



July 22, 2021

INFORMATION  ACTION

**SUBJECT: RACE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION REFLECTION**

**Strategic Priority Area I: Child Health**

**Goal:** All children thrive by achieving optimal health prenatal through age 5.

**Strategic Priority Area II: Child Development**

**Goal:** All children birth through age 5 have high-quality, nurturing environments that ensure their learning readiness.

**Strategic Priority Area III: Family Functioning**

**Goal:** All families have the knowledge, skills, and resources to support their children's optimal development.

**Strategic Priority Area IV: First 5 California Workplace Development and Culture**

Positive relationships and supportive culture

## **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE**

On behalf of the First 5 Network (local county commissions, First 5 California [F5CA], and the First 5 Association) Executive Directors Melissa Stafford Jones and Camille Maben will present an overview of the Race, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) reflection and learning effort to build REDI knowledge and practice among and across all partners of the First 5 Network.

## **SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

In October 2021, the First 5 Association released a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a REDI consultant to help devise and implement a framework to increase the capacity of the First 5 Network to advance work addressing structural, policy, and systems-level inequities affecting young children, their families, and communities. The RFP development, review, and selection process included representatives from the First 5 Association, F5CA, and county commissions, which became the Core REDI Team (Core Team). The Core Team has been partnering with the consultant in carrying out the REDI reflection and learning effort. The firm Teng & Smith, Inc., was selected and

began consulting in January 2021. F5CA contributed \$49,999.99 to support and partner in the REDI work through a contract with the First 5 Association.

The goal of the REDI work is for First 5 Network members to understand REDI concepts and constructs, increase their capacity to engage in REDI dialogues, have access and capability to use tools and supports to participate in REDI work in their local environments, and be prepared to engage in and lead work addressing systems-level inequities in collaboration with external partners.

In March, the Core Team and consultants drafted a mission and vision for the REDI work, as follows:

- *Mission:* To develop a foundation and framework for the First 5 Network to center racial equity, diversity, and inclusion (REDI in its mission to build early childhood systems and supports for California's families and children.
- *Vision:* Children live in a work where life outcomes are not determined by race or family income. Redi is embedded in all systems, structure, strategies, and practices within and across the First 5 Network and the extended ecosystem to ensure all children and families, especially those of color and those farthest from opportunities and access, reach their full potential.

The Core Team and consultants also developed a theory of change with short and long term outcomes for the First 5 Network, families and communities, and systems.

The consultants conducted 47 stakeholder interviews in April, including individuals from First 5 commissions, partner agencies, and organizations statewide. Findings are summarized in a report released May 2021. In general, stakeholders agreed the REDI work was timely, driven by national and local conversations regarding racial equity work, and strong community voices advocating for change. Stakeholders also noted several challenges including lack of clarity about goals and strategies, lack of trust, some resistance, and systemic racism.

In July, the consultants piloted three leadership-oriented REDI sessions for Core Team members and additional invitees, including nine staff from F5CA. Through fall 2021, the curriculum will be delivered across the First 5 Network encouraging "courageous conversations," providing practical tools, and offering individualized coaching and consulting on a one-on-one basis to help participants develop the skills and competencies associated with applying a REDI lens to policy development and systems change.

## **FISCAL DETAIL**

As mentioned, F5CA contributed \$49,999.99 (from the Unallocated account) to support and partner in the REDI work through a contract with the First 5 Association for fiscal years 2020–21 and 2021–22.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

None.