REQUEST FOR APPLICATION

Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards (CARES) Plus Program

Round 2

FY 2013-16

March 7, 2013

FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA

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I. CARES Plus Program Round 2 - Request for Application Overview

First 5 California is issuing this CARES Plus Program Round 2 Request for Application (RFA) to fund county-level partnerships that focus on providing research-based professional development opportunities designed to meet the needs of the local early learning workforce. The ultimate purpose of Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards (CARES) Plus is to provide a stable Early Childhood Education workforce, to promote caring interactive relationships between children and teachers, and to improve child outcomes.

A. Program Objectives

CARES Plus is a professional development program targeting early educators working with children ages 0 to 5. The program objectives are as follows:

- Increase teacher effectiveness by improving quality of interaction with children.
- Help teachers to develop professionally through:
  - Coursework in Early Childhood Education (ECE) and Child Development (CD).
  - Degree or permit attainment.
- Retain qualified teachers in the Early Childhood Education field.
- Provide smoking cessation training to inform participants and encourage them to share information and resources with families and staff.

For a conceptual perspective of the goals and objectives of CARES Plus please refer to the Conceptual Framework Logic Model in Appendix K.

The success of this statewide program depends upon the active involvement and expertise of key partners. For an overview the CARES Plus Program Partners please refer to Appendix G.

B. Funding Authority

<u>Statutory</u>

Health and Safety Code (HSC) Sections 130105(d)(1)(B)-(D) authorize the expenditure of funds from the California Children and Families Trust Fund to ensure children are ready to enter school, and for programs related to education including, but not limited to, the development of educational materials, professional and parental education and training, and technical support for county commissions.

HSC Section 130125(i) specifies First 5 California’s authority to enter into contracts and allocate funds to county commissions as necessary or appropriate to carry out the provisions and purposes of the California Children and Families Act of 1998.

First 5 California Children and Families Commission Authorization

In October 2012, the First 5 California Children and Families Commission approved funding of up to $14 million a year for three years beginning July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2016, to support the CARES Plus Program Round 2.

C. Purpose of CARES Plus Program Round 2

Building on current research and the success of CARES Plus Round 1, CARES Plus Round 2 is a statewide professional development program for early educators. Its ultimate goal continues to be to improve children's learning and developmental outcomes through improved teacher effectiveness. CARES Plus continues to provide stipends, training, and higher education access that collectively serve to support and retain qualified early childhood educators.

Findings from the research on brain development, coupled with young children's need for positive, sensitive relationships with effective caregivers, provides the evidence base for CARES Plus.

The following three evaluation questions are designed to assess the effectiveness of the CARES Plus program:

1. Does training provided by CARES Plus improve teacher effectiveness in the classroom?
2. Do program participants consider training provided by CARES Plus to be useful in their work in Early Childhood Education?
3. Does training provided by CARES Plus improve retention of teachers working in Early Childhood Education?

D. Summary of Local CARES Plus Program Planning and Implementation Requirements

This RFA contains a detailed description of the responsibilities of Lead Agencies, regarding: program design; implementation and administration responsibilities; data and information requirements, and fiscal and audit requirements. At the highest level, to be approved for CARES Plus Round 2 funding, a Lead Agency must form a local consortium, create and implement an Effectiveness and Access Plan, and incorporate specific participant, program and administrative requirements in its local CARES Plus program.

CARES Plus consortia are developed by the Lead Agency at the local level to enhance interagency coordination among local entities dedicated to professional development, teacher retention, and enhancing the quality of early care and education. While the Lead Agency remains responsible to ensure that all CARES Plus Program requirements are met, and for program and fiscal accountability of all CARES Plus expenditures, the intent is that the local consortium will assist with ensuring the maximum impact and success of the local CARES Plus program.

The Effectiveness and Access Plan is developed at the time of application by the Lead Agency of the local consortium, and is updated annually throughout the program. The goal of the plan is to provide access to supports and professional development to early care and education providers.

