



“One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way.”

~ Frank Smith

## First 5 California Dual Language Learner (DLL) Pilot Opportunity

California’s early learning settings serve children ages 0 to 5 from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences shaped by culture, traditions, and routines in their families and communities. California has an estimated 1.8 million DLL children in this age group—more than any other state. Sixty percent of California’s children ages 0 to 5 live in households where a language other than English is spoken. DLLs are children who are learning two or more languages at the same time.

Through a DLL Pilot, First 5 California (F5CA) has the opportunity to identify effective strategies that support dual language development across early learning settings, engage families to support their children’s dual language development, and deliver effective professional learning opportunities so educators, caregivers, and other staff can effectively support the learning and development of young DLLs.

The U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Education, in their joint Policy Statement on Supporting the Development of Children who are Dual Language Learners in Early Childhood Programs note, “The lack of proven instructional practices and evidence-based models that effectively support the development and learning of children who are DLLs is also a contributor to the achievement gap.”

## F5CA DLL Pilot Goals

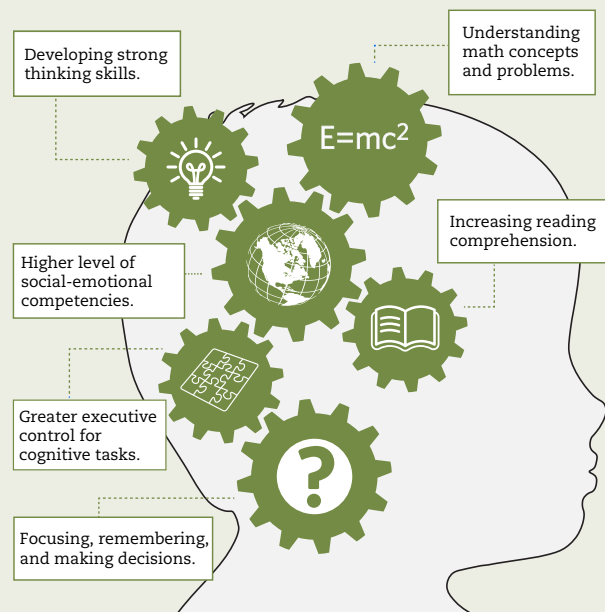
By partnering with local programs, the F5CA DLL Pilot will identify and then disseminate: (1) culturally and linguistically responsive teaching strategies, curricular approaches, and professional development to promote dual language

acquisition; (2) appropriate child and program assessment tools to better support children who are DLLs; (3) practices to empower and partner with families of DLLs and optimize home language; and (4) public awareness messages about the benefits of being bilingual.

The F5CA DLL Pilot will further the ultimate goal for California’s young DLLs to thrive, develop bilingual ability, be ready for kindergarten, and succeed in school and beyond.

## Benefits of a Bilingual Brain

Research shows that bilingual children have an easier time with these key brain functions:





## Six Reasons to Raise a Bilingual Child

1. It is easier to learn another language from birth than it is during any other time in life. Babies can start off with two first languages.
2. Bilingualism helps children develop superior reading and writing skills.
3. Bilingual children tend to have overall better analytical, social, and academic skills than their monolingual peers.
4. Bilingual children tend to have higher self-esteem and self-confidence. Knowing more than one language helps children feel at ease in different environments.
5. Bilingual adults tend to have more career prospects and higher average salaries than monolingual adults.
6. A bilingual brain is quicker and nimbler. As adults, bilinguals tend to be more resistant to Alzheimers and other forms of dementia.

### Evaluation

American Institutes for Research, an evaluation contractor, will work collaboratively with the F5CA DLL Pilot implementers to assess overall effectiveness of local DLL approaches, and to identify strategies and practices that support the learning and development of young DLLs. F5CA will share the findings of the F5CA DLL Pilot to inform the California Quality Rating and Improvement System and those implementing First 5 IMPACT (Improve and Maximize Programs so All Children Thrive) across the state, as well as state and local policy makers.

### Positive Messaging

A baby's brain develops at fantastic speed beginning at birth. Parents and caregivers can have a powerful and positive impact on a baby's brain growth through loving, verbal engagement through talking, reading, and singing right from the start. F5CA provides



positive messaging about the benefits of bilingualism and early brain development as part of a parallel approach to the F5CA DLL Pilot implementation. F5CA has highlighted the many benefits of bilingualism in its statewide *Talk. Read. Sing.*® campaign.

### Target Population

The F5CA DLL Pilot will serve California's diverse population of children ages 0 to 5 and their families across early learning settings.

### Funding and Timeframes

The anticipated investment for the F5CA DLL Pilot is approximately \$20 million over five years (FYs 2016–17 through 2020–21), while requiring local investments to complement state funds. Funding is made available through the California Children and Families Act, a 1998 voter-approved tobacco tax.

### Implementation Date

The F5CA DLL Pilot is scheduled to launch in January 2018.

**For more information:**  
[DLLPilot@first5.ca.gov](mailto:DLLPilot@first5.ca.gov)