasing ability to compare, match, and sort objects into groups according to their attributes

Mark the latest developmental level the child has mastered:

Building			Integrating		
Earlier <input type="radio"/>	Middle <input type="radio"/>	Later <input type="radio"/>	Earlier <input type="radio"/>	Middle <input type="radio"/>	Later <input type="radio"/>
<p><b>Sorts objects into two groups based on one attribute, but not always accurately</b></p>	<p><b>Sorts objects accurately into two or more groups based on one attribute</b></p>	<p><b>Sorts objects into two or more groups based on one attribute, then puts all the objects together and re-sorts the entire collection into new groups</b></p>	<p><b>Sorts objects into groups based on at least two attributes, sometimes sorting by one attribute and then subdividing those groups based on a second attribute</b></p>	<p><b>Sorts objects by attributes that are subtle and not immediately obvious and describes the resulting categorical groups</b></p>	<p><b>Sorts objects to gather and organize information, compares the groups of objects, and interprets the information</b></p>
<p><b>Possible Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Separates blocks into a blue pile and a green pile, leaving a few green blocks in the blue pile.</li> <li>▶ Sorts rocks into two piles, big and small, after a neighborhood walk.</li> <li>▶ Picks out toy trucks from a basket of toys and sets them on a nearby shelf, and then picks out toy cars from the basket and sets them on a different shelf.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Separates a pile of toy animals by kind (e.g., dogs, cats, and birds).</li> <li>▶ Puts crayons, pencils, and markers into different containers.</li> <li>▶ Sorts a group of big squares and little squares into two piles by using eye gaze to indicate where an adult should put each square.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Sorts buttons by color, and then sorts all of them again by shape or size.</li> <li>▶ Sorts shoes based on color, and then re-sorts all of them by type (e.g., slippers, boots, tennis shoes).</li> <li>▶ Sorts flannel-board pieces by type (e.g., shoes, pants, and shirts), and then re-sorts all of them by what is worn on a hot day and what is worn on a cold day.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Separates tiles into four groups: blue circles, blue squares, red circles, and red squares.</li> <li>▶ Removes utensils from the play kitchen and sorts them into groups: big spoons, small spoons, big forks, and small forks.</li> <li>▶ Sorts the bin of interlocking blocks into several piles, first by color, then by shape (e.g., squares and rectangles).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Puts pictures of a scarf, hat, and warm jacket together and pictures of a bathing suit, sandals, and bucket together. Communicates, "These three you use in the winter and these three you use in the summer."</li> <li>▶ Sorts cards with pictures of tools into garden tools, building tools, and kitchen tools, and communicates the type of tools in each group.</li> <li>▶ Puts a ruler, a magnifying glass, and a balance scale into a storage bin, and scissors, a hole puncher, and construction paper in a basket, and then communicates, "The tools in the storage bin are for the science table and the tools in the basket are for art."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Places a variety of apples into three bowls based on color, counts the number of apples in each bowl and communicates, "The most apples we have are green, then red, then yellow."</li> <li>▶ Sorts cards used to track the weather during the month and counts the number of cards in each category to report how many sunny, cloudy, and rainy days there were that month.</li> <li>▶ Organizes the forks and spoons, and communicates, "We have more spoons than forks and more small spoons than large spoons."</li> </ul>

- Child is emerging to the next developmental level
- Unable to rate this measure due to extended absence

Children scoring at integrating earlier, middle or later were considered as "meeting the threshold" for readiness

# FIRST 5 MONTEREY COUNTY BOARD BRIEFER

**MEETING: Regular Commission Meeting – Monday, February 26, 2024**

**SUBJECT: First 5 California Annual Report for FY 2022-23**

**POSSIBLE ACTION:**

- a. Hold Public Hearing
- b. Accept First 5 California Annual Report for FY 2022-23

**Commissioner Recusals: None**

**BACKGROUND:**

The First 5 California State Commission approved the FY 2022-23 First 5 California Annual Report on January 25, 2024. Prop 10 legislation also requires County Commissions to hold a Public Hearing to accept the First 5 California Annual Report. It is attached as Item 2a.

The California Children and Families Act of 1998 (the Act, in Health and Safety Code, Section 130150) states F5CA shall:

Conduct an audit and prepare a written report on the implementation and performance of the state commission functions during the preceding fiscal year, including, at a minimum, the manner in which funds were expended and the progress toward, and the achievement of, program goals and objectives.

The Act also states:

The written report shall include a listing, by category, of the aggregate expenditures on program areas funded by the state and county commissions pursuant to the purposes of this Act, according to a format prescribed by the state commission.