The program and administrative requirements of the Lead Agency are described throughout this RFA. A CARES Plus Program Glossary is included as Appendix F, for reference. Submitting an application and accepting an award of funds for CARES Plus Program Round 2 constitutes the Lead Agency's agreement to implement each of the these requirements.

E. Summary of Participant Requirements

CARES Plus Program Round 2 is designed to recruit early child educators interested in improving their professional development and their teacher-child interactions in the classroom. Each Lead Agency shall recruit teachers that meet minimum requirements to be participants during each academic year. To be eligible as a participant, a teacher must maintain continued employment in a licensed or license-exempt program for a minimum of nine months each academic year, working a minimum of 15 hours per week, and making less than $60,000 per year. The weekly time minimum may be adjusted for participants working in seasonal and other migrant programs, upon written approval by First 5 California.

Participants must agree to fully participate in all program requirements, as described in this RFA and as reflected in their Professional Growth Plan. In designing, implementing and administering its local CARES Plus program, the Lead Agency must provide and manage all of the participants' program requirements and ensure that those requirements are met. Table A on page 9 provides an overview of the CARES Plus participant requirements, and are further defined in Section III of the RFA.

TABLE A
CARES Plus Program Round 2 Participant Requirements

All Participants: CARES Plus CORE Requirements		
Complete three online courses and participate in *Classroom Assessment Scoring System*^{TM} (*CLASS*$^{TM)}$ observation if selected in random sample.		
Intro to the *CLASS*^{TM}	*Looking at CLASSrooms*^{TM} (*LAC*^{TM})	CARES Plus Tobacco Training
• Two-hour interactive online program to gain an understanding of the *CLASS*^{TM} • Available in English and Spanish • Toddler or Pre-K option Infant programming available in Fall 2014 or when available	• Online program focusing on identifying and analyzing effective teacher-child interactions • Available in English and Spanish • Toddler or Pre-K option Infant programming available in Fall 2014 or when available	*Kids and Smoke Don't Mix*: A Tobacco Training for child care providers and preschool teachers sponsored by First 5 California and created by the California Smokers' Helpline

All Participants: Annual Requirements
Meet twice a year with a CARES Plus Advisor, complete a Professional Growth Plan, select and complete approved component requirements, and complete an annual participant survey.

*Electives Depending on Each Participant's Professional Growth Plan: CARES Plus Professional Development Component Requirements			
Component A	Component B	Component C	Component D
Minimum of 21 hours of CDE-approved professional growth trainings • Participate in *CLASS*^{TM} observation if selected	Minimum of six units of higher education towards a degree in ECE, CD or related field • Participate in *CLASS*^{TM} observation if selected	Serve as CARES Plus Advisor • Requires BA degree • Complete CORE Requirements	*My Teaching Partner* (*MTP*$^{TM)}$ provides one-on-one professional growth coaching • Required to participate in *CLASS*^{TM} observation

*Each Lead Agency has the discretion to select which of these Components to offer in its local CARES Plus program. Depending on the resources available, each Lead Agency can choose to offer one or more of Components A, B, C and D.

II. WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR THIS RFA

The term Lead Agency is used throughout the RFA to refer to the local agency that ultimately submits the CARES Plus Letter of Intent and application. A qualifying local agency may either be a First 5 county Commission or a Local Public Entity (LPE), as further defined in this Section II below.

Lead Agencies are encouraged to collaborate whenever feasible to create cohesive programs, share resources and reduce administrative costs. Inter-county collaboration on a single application is permitted, and especially encouraged for small counties. The Lead Agency must be located within the submitting county or within a participating county if more than one county forms a collaborative. All Lead Agency applicants, if other than a First 5 county commission, will be required to provide evidence of existing capacity to carry out and implement similar programs, and to meet the specific program and fiscal requirements of CARES Plus.

The Lead Agency is responsible for developing a consortium consisting of organizations with the same goals and objectives to improve the quality of early learning. At the local level, each consortium must include, at a minimum, the First 5 county commission, local higher education institutions, Local Child Care Planning Councils, local Resource and Referral agencies, and AB 212 local initiatives. Consortia members also may include entities such as local education agencies, County Offices of Education, Early Head Start, and Head Start programs.

