

Early Childhood Council of Kern Strategic Plan Update 2018-2021 Executive Summary



Early Childhood Council of Kern

Planning for quality early care and education.

Adopted by:
Early Childhood Council of Kern (date)

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The Early Childhood Council of Kern is funded with a Planning Council grant through the California Department of Education, Early Education and Support Division.

Vision Statement

All Kern County families will have access to high quality early care and education services.

Mission Statement

The Early Childhood Council of Kern is dedicated to promoting and supporting a community-wide effort which results in a high quality early care and education system that meets the needs of all Kern County families.

The Early Childhood Council of Kern is a 30-member, appointed advisory board working together to increase and enhance the quality of early care and education programs in Kern County. It is comprised of parents, early childhood professionals, employers, educators, public agencies, advocates – all with a common interest – increasing the availability of quality early care and education services for children birth to 12 years of age in Kern County.



Quality Statement

The Early Childhood Council of Kern believes that a high quality early care and education setting promotes:

Child Development

- Enhancement of the whole child through physical, social, emotional and intellectual development with respect to a child's ability and culture;
- Frequent, positive, warm interactions appropriate to a child's age and development;
- Varied learning activities appropriate to a child's age and development;

Health and Safety

- Healthy, safe, and nurturing environments;
- Provision of nutritious meals and snacks;
- Knowledgeable and skilled providers to respond to the needs of each child;

Effective Program Administration

- On-going communication with families and opportunities for meaningful family involvement;
- Opportunities for training and support for providers;
- Implementation of an on-going systematic evaluation process

The full Strategic Plan including action steps can be found at: <http://earlychildhoodkern.org/data-and-resources/>

The 2018-2021 Strategic Plan is designed to address current early care and education issues facing all Kern County families regardless of income. As our society changes, modifications will need to be made. There is a need to continue community collaborations in order to leverage funds and maintain services for families. The Early Childhood Council of Kern (the Council) continues to look to traditional as well as non-traditional partners to achieve the goals outlined in this plan.

OVERVIEW - 2018-2021 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1. QUALITY WORKFORCE

Through collaboration and community partnerships the Council will provide professional development opportunities to strengthen the early care and education workforce.

OBJECTIVES

- Promote and support early care and education provider involvement in a variety of educational and professional growth opportunities;
- Promote quality standards within the early care and education field.

GOAL 2. ACCESS AND CAPACITY

By engaging in local and statewide efforts the Council will assist in increasing local early care and education capacity to provide all Kern County families access to quality programs in a variety of settings.

OBJECTIVES

- Increase the number of quality early care and education programs for all children throughout Kern County;
- Promote the expenditure of all funds made available to Kern County by the California Department of Education, Early Education and Support Division through the Voluntary, Temporary, Transfer of Funds (VTTF) process;
- Act as advocates for the early care and education field including promoting careers in the field.

GOAL 3. ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY AWARENESS

The Council will inform parents and the community regarding quality early care and education programs for all children.

OBJECTIVES

- Present a clear and consistent message to local and state elected officials about the value of quality early care and education programs;
- Inform local providers of legislation that has/will have a local impact;

- Inform parents and the community of the importance of quality early care and education programs, the role parents play as their child's first teacher and resources available to help meet the developmental needs of their young children;
- Promote the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) as funding permits;
- Continue public awareness efforts to reach all communities of the county.

GOAL 4. COUNCIL ACCOUNTABILITY

In compliance with Education Code, the Council will operate in an effective manner consistent with the intent of the Local Child Care Planning Councils.

OBJECTIVES

- Maintain the office of the Early Childhood Council of Kern including employment of staff and consultants and the election of an Executive Committee;
- Promote the role and responsibility of the Council within the early care and education field and to the general public;

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- Update the county-wide, child care needs assessment as required by the Education Code (Section 8499.5);
- Maintain a comprehensive county-wide early care and education strategic plan designed to mobilize public and private resources to address identified needs;
- Maintain geographical priorities for Kern County as specified in the Education Code (Section 8499.5);
- Implement a training plan to provide increased efficiency, productivity and facilitation of Council meetings;
- Submit required reports to regulatory and funding agencies;
- Maintain the membership of the Council, making every effort to ensure that the ethnic, racial and geographic composition of the Council is reflective of the county's population as specified in Education Code;
- Maintain current data on the early care and education workforce in Kern County;
- Implement and/or provide oversight to existing and future independently funded programs (short term projects funded by non-permanent funding sources most with a specific focus);
- Maintain current governing documents such as bylaws.



SCHOOL AGE CARE

Since the implementation of the After School Education and Safety (ASES) programs, funded by the California Department of Education, school districts have provided much of the professional development needed by ASES staff internally. Therefore the need for the Council's involvement has been greatly reduced. The Council will continue to collaborate with school districts and others operating after school programs as the opportunity arises.

ACHIEVING OUR GOALS

For each goal and objective outlined in the plan, specific strategies have been identified. The Council understands that these strategies may not be all inclusive. Thoughtful consideration was given to many additional strategies. Some, while important, did not fall within the sphere of influence of the Council. Others are presently beyond achievability based on available resources. In addition, some strategies may be successful in one community and not in another. A variety of options are necessary to meet the needs of all Kern County families. A "one-size-fits-all" approach is not logical when addressing the diverse populations that make up Kern County. The key to achieving the goals in this document are effective partnerships with each partner contributing their unique expertise and resources.

ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The Early Childhood Council of Kern meets on the first Wednesday of each month from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. except for July and January. The public is welcome to attend and actively participate with general and committee meetings, typically held in Bakersfield. Please call the Council office or visit the Council's website to verify meeting date, time and location.

JOIN US!

Appointments are made to the Early Childhood Council of Kern throughout the year by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools and the Kern County Board of Supervisors. Terms are for three years in the categories of: Child Care Consumers, Child Care Providers, Public Agency Representatives, Community Representatives and Discretionary Members.