The Annual Report for FY 2022-23 includes:

1. Statewide Focus and Investments
2. North Star and Audacious Goal
3. Result Based Accountability
4. State Highlights
5. Policy Pillars and Wins
6. County Expenditures and Result Areas
7. Population Served Data
8. County Highlights

**Highlights:**

The State Commission is currently implementing their FY 2019–2024 Strategic Plan, which includes:

**Vision:** California’s Children receive the best possible start in life and thrive.

**Mission:** Convene, partner in, support, and help lead the movement to create and implement a comprehensive, integrated, and coordinated system for California’s children prenatal through five and their families. Promote, support, and optimize early childhood development.

**North Star Statement:** Trauma-informed, healing-centered, and culturally responsive systems promote the safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments necessary to eliminate inequities and ensure healthy development for all children.

**Audacious Goal:** In a generation, all children 0–5 will have the safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments necessary to achieve healthy development.

In FY 2022/23, First 5 California received \$67.5 million from Prop 10 revenues, and county commissions received \$270.3 million.

**New investments include:**

- \$125 million for Improve and Maximize Programs so All Children Thrive (IMPACT) Legacy.
- \$10 million to strengthen and elevate the 0–5 strategy, investments, and impact under the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative in partnership with the California Health and Human Services Agency.
- \$2 million for the 25-Year Lookback Report to summarize the overall impact of First 5 CA since the passage of Proposition 10.
- \$3 million to work with the Children’s Data Network for the Prenatal to Age Five Data Landscape Project and Indicators.
- Foundational research for a Fatherhood Initiative to identify the key issues regarding the changing definition of fatherhood and exemplary fatherhood initiatives within the local First 5 Network.

**Continued Investments:**

- Grant dissemination and enhanced education, training and technical assistance, communications, and system of change collaboration with local First 5s on Home Visiting Coordination and the Small Population County Funding Augmentation (SPCFA).
- The Dragon Song campaign was developed and released to provide the first step toward creating awareness of the importance that calmness plays in connecting children and caregivers to their emotions.
- The Stronger Starts public education and awareness campaign launched in the spring of 2023, introducing messaging around adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and toxic stress response to families and caregivers of young children.

Due to its size, the full report is not attached and can be found at:

[https://www.cfc.ca.gov/pdf/about/budget\\_perf/annual\\_report\\_pdfs/F5CA\\_2022-23\\_Annual%20Report\\_ADA.pdf](https://www.cfc.ca.gov/pdf/about/budget_perf/annual_report_pdfs/F5CA_2022-23_Annual%20Report_ADA.pdf)

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Prop 10 legislation requires County Commissions to hold a public hearing to accept the First 5 California Annual Report prior to the county receiving continuing allocations.

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Francine Rodd, Executive Director



## REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Monday, January 22, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.

First 5 Monterey County (F5MC) ♦ 1125 Baldwin Street ♦ Salinas, CA

**Call to Order:** Chair Lopez called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Commissioner Monica Lal led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call:** A legal quorum was present. The following Commission members attended in person: Chris Lopez (Chair), Caryn Lewis (Vice-Chair), Clarisa Reyes-Becerra, Monica Lal, Lori Medina, and Katy Eckert. Cristina Sotelo was absent.

**Additions or Corrections to the Agenda:** None.

**Public Comment Period:** *Members of the audience desiring to address the Commission may do so during this time. Public comments on items not already on the agenda will be accepted. Protocol for action includes staff presentations, questions from the Commission, public input, deliberation, and voting/referral by the Commission.*

No public comments were made.

**Information Items:** *These are information items, no action to be taken by the Commission.*

1. **Brown Act Review - Kenneth J. Price, Commission Legal Counsel, Baker Manock & Jensen**  
Kenneth Price provided a review of the Brown Act (presentation added as Item 1a).
2. **Executive Director Report by Strategy - Francine Rodd, Executive Director**  
ED Rodd reviewed highlights of the Board Briefer for Item 2 and led an exercise with the Commissioners and meeting participants to provide feedback on the Mission and Vision for the First 5 Network (made up of First 5 California, the First 5 Association, and the 58 County Commissions).
3. **Bright Beginnings December 2023 - January 2024 Report – Sonja Koehler, Director of Bright Beginnings**  
S. Koehler presented (presentation added as Item 3a).
4. **Policy, Advocacy, and Communications Team Monthly Report – Nina Alcaraz, Director of Policy, Advocacy, and Communication**  
N. Alcaraz presented the Item 4 briefer and added the following:
  - On March 9<sup>th</sup> F5MC is holding a photo session with children and their families at Hartnell Child Development Center.
  - On March 12<sup>th</sup> F5MC is presenting to the Board of Supervisors.

**Action Items:** *Protocol for action items includes Staff presentations, questions from the Commission, public input, deliberation, and voting/referral by the Commission.*

5. **F5MC Policy and Advocacy Platform Update – Nina Alcaraz, Director of Policy, Advocacy, and Communications**

ACTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Reyes-Becerra and seconded by Commissioner Eckert to Approve the updated F5MC Policy and Advocacy Platform. The motion was unanimously approved by rollcall vote.