A. First 5 County Commissions

First 5 county commissions have priority and “first right of refusal” to apply for CARES Plus program matching funds and to serve as the Lead Agency for the CARES Plus program in their respective counties. To establish its designation as the Lead Agency, the First 5 county commission must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) in Form R.2 by March26, 2013. The instructions for completing the Letter of Intent are detailed in Form R.1.

B. Local Public Entity (LPE)

In the event a First 5 county commission chooses not to act as the Lead Agency, First 5 California will accept an LOI from a Local Public Entity (LPE). An LPE applicant must be located within the county it wishes to serve or within a participating county if more than one county wishes to establish a collaborative for a local CARES Plus program. To be considered as a Lead Agency, the LPE must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) in Form R.3 by April 3, 2013. The instructions for completing the Letter of Intent are detailed in Form R.1.

Note: For purposes of this RFA, a Local Public Entity refers to “a county, city, district, public authority, public agency, and any other political subdivision or public *corporation in the state, but does not include the State." (California Government Code, Section 940.4.)*

The LPE must include the following additional information with the LOI form:

- Evidence reflecting the existing capacity to provide early learning workforce services and administrative, fiscal, and program oversight.
- The LPE's mission statement.
- The LPE's goals and objectives.
- Organizational chart.
- List of any early childhood accreditations achieved, if applicable.

III. LEAD AGENCY PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

The Lead Agency is responsible for designing and implementing a local CARES Plus program that adheres to the requirements described in this RFA. The Lead Agency will be responsible for meeting fiscal and legal requirements, providing program management, and ensuring accountability. To be approved for CARES Plus funding, the Lead Agency must do the following:

A. Develop a Consortium

i. Consortium Partners

Providing quality early learning programs for children ages 0 to 5 requires meaningful partnerships at many levels. The CARES Plus model is predicated on the power of partnerships – among public and private funders, various sectors of higher education, and alternative providers at the state and local levels. CARES Plus requires interagency collaboration among local agencies including but not limited to: county commissions, two- and four-year higher education institutions, local educational agencies, Resource and Referral (R&R) agency, Local Child Care Planning Council (LCCPC) and AB 212 programs. Consortiums may also include other professional development partners with similar goals, such as Early Head Start, Head Start, Migrant Education, community-based organizations and other license-exempt non-traditional child care programs to ensure shared use of resources, training opportunities, seminars, and classes, etc.

ii. Non-duplication of Services

To ensure non-duplication of services and maximization of local funds, all local CARES Plus programs must coordinate with their LCCPC and the AB 212 local initiatives. Use Form R.2 or R.3 to document support of the LCCPC as well as any other partner agencies.

The local CARES Plus program must also partner with existing AB 212 programs. A participant receiving an AB 212 stipend should be given access to CARES Plus support services and training provided through CARES Plus.

B. Develop a Local Effectiveness and Access Plan

As part of the application and approval process, the Lead Agency, together with the local CARES Plus consortium, is required to develop and annually update an Effectiveness and Access (E&A) Plan. State and/or local matching funds may be used to plan, implement and support E&A Plan activities. The goal of the E&A Plan is to help early educators become more effective in their work with children.

An E&A Plan must describe the recruitment, training, professional development, mentoring, and coaching of an expanded pool of qualified early educators. The E&A Plan must include the creation and enhancement of programs and opportunities needed by the local workforce. These opportunities must address articulation and higher education pathways, course content, and student readiness, and the E&A Plan must seek remedies to obstacles that interfere with student success in obtaining degrees in early childhood education or related fields.

The local CARES Plus E&A Plan must focus on improving the quality of professional development by providing early educators access and tools to infuse this knowledge into their daily classroom. The professional development must:

- Be evidence-based.
- Reflect the California Early Childhood Educator Competencies.[1]
- Align with California Department of Education (CDE) research-based resources, such as, but not limited to, the *California Infant/Toddler and Preschool Learning Foundations* and the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework*.[2]
- Infuse content with current research and knowledge of teacher effectiveness.
- Address issues such as cultural and linguistic diversity.
- Focus on improving child outcomes through effective teacher practices.

