



**To:** Commissioners, First 5 Ventura County

**From:** Petra Puls, Executive Director

**Date:** September 24, 2020

**Re:** Recommendation to Adopt a Revised Preschool Implementation Model

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**Background**

F5VC funded preschool programs target families who are not income eligible or unable to access a publicly funded preschool space. The program is modeled after the California State Preschool Program (CSPP) and all but one of the F5VC preschool contractors also implement a CSPP program, providing an opportunity to leverage funds and serve families with a range of incomes.

Since March 2019, preschool programs in California have greatly been impacted by the onset of COVID-19 and subsequent local and State Public Health orders. Although preschool is allowed to remain open as an essential service, all of the programs funded by F5VC operate on Local Education Agency (LEA) property, and most LEAs have closed their campuses to students, including preschoolers. Two F5VC funded preschool programs are offering in person services at this time, while the remainder are offering distance learning.

Upon analysis of CDE's CSPP guidance released earlier this month, F5VC staff recommend that the Commission consider a flexible implementation of preschool in FY 2020-21. Under this modified model, First 5 Ventura County preschool contractors who are closed due to a public health order and continue to incur operating costs would be able to deliver a virtual distance learning model, or a hybrid model that offers a combination of in-person and distance learning, in addition to regular in-person programming.

F5VC funded programs who are closed, or who are not able to provide in person services for all currently enrolled children due to a public health order, or when families choose to shelter in place due to the Covid-19 pandemic, must submit a distance learning plan to F5VC for approval in order to provide distance learning services. These requirements are being mirrored by CDE with their CSPP programs.

Allowing a flexible implementation of preschool during this unprecedented time will support children's school readiness, and help Ventura County retain its preschool capacity and workforce, ensuring preschools have the necessary infrastructure to reopen their programs in person as soon as circumstances allow it.

**Recommendation**

The Commission will consider the adoption of a revised implementation model for Preschool for FY 2020-21. Under the new model, First 5 Ventura County preschool contractors would be able to deliver a virtual distance learning model, a hybrid model, or regular in-person programming, dependent upon Covid-19 related circumstances.