**Consent Agenda Items:** *Items on the consent calendar are to be considered routine and will be enacted by one motion followed by a vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless the Commission, audience, or staff request specific items be removed from the consent calendar for separate discussion and action. Any agenda item removed will be voted upon following the motion to approve the consent calendar.*

#### **6. December 4, 2023 Regular Commission Meeting Minutes – APPROVE**

ACTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Medina and seconded by Commissioner Eckert to Approve Consent Item 6. The motion was approved by rollcall vote (5-Aye, 1-Abstention).

#### **Commissioner Comments/Announcements** – All Commissioners

Receive Commissioner reports/updates on items relevant to early childhood development.

- Commissioner Eckert shared that she will be presenting to the Behavioral Health Commission on Prop 1 in February and will be scheduled to give a presentation to the Board of Supervisors also. The presentation will focus on the impact the passage of Prop 1 will have regarding less local access to prevention funding and leveragable services for mental health patients.
- Commissioner Medina – Emphasized the importance for advocacy and information sharing, especially given some significant potential budget impacts to Social Services.
- Commissioner Lewis shared a new app available to families across the County called Brightlife ([www.brightlife.kids](http://www.brightlife.kids)). The app is primarily focused on 0 to 12 and has some important coaching resources.

**Closed Session:** *The Commission will meet in closed session to discuss matters involving pending litigation or personnel, pursuant to Government Code section 54957*

#### **7. Public Employee Performance Evaluation and Compensation Consideration**

##### **Title: Executive Director**

The Commission recessed to Closed Session at 10:24 a.m. and returned to Open Session at 11:09 a.m.

Chair Lopez reported that no reportable action was taken.

**Adjournment:** Chair Lopez adjourned the meeting at 11:10 a.m.



The correction is highlighted in yellow on page 2 and reflects the actual action taken.



## REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Monday, December 4, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.

First 5 Monterey County (F5MC) ♦ 1125 Baldwin Street ♦ Salinas, CA

**Call to Order:** Chair Lopez called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Chris Lopez led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call:** A legal quorum was present. The following Commission members attended in person: Chris Lopez (Chair), Caryn Lewis (Vice-Chair), Clarisa Reyes-Becerra, Julie Drezner, Lori Medina, and Cristina Sotelo. Katy Eckert was absent.

**Additions or Corrections to the Agenda:** None.

**Public Comment Period:** *Members of the audience desiring to address the Commission may do so during this time. Public comments on items not already on the agenda will be accepted. Protocol for action includes staff presentations, questions from the Commission, public input, deliberation, and voting/referral by the Commission.*

No public comments were made.

**Information Items:** *These are information items, no action to be taken by the Commission.*

**1. Executive Director Report by Strategy - Francine Rodd, Executive Director**

ED Rodd presented a year-in summary (included as Item 1).

**2. Policy, Advocacy, and Communications Team Monthly Report – Nina Alcaraz, Director of Policy, Advocacy, and Communications**

N. Alcaraz presented and highlighted the *Monterey County Gives!* Campaign, which officially launched on November 9, 2023.

**3. Review Process for Public Employee Performance Evaluation: Executive Director – Kerstine Curtis, Controller**

K. Curtis reviewed the process and timeline for the Executive Director’s Performance Evaluation with the Commission. The Performance Evaluation will be completed in person at the January 22, 2024 Regular Commission Meeting in Closed Session.

**Action Items:** *Protocol for action items includes Staff presentations, questions from the Commission, public input, deliberation, and voting/referral by the Commission.*

**4. Annual F5MC Commission Organization and 2024 Meeting Schedule – Joanna Jensen, Administrative Manager**

ACTION: By motion of Commissioner Medina and seconded by Commissioner Lewis, the Commission unanimously APPROVED the slate of Officers, Committee Members for 2024, as noted in capital letters below; and APPROVED the 2024 Meeting Schedule:

- a. APPOINTED Commission Officers
  - i. Chair – CHRIS LOPEZ
  - ii. Vice-Chair - CARYN LEWIS
  - iii. Secretary - CRISTINA SOTELO

**The correction is highlighted in yellow on page 2 and reflects the actual action taken.**

- b. APPOINTED Committee Members
  - i. Standing Committees
    - 1. Executive Committee OFFICERS (CHRIS LOPEZ, CARYN LEWIS, AND CRISTINA SOTELO)
    - 2. Finance/Personnel Committee KATY ECKERT (Committee Chair), LORI MEDINA, and MONICA LAL
    - 3. Evaluation Advisory Committee – **COMMISSIONERS: CARYN LEWIS and** CLARISA REYES-BECERRA  
COMMUNITY MEMBERS: JULIE DREZNER (Committee Chair), KRISTA HANNI, and MICHAEL APPLGATE
  - ii. Ad Hoc Committees (as needed – none currently exist)
- c. APPROVED the 2024 Meeting Schedule with addition of Executive Committee and the Evaluation Advisory Committee once dates are established by the Committees in December.

