

## ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETIN NO. 9

### **Subject: 2017 Policy Platform and Advocacy Guidelines**

**Purpose:** To provide a policy and process for the Commission to set the parameters to support the continued advancement of positive outcomes for children 0-5 and their families. It is the intent of this policy to guide local, state and national decision-making and to integrate services in the areas of health and wellness, parent education and early childcare and education.

**Rationale:** To promote First 5 Kern's mission and vision, the policy platform and advocacy guidelines establish protocols and a process for the Commission to take positions on federal, state and local policy and engage with various stakeholders in promoting these efforts.

**Policy and Criteria:** This policy reflects administrative intent to on-going research, evaluation and strategic analysis in order to inform and remain in alignment with the Commission approved Strategic Plan. Utilizing the First 5 California and First 5 Association Policy agendas, First 5 Kern will solicit input annually, regarding policy, direction and coordination of advocacy efforts in support of First 5 Kern's Strategic Plan with all of the key stakeholders within Kern County.

This approach will inform and guide the Commission in making recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature for revisions in State laws, State budget, regulations and programs serving children and their families that are necessary or appropriate to carry out an integrated and comprehensive system of early childhood development in an effective manner.

Through this policy, the Executive Director will have the authority to represent the Commission in advocating for proposals, legislative or otherwise, that align coherently with the above mentioned platform. Advocacy activities may include: establishing relationships with elected officials, legislators, staff and key stakeholders; planning legislative visits regarding key First 5 Kern investment areas; testifying and participating in hearings and programs, services and unmet needs and services for children and families in Kern County; developing messaging around the First 5 Kern programs and the importance of investing in programs focused on children 0-5 and their families; and authoring or co-signing advocacy support letters.

Should a proposal pertaining to children's services potentially conflict with this policy, the Executive Director will seek direction from the Commission. When time allows, such proposed issues will be brought to the next regularly scheduled Commission meeting. When there are time constraints, the Executive Director will seek direction from the Chair.

All actions under this policy shall be in accordance with all applicable state laws as well as the Strategic Plan and annual budget as approved by the Commission, authorized pursuant to the Children and Families Act of 1998, and included within the annual audit of the Commission.