The local Effectiveness & Access Plan must reflect the following four elements:

i. <u>Integrate First 5 California's Principles on Equity</u>

On October 18, 2001, the First 5 California State Commission adopted the Principles on Equity[3], which serve to ensure that California's children from diverse populations and those with special needs are integrated into the planning and implementation of programs supported by Proposition 10. A respected group of

[1] See http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/ececompetencies2011.pdf.
[2] See http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/psfoundations.asp, http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/itfoundations.asp, and http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/psframework.asp.
[3] Appendix L.

leaders in early childhood development, health, and special needs served to outline the parameters and craft the Principles on Equity.

The Principles on Equity address four major areas which must be addressed in the development of each local E&A Plan:

- Inclusive Governance and Participation
- Access to Services
- Legislative and Regulatory Mandates
- Results-based Accountability

The E&A Plan must describe in detail how these principles are addressed and incorporated into the daily local program operations.

ii. Priority Zones, Outreach and Recruitment

CARES Plus requires that each local E&A Plan targets outreach and recruitment to participants in Priority Zone communities. Priority Zones are areas in which:

- There is a low supply of licensed child care, as identified on the California Department of Education website for school API ranks[4] and the California Child Care Resource & Referral (R&R Network's website[5], *and*
- The local school is low-performing, ranking within the bottom five deciles of California's Academic Performance Index (API).

State matching funds must first be used with participants from Priority Zones. These funds must be used to develop and support effective outreach strategies that target eligible Family Child Care (FCC) Providers, Migrant Education early educators, as well as early educators who offer care to infants/toddlers in high need areas, children with disabilities or special needs, and English language learners. These outreach strategies must be culturally and linguistically competent to successfully recruit participants that reflect the local diversity of the children being served.

iii. Support Services

All local CARES Plus programs must offer services to support participants' success both in completing CARES Plus requirements and in incorporating the acquired knowledge and skills into their practice as defined in the local E&A plan. These support services can be offered through means such as, but not limited to: cohorts, coaching, tutoring, lending libraries, and courses offered in other venues and in multiple languages.

Based on local need, support services may include:

- Technical assistance, including application assistance to early educators who are potential CARES Plus Program participants.

[4] See http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ap/.
[5] See www.rrnetwork.org under resources and links/county info and agencies.

- Supports for Dual Language Learners, such as: ESL and linked classes (English as a Second Language with Child Development); classes and materials, including curriculum and texts, in languages other than English; or an English course with a translator
- Supports and specific classes[6] that help participants acquire the necessary skills to obtain a degree or the Child Development Permit
- Multilingual educational and career supports, including tutoring, homework assistance, career advisor/counseling, and an academic/course advisor
- Links to financial aid and scholarships, books (may include lending library), and/or financial support to attend unit-based classes and evidence-based training

iv. Articulation and Alignment for Increased Accessibility

The Lead Agency and consortium must work to improve accessibility of courses and the articulation and alignment between and across higher educational systems. The passage of Senate Bill 1440 (Padilla) strengthened the efforts to provide a more seamless transition for students transferring from public community colleges to four-year institutions, and, if effectively implemented, will remove this obstacle for CARES Plus participants. Local consortiums must partner with local community colleges and four-year institutions to ensure that this is being implemented effectively and uniformly.

C. Design, Implementation and Oversight of CARES Plus Components and Annual Requirements

The Lead Agency must include in its local CARES Plus program the staffing and resources to ensure that all participant requirements are available to its participants, to ensure that the participants are meeting all program requirements, and to administer the business processes necessary to support the successful implementation of the local program.