**5. First 5 Monterey County FY 2022/23 Annual Report to the Board of Supervisors – Nina Alcaraz, Director of Policy, Advocacy, and Communications Manager**

N. Alcaraz presented.

ACTION: By motion of Commissioner Sotelo and seconded by Commissioner Reyes-Becerra, the Commission unanimously APPROVED the FY 2022/23 Annual Report to the Board of Supervisors with the incorporation of recommended changes; and authorized the Executive Director to finalize the report and make additional non-substantive changes.

**6. First 5 Monterey County FY 2022/23 Annual Report to the Community – Nina Alcaraz, Director of Policy, Advocacy, and Communications**

N. Alcaraz presented.

ACTION: By motion of Commissioner Reyes-Becerra and seconded by Commissioner Drezner, the Commission unanimously APPROVED the FY 2022/23 Annual Report to the Community with authorization for the Executive Director to make additional non-substantive changes.

**Consent Agenda Items:** *Items on the consent calendar are to be considered routine and will be enacted by one motion followed by a vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless the Commission, audience, or staff request specific items be removed from the consent calendar for separate discussion and action. Any agenda item removed will be voted upon following the motion to approve the consent calendar.*

ACTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Medina and seconded by Commissioner Sotelo to Approve Consent Items 7, 8, 9, 10, 11b, 12a and 12b. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Recusal** – For Item 11a, Commissioner Lewis recused herself from voting on this item as the Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services for the Monterey County Office of Education and left the room. Though there is no personal gain from this decision, it is the policy of F5MC to avoid even the appearance of impropriety where conflict of interest issues are concerned.

ACTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Medina and seconded by Commissioner Reyes-Becerra to Approve Consent Item 11a. The motion was unanimously approved with one recusal (Lewis).

**7. October 23, 2023 Regular Commission Meeting Minutes – APPROVED**

**8. Financial Statements for Q1 FY 23/24 (July through September 2023) – APPROVED**

**9. Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) – APPROVE COLA of 2.5% effective for the first full payroll period in January 2024**

**10. Bright Beginnings Report – ACCEPTED**

**The correction is highlighted in yellow on page 2 and reflects the actual action taken.**

**11. Contract Amendment:** Authorize the Executive Director to execute amendments with the following contractors for FY 23/24 - APPROVED

**11a. Monterey County Office of Education,** from a total not-to-exceed amount of \$295,772 (\$147,886 per FY) to a total not-to-exceed amount of \$326,430 (\$166,593 for FY23/24 and \$159,837 for FY24/25) in FY 23/24 - 24/25 for services associated with the First 5 California IMPACT Legacy Grant - APPROVED

**11b. Heart of Strategy, Inc., Lindsay Bellows,** from an amount not-to-exceed \$56,160 to \$91,160 (an increase of \$35,000) to provide additional support for Strategic Plan Implementation - APPROVED

**12. Contract Renewals/New Contracts:** Authorize the Executive Director to execute amendments with the following contractors for FY 23/24 – APPROVED

**12a. Persimmony International, Inc.** for continued use of the Persimmony database system on a month-to-month basis, beginning on January 1, 2024 for up to six months, in an amount of \$5,000 per month, with a total amount not-to-exceed \$30,000 in FY23/24 - APPROVED

**12b. Maria Carmen Parra** to provide Community Engagement & Inclusion support to the Central Coast Early Childhood Advocacy Network (CCECAN) for First 5 Monterey County for an amount not-to-exceed \$20,300 in FY 23/24 – APPROVED

**13. F5MC Employee Handbook Update – ADOPTED**

**Commissioner Comments/Announcements** – *All Commissioners*

Receive Commissioner reports/updates on items relevant to early childhood development.

Commissioner Lewis shared that she, ED Rodd, and S. Koehler have been discussing how to engage the community with Universal Pre-K.

Chair Lopez shared that over 1,100 children will be receiving gifts at this year's Operation Santa event. The event will take place on December 14<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Sotelo shared that three mom's referenced IFECMH trainings at the support group she facilitates at the Acosta Plaza in Salinas.

**Adjournment:** Supervisor Lopez adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m.





**Access to Quality Early Care & Learning**

*Planning & Advocacy (See also Cross-Cutting Strategies):*

- Ongoing participation in the Regions Rise Together (RRT) inclusive economic development initiative:
  - Director and Coordinator participated in the monthly Community Leadership and Power Committee meetings to support community advocacy for child care. Committee is looking ahead to further collaboration beyond the RRT Blueprint.
  - Director chairing Care Committee, which includes participation in the Coordination Committee and the Leads Work Group, to coordinate across sections of the Blueprint and initiative. Drafted briefer to make the case for increased investment in child care, with key data points including supply, demand for child care and gap in funding. (Briefer in review by Committee.)
- Participated in the following spaces to maintain presence of Bright Beginnings and need for more investment in child care specifically: Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce Economic Vitality Committee; Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Government Relations Committee; Monterey Bay Economic Partnership Luncheon (topic = elections & civic engagement).

*Early Learning System Support:*

- Chairing Apprenticeship Committee, with last meeting January 26 and next meeting scheduled for February 23, 2024. Focus of BB support is on increasing enrollment into program and technical assistance for wrap around program supports (e.g., reflective practice, mentoring, etc.). Co-Chair Tammy Boates, instructor at Hartnell, focuses on curriculum development.
- Meet with Nurture FCCH start up facilitators and CSUMB for ongoing discussion of how to better leverage existing supports in our community. Confirmed that a child care home can be licensed for up to 8 children under an ITN (SSN not required).
- Facilitated discussion around ECE Workforce Attraction campaign at Child Care Planning Council meeting January 12, 2024. Recommendation is to focus on compelling message around the intangible benefits of going into ECE, to deepen recruitment at the High School level, and to share Apprenticeship and FCCH Start Up information with families at enrollment processes for early learning at schools and centers.
- Supported the Greenfield Early Learning Partnership TK & Kinder Enrollment Fair on February 7. Had approx. 30 agencies tabling with community resources - the most yet! This year's data collection upgraded to include tracking of relationship between attendance and completion of enrollment process. Report forthcoming after start of the new school year.
- Next issue of Early Care & Education Digest to be published February 21, 2024.

**Family Resilience through Social and Emotional Well-being**

- Maternal Mental Health Task Force:
  - Held regular Task Force meeting January 24 with presentation from Carelon Behavioral Health Services. Published November issue of the monthly Maternal Mental Health Newsletter. Next Task Force meeting scheduled for February 28, 2024.

- Facilitated interim steering committee on February 1, including onboarding and orientation of new members: Rosemary Soto, F5MC; Ella Harris, MCBH; Julie Norton, CCAH. Continuing members are Relindis Diaz, MCBH; and Nora Yerena, Raices & Carino.
- Supported various action committees: Doula Network & MMH Awareness Committee
- Preparing logistics and communications for the 2024 Maternal Mental Health Forum, March 19-20

 **Families Surrounded by Support**

*Family Friendly Business Practices*

- Coordinating with County of Monterey child care workgroup to conduct feasibility study for opening child care center on County property. January meeting was canceled, sent information via email.
- Co-Sponsored and attended employer training to support lactation at the worksite (with focus on agricultural worksites), hosted by County of Monterey WIC, with est. 30 attendees from around the state.

 **Cross Cutting Strategies and Collective Impact Support**

*Community Outreach, Inclusion & Advocacy (COIA):*

- Co-Sponsored and supported logistics of Parent Power Summit on February 10.
- Ongoing support of the Mamas de Salinas Abogan to build advocacy skills and to integrate into various project work (e.g., workshops and participation in Parent Power Summit, COLIBRI, Regions Rise Together, Maternal Mental Health Task Force, Parenting Connections Moms & Baby Circles)
- Staff supporting implementation of Uplift listening Sessions with F5MC, scheduled:
  - Salinas @Sherwood Hall - March 6, 2024
  - Greenfield @Vista Verde - March 12, 2024
  - Pajaro: TBD
- Supporting coordination of the COLIBRI grassroots child care advocacy campaign co-design:
  - COIA Coordinator leads project management
  - COIA Coordinator and Director participate on the core catalyzing team with Mamas de Salinas Abogan, First 5 Monterey County, Central Coast Early Childhood Advocacy Network, and Building Healthy Communities.
  - Held first collaborative co-design session on January 17, planning for the February 21st session. Final session scheduled for March 20.
- Cultivation of relationships within the Initiative by attending: Monterey County Immigration Services Network of Empowerment (CISNE), South County Organizations & Resources (SCORE), GUSD Community Collaborative, Bright Futures Steering Partners, F5MC Commission, and Children’s Council General Assembly and Executive Committee; Community Alliance for Safety and Peace (biweekly); County of Monterey Board of Supervisors. Attended Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce Annual Members Luncheon; Impact Monterey quarterly meeting.