Table A on page 9 provides the overview of the participant requirements. Lead Agencies are responsible to:

- Ensure the eligibility of each participating educator and his or her completion of the Participant Application and Certification (Form P.1).
- Provide CORE Component to all first-year participants
- Provide the annual requirements to all participants
- Provide one or more of Components A, B, C & D in the local CARES Plus program, for participants to elect as part of their Professional Growth Plan
- Oversee and verify the successful completion of each participant’s mandatory and elective program requirement
- Maintain documentation of each participant’s enrollment, participation and completion for evaluation, compliance and audit purposes

6 For a list of eligible courses that may be included in a local CARES Plus program, see Appendices B and S.

Most of these program requirements required to be provided by the Lead Agency are fully described below in Section V, detailing the participants' participation requirements. In addition to those descriptions, there are some additional program requirements that Lead Agencies are responsible for:

i. CARES Plus Tobacco Training: *Kids and Smoke Don't Mix*

In an effort to decrease the number of children ages 0 to 5 exposed to second-hand smoke, all CARES Plus participants are required to complete the online tobacco training, *Kids and Smoke Don't Mix*.

At a minimum, and in addition to training, Lead Agencies must design their local CARES Plus programs to:

a) Encourage participants to incorporate newly gained knowledge about the effects of second-hand smoke on young children and share information with families and staff.
b) Promote and inform parents about the availability of tobacco cessation services provided through the California Smokers' Helpline (1-800-NO-BUTTS) by posting a link to the Helpline on the Lead Agency website and wherever else appropriate.
c) Disseminate tobacco cessation educational materials developed by the California Smokers' Helpline to CARES Plus participants to share with families.

ii. CARES Plus Advising

As part of the annual requirements, all CARES Plus participants must meet with a CARES Plus Advisor twice a year. Lead Agencies must provide this service in one of the following ways:

a) Pay staff or subcontractor to act in the capacity of a CARES Plus Advisor.
b) Pay for position(s) housed at a college, a local education agency, or an R&R.
c) Choose to incorporate the optional Component C designed to provide stipends to participants who will act in the role of advisor to other participants.

All CARES Plus Advisors, regardless of how the services are obtained, must know and understand the local CARES Plus Program, the First 5 California CARES Plus Program Round 2 RFA requirements, local college degree requirements for ECE, and application of the Child Development Permit Matrix. Lead Agencies must ensure that advisors are familiar with other related community links and resources and have knowledge of recent research on increasing teacher effectiveness and practice. It is expected that if additional training is needed to ensure that all advisors are well trained, it is the responsibility of the Lead Agency to provide this training.

The role of a CARES Plus Advisor is to assist a participant in developing his/her mandatory CARES Plus Professional Growth Plan and connect it to clear program goals and objectives. The CARES Plus Professional Growth Plan is modeled after a professional development planning document designed by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, adapted for use in the CARES Plus Program (Form P.5), and incorporates CARES Plus standards for professional development[7].

In the development of individual Professional Growth Plans, CARES Plus Advisors must help participants:

- Attain knowledge of *CLASS™* and the importance of focusing on improving the effectiveness of their practice and the quality of their teacher-child interactions,
- Understand the steps needed to obtain a degree in ECE or related field,
- Understand the requirements of the Child Development Permit Matrix, and
- Understand local and state CARES Plus requirements.

No matter how the services of a CARES Plus Advisor are provided, Lead Agencies must ensure that all advisors or advising services meet the needs of the CARES Plus participants as described above. If a participant is required to have an academic advising session during the program year, this may be substituted for one of the two required CARES Plus advising sessions each year. The second advising session must be with a CARES Plus Advisor.

At the end of each academic year, the CARES Plus Advisor must verify that each participant has completed his or her Professional Growth Plan. The CARES Plus Advisor must provide both the Lead Agency and the participant with a copy of the completed and verified Professional Growth Plan. The Lead Agency must keep a copy of each participant's Professional Growth Plan as part of its document retention responsibilities for evaluation and audit purposes.

iii. Integration of Knowledge in the Classroom

As described below in Section V, participants receive access to online training and materials as part of the CORE requirements. This includes a *CLASS™* Dimension Guide, *Introduction to CLASS™* and up to 6 months access to *Looking at CLASSrooms™*. Lead Agencies are responsible for assisting CARES Plus participants in integrating this training and knowledge into daily classroom practice. This may be accomplished through, but not limited to, study groups, journaling, cohort trainings, and professional growth advising.