*Backbone:*

- Conducted 4 weekly full team work sessions, frequent one-on-ones between individual team members for coordination and mentorship, and regular meetings between BB Director and F5 staff to coordinate administratively (roughly monthly with Controller, biweekly with ED/Bright Beginnings Co-Chair, weekly with Admin Manager, biweekly with PAC Director). Held one-on-one conversations with Bright Beginnings leadership (Bright Futures Steering Partners for Goals 1&2), Shannan Watkins from Early Learning Services and Josh Madfis from United Way.
- Participation with Bright Futures Education Partnership Steering Partner meetings. BB Director participating in recruitment of new BF Director: Tony Azumeca has been hired as interim director.
- Opened a conversation about measuring systems transformation with partners during the F5MC Evaluation Advisory Committee on February 14.

## ITEM 5

- Gave verbal annual report for FY 22/23 to the Children’s Council on February 12 and will present to the Board of Supervisors on March 12, 2024.
- Published 13 social media posts, sharing relevant resources related to all strategy-aligned projects and from partners of the Initiative.
- Held virtual Early Childhood Development Advisory Group meeting on January 18 (slides here), with an eSummary.

###

# FIRST 5 MONTEREY COUNTY BOARD BRIEFER

**MEETING: Regular Commission Meeting – Monday, February 26, 2024**

**SUBJECT: Policy, Advocacy, and Communications Monthly Report**

**POSSIBLE ACTION:**

No action to be taken.

**Commissioner Recusals: None**

**SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:**

**STATE:**

**First 5 Association**

- **First 5 Association Summit and Advocacy Day, February 5-6, 2024 in Sacramento:** ED Rodd, Director of PAC Alcaraz and Director of Racial Equity and Systems Soto attended the First 5 Association Summit and connected with First 5's around the state. Rodd and Alcaraz met with staff from Speaker Rivas and Assemblymember Addis's offices along with Senator Laird. There were three main items that were discussed:
  - **Supporting a request for \$100 million state general fund request** to ensure that local early childhood systems stay intact and provide county First 5s the time to address long-term solutions while minimizing the need for immediate local cuts.
  - **AB 2982 (Gomez-Reyes): Prenatal-to-3 statewide systems workgroup** bill would establish a 12-person working group to review current policies and practices at the state and local level related to infants, toddlers, and their families and make recommendations for improvements. The recommendations will focus on: early childhood systems, including local First 5 infrastructure and needs; outlining additional recommendations for system building, including financing, data, and the needs of specific sub-populations of young children; and working with state agencies to ensure alignment and partnership so that all of CA's young children and their families can thrive. The group will be tasked with crafting a 10-year agenda/strategy for the state. At the time of the advocacy day, there was no sponsor or bill number. By Friday, Feb. 16<sup>th</sup> a bill had been introduced for this purpose.
  - **Supporting Continuous Medi-Cal enrollment** – as part of our Association policy priorities to preserve previous state policy achievements and investments, F5AC will continue to track and support the inclusion of multiyear continuous Medi-Cal coverage protection for children 0 to 5 in the state budget.

**LOCAL:**

**Child Care discussions:**

- **COLBRI:** F5MC is working in partnership with Building Healthy Communities and Bright Beginnings to bring together community organizations to advocate for child care in the community. The first of 3 planning meetings occurred in January to discussed shared vision of what to accomplish to improve child care in Monterey County. The second meeting will be held on February 21 to develop a focus and set collective short, medium, and long term goals.

**Central Coast Early Childhood Advocacy Network (CCECAN):**

- **Parent Power Summit, February 10, 2024 (10-2p) at Sherwood Hall, Salinas:** The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Parent Power Summit was a lovely event with over 180 community members, children and elected officials in attendance. We are still working on survey analysis but have heard from many people that they made connections, learned new skills and are excited to advocate for their community. Senator Laird spoke to attendees and we had a panel of community leaders along with Alexis Garcia-Arrazola from Assemblymember Addis's office and Dominic Dursa from Speaker Rivas's office.
- Please see the embedded video for more information about CCECAN:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXvuskbJnDE>

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

- **Hartnell Photoshoot – Saturday, March 9:** We are looking to update our photos and will be holding a day of photoshoots. We are recruiting 40 families to participate. If you know of any families that would be interested, please let staff know.
- **CAPC Safe Sleep Commercial:** Staff worked with the Child Abuse Prevention Council and other partners to design a commercial to promote safe sleep habits. The commercial will air during Child Abuse Prevention Month in April. Please see the video [here](#).

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no immediate financial implications to this discussion.

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Nina Alcaraz, Director of Policy, Advocacy, and Communications



# PROTECTING CRITICAL SERVICES FOR CALIFORNIA'S YOUNGEST CHILDREN

## BUDGET REQUEST

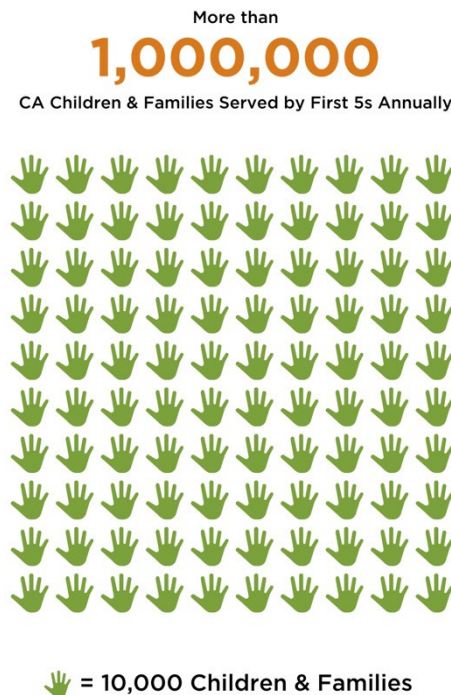
The First 5 Association of California (F5AC) is requesting a one-time \$100 million investment to ensure local programs serving California's babies, toddlers, and preschoolers stay intact. This one-time funding request would be allocated to First 5 programs throughout the state and focus on the highest priority areas:

- Family strengthening programs such as family resource centers, fatherhood programs and home visiting.
- Infant and early childhood mental health services for young children and their caregivers, and workforce training.
- Child care and early learning supports such as provider coaching, mentoring, and stipends.

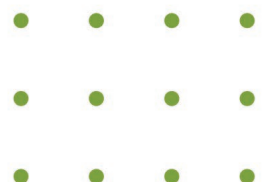
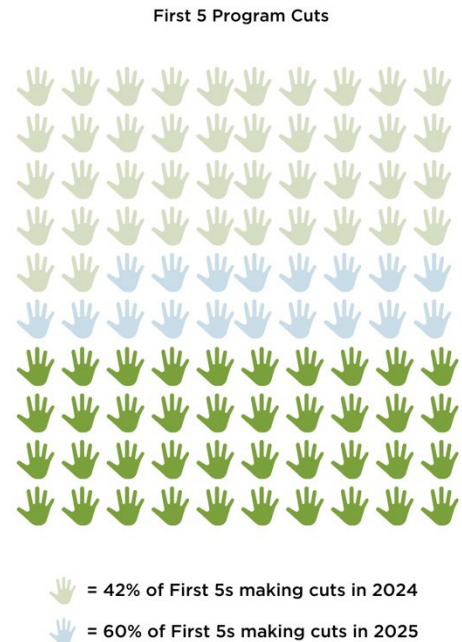
## SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AT RISK

For 25 years, local First 5 programs in every county have supported the healthy development and school readiness of millions of California children. Already declining tobacco tax revenues that fund First 5 programs have been dramatically slashed since Proposition 31 (the flavored tobacco ban) was implemented last year. F5AC's tobacco tax revenue projections estimate **First 5s will need to cut \$123.7M** in early childhood community investments over the next two fiscal years and \$422.9M in the next five fiscal years.<sup>1</sup> The need is urgent— **more than 42% of First 5s have already made program cuts this year and 60% are planning on program cuts in 2024-25.**<sup>2</sup>

**Without a short term, stop-gap investment from the state, programs serving tens of thousands of low-income children and children of color will end. California's babies, toddlers, and preschoolers should not bear the impact of the flavored tobacco ban in the form of fewer services and opportunities for healthy development.**



## BUDGET CUTS



# PROTECTING CRITICAL SERVICES FOR CALIFORNIA'S YOUNGEST CHILDREN



## PRESERVING FIRST 5 INFRASTRUCTURE

Local First 5s make up a statewide, 58-county network of early childhood service providers, case managers, grant makers, program coordinators, trusted messengers, researchers, advocates, and effective public stewards of state and local funding. **Together this network impacts the lives of more than 1 million kids, families and caregivers each year.**<sup>3</sup>

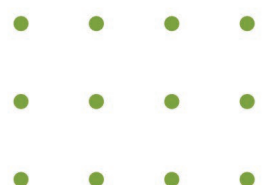
In addition to community program cuts, operational reductions in this network mean First 5s cannot **coordinate** local early childhood services like home visiting or serve as contract managers for CalAIM (California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal) community partners. In addition, because First 5s **leverage** funds to match other local and state funding, every tobacco tax dollar lost reduces funding available to serve California's children and their families. Finally, as statewide **innovators** of early childhood best practices, a dwindling infrastructure will disproportionately impact the state's most vulnerable children.

For more information, contact Courtney Armstrong, Director of Government Affairs with First 5 Association of California, at [courtney@first5association.org](mailto:courtney@first5association.org).

<sup>1</sup> First 5 CA, "FY 22-23 Monthly Distribution of Tax Revenues". <https://bit.ly/3S8L0jt>

<sup>2</sup> Based on the response from 47 counties who participated in a survey conducted by First 5 Association of California in 2023. These counties comprise 88% of children born in the state.