D. Local Program Stipend Structure

All local CARES Plus programs must offer eligible participants a stipend. The stipend structure based on the level and intensity of the component and annual requirements met by each participant. The stipend structure must take in to consideration the following conditions, and Lead Agencies may offer higher stipends for the following:

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7 Appendix M.

- Component of participation, and the hours invested in training
- Completing a Fall and Spring *CLASS*™ assessment
- Degree attainment or movement forward on the Child Development Permit Matrix[6] (number of units achieved each program year) and professional goals of the participant
- The number of academic years a participant remains an active participant in CARES Plus (for example, an increased stipend for each additional year of participation in Round 2)

Component CORE-only, A and B Stipend Structure:
CORE, Component A and B stipends are established at the local level.

Component C Stipend Structure:
The stipend package must be commensurate with either the hours worked or the number of participants advised.

Component D Stipend Structure:
Lead Agencies will be required to adhere to the following Component D stipend structure. This structure is in response to issues raised regarding the varying number of cycles completed by individual participants.

My Teaching Partner™ (*MTP*™) is designed to take place over 8-10 months, and it is expected that each participant will complete on average 2 cycles per month. However, due to local program variability and the need to distribute *MTP*™ cameras and materials, participants may be unable to complete the anticipated number of cycles. Taking into consideration the constraints of CARES Plus as well as local timelines, it is reasonable that participants, depending on their beginning and ending dates, will complete anywhere from 10 to 16 cycles during an academic year. To give participants an incentive to complete as many cycles as possible during year, First 5 California has established a <u>minimum</u> stipend structure for Component D participants. Lead Agencies may increase this stipend level as they deem appropriate:

- Each cycle completed as defined by the state contractor administering *MTP*™ = $50 per cycle (minimum)
- The completion of no more than two cycles per month is eligible for a stipend. However, if a cycle is missed due to unusual circumstances, the *MTP*™ coach, working with their assigned specialist, may determine if a third cycle in a month is appropriate. This would only occur on rare occasions.

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[6] The matrix is published by the California Child Development Training Consortium at http://www.childdevelopment.org/cs/cdtc/print/htdocs/services_permit.htm.

Participants will continue to receive professional development hours for time spent in the program. The state contractor administering *MTP™* will determine both the number of cycles completed per individual participant as well as the professional development hours earned. Lead Agencies will receive a copy of the Certificate of Completion for each participant. The Certificate will also include the number of professional development hours earned.

IV. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

A. IT Support

Since many CARES Plus program activities involve the use of computer and internet, counties must provide related IT support services to participants in their county. It is expected that the Lead Agency will ensure access to training to promote computer literacy and access to the necessary tools to promote program success. Support may include access to computer labs, computer training, creating online email accounts, etc.

Lead Agencies are responsible for allocating sufficient resources (personnel, hardware, software, internet access) in support of data operations. Data operations include activities such as data entry and maintenance as required by First 5 California to support CARES Plus program and evaluation activities.

B. Equipment Distribution Assistance

The Lead Agency will be responsible for ensuring that all participants receive the necessary equipment and materials to successfully complete the CORE requirements, *CLASS™* observation sample and *MTP™*. This may include but not be limited to the distribution of online access cards, *CLASS™* Dimension Guides, camera equipment, and SD cards.

C. CARES Plus Participant Enrollment and Maintenance

The Lead Agency will be responsible for recruiting applicants, verifying eligibility, and entering accurate and timely data into the CARES Plus data system.

MTP™ recruitment and enrollment at the local level must be initiated as soon as possible to comply with the August 20th participant data deadline. *MTP™* is designed to take place over an 8-10 month period and this deadline was established to ensure *MTP™* participants receive the maximum benefit of this professional development program. First 5 California will offer this opportunity to up to 500 participants statewide each year.
Recruitment and enrollment at the local level for all other participants (CORE, Component A, B, and C) must be initiated early as well, to comply with the September 15th participant data deadline, in order for all counties to be fairly represented in the *CLASS™* observation sample.