<sup>3</sup> First 5 California, "2022-23 Annual Report", Appendix C, page 59. <https://bit.ly/48DBv2N>





# PRENATAL TO 3 WORKING GROUP LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL



## THIS BILL

First 5 Association of California proposes a bill to establish a statewide Prenatal to Three Workgroup to craft evidence-based and community-informed recommendations for a 10-year comprehensive, equity-focused prenatal to three system policy agenda.

## ISSUE

California has made important strides in supporting young children and their families. The Master Plan for Early Care and Education and Whole Child Screening Tool established by AB 2832 (2022) made great strides but were primarily focused on early childhood education and childcare leaving significant gaps.

Additionally, services are unequally provided throughout the state by a patchwork of providers. Some are Medi-Cal eligible, but lacking providers and others are administered by counties as resources are available.

There is room to tailor services to communities, while ensuring equity in the services available to children across the state.

It is time to focus on the needs of California's infants and toddlers and their families and address their needs comprehensively.

Policies also need to uplift family and community strengths and affirm their cultures and languages given that 75% of our state's 0-3 population are children of color.

## SOLUTION

This bill would help California move towards more effective, universal, and equity-focused systems and services for infants and toddlers.

The bill would establish a 12-person working group to review current policies and practices at the state and local level related to infants, toddlers, and their families and make recommendations for improvements at all levels. The working group's review and recommendations shall focus on the following:

- (1) Early childhood systems, including local First 5 infrastructure and needs.
- (2) Outlining additional recommendations for system building, including financing, data, and the needs of specific sub-populations of young children.
- (3) Working with state agencies to ensure alignment and partnership so that all of California's young children and their families can thrive.

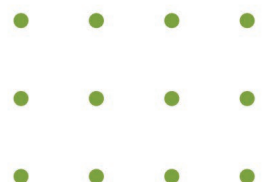
The workgroup shall submit its recommendations to the Administration and to the Legislature by January 31, 2026.

## SUPPORT

First 5 Association of California

## CONTACT

Courtney Armstrong, Director of Government Affairs  
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 415.272.1299 mobile







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**FIRST 5**  
ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA

## Press Statement

### Governor's January Budget and Children's Continued Medi-Cal Coverage

**For Immediate Release:**  
**January 10, 2024**

A coalition of organizations – including American Academy of Pediatrics-California, Children Now, First 5 Association of California, March of Dimes, Maternal and Child Health Access, National Health Law Program, The Children's Partnership, and Western Center on Law and Poverty – urges the Administration greenlight the implementation of an important protection to keep low-income kids healthy.

California is one of the first states in the country to adopt a multi-year continuous Medi-Cal coverage protection for young children. This means that children under the age of five can keep their Medi-Cal coverage without a gap in that coverage – often caused by administrative paperwork hurdles. With Medi-Cal covering more than half of all children in California, and given that almost three out of four Medi-Cal children are children of color, continuous coverage protections ensure children of color have a healthy start in life.

Gaps in coverage lead to missed essential health care, including vaccinations and early identification of developmental delays and interventions. By contrast, protecting Medi-Cal coverage in the first 5 years of life, when 90 percent of brain development occurs, can set a child on a course for healthy development.

Continuous coverage has proven to be extremely effective, even in challenging times. During the pandemic, the uninsured rate for California children dropped from 3.6 percent to 3.2 percent—an 11% percent drop. Continuous coverage not only protected children from becoming uninsured, it reduced the uninsurance rate, *even during a pandemic*.

We appreciate that the projected state budget shortfall may require state policymakers to curtail new investments and focus on preserving the investments already made. However, moving forward with multi-year continuous coverage not only protects young children's healthy development, it also preserves existing state investments in children's mental health and the Administration's strategic priorities in early childhood development. Children cannot benefit from these investments if they lose their Medi-Cal coverage.

Medi-Cal coverage protections have never been more important. Almost 200,000 California children have already lost their Medi-Cal coverage from July to October 2023 as part of the unwinding of the federal Medicaid continuous coverage protection. California's young children need the state's multi-year continuous coverage protection to go into effect as soon as possible.

*To meet a January 2025 start date for continuous coverage, we urge the Governor to greenlight this policy as soon as possible, so the Department of Health Care Services can take the necessary steps for implementation. The State should submit a request for federal approval to the federal Medicaid agency as soon as possible—not waiting until the Spring to submit.*

The Governor's immediate action on this will help prevent more children from unnecessarily losing health coverage in the coming years, and ensure California does not get left behind as similar policies are being implemented in other states (including [Oregon](#), [Washington](#), [Massachusetts](#), [New Mexico](#), [North Carolina](#), [Arizona](#), [Hawaii](#), and [Pennsylvania](#)). Our organizations look forward to continued engagement with state partners on the timely implementation of this important policy.

For questions please contact:  
Kristen Golden Testa,  
Health Policy Director,  
The Children's Partnership  
415 505 1332