To effectively manage the *MTP™* selection process and *CLASS™* observation sampling, First 5 California requires the Lead Agency to submit the following participant data into the CARES Plus data system accurately and on time:

- Enrollment and data entry for all *MTP™* participants must be completed by August 20th of each year.
- Enrollment and data entry for 80% of all other participants (CORE, and Components A, B and C) must be completed by September 15th of each year
- Final enrollment and data entry for the remaining 20% of participants must be completed no later than December 31st.
- At a minimum, monthly maintenance of participant data including program status (i.e., withdrawals) and participant contact information changes (i.e., change of address or telephone, etc.)
- Final data entry for program status and completion for all participants must be entered by July 31st of each fiscal year, beginning on July 31, 2014 and therafter.

The data requirements for CARES Plus Program are provided in further detail in **Section V.** below.

To support the MTP™ and CLASS™ observation process, the Lead Agency will be responsible to carry out or assist with the following administrative functions:

- Notifying eligible applicants of their selection as CARES Plus Participants
- Obtaining required participant forms and authorizations [7]
- Distributing and collecting equipment
- Distributing training materials
- Maintaining supporting documentation of all participant eligibility and professional development completion for evaluation and audit purposes

V. CARES PLUS PROGRAM PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS

Upon notification by the Lead Agency of their acceptance as CARES Plus participants and completion of program forms and authorizations, all participants must complete the following program requirements.[8]

A. Annual Requirements – All Participants

All CARES Plus participants must complete a series of annual requirements including:

- Meet twice a year with a CARES Plus Advisor[9]
- Submit and complete a CARES Plus Professional Growth Plan (Form P.5)[10]

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[7] See Section X(A).
[8] Table A includes an overview of these requirements.
[9] Component B participants may substitute one professional growth advising session with one academic advising session. The second advising session must be with a CARES Plus Advisor.

- Participate in specific evidence-based trainings and resources to improve the quality of teacher-child interactions, as specified below.
- Complete an annual CARES Plus Participant Survey. The Participant Survey is an online questionnaire regarding the usefulness of CARES Plus training for participants.

➢ Note: A condition of participation in CARES Plus Program Round 2 is a consent to be part of a statewide evaluation of the classrooms included in CARES Plus. If chosen by random sample by First 5 California for a *CLASS*[TM] observation, a participant **must** allow a trained and certified observer to complete two observations or observations or submit a 2-hour videotape of normal classroom activities in the same academic year: one in the Fall and another in the Spring.

B. CARES Plus CORE Requirements

First-year CARES Plus participants working with **preschoolers**[11] **and toddlers** must complete the following CORE requirements:

- Complete the online *Introduction to the CLASS*[TM]
- Complete *Looking at CLASSrooms*[TM] *(LAC*[TM]), a video-based, self-practice reflection study[12]
- Complete the online course: *Kids and Smoke Don't Mix*
- Complete a Fall and Spring *CLASS*[TM] observation, if chosen. To comply with this requirement, a participant must either submit a two-hour video of continuous classroom activities, one at the beginning of the school year and one at the end of the school year, or consent to a trained observer conducting two in-class observation sessions. Feedback on the Fall observation will be provided for use in the Spring advising session with the CARES Plus Advisor.

First year CARES Plus participants working with **infants** during 2013-14 must complete the following CORE requirements:

- Complete the online course: *Kids and Smoke Don't Mix*
- Meet with CARES Plus Advisor and complete a Professional Growth Plan (Form P.5)
- Completion of Component A, B or D
- Complete Infant Versions of *Introduction to CLASS*[TM] and *LAC*[TM] as soon as they become available.

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[10] Participants in Component C serving as a CARES Plus Advisor are exempt from this annual requirement.
[11] For purposes of CARES Plus, preschoolers include children ages 3 to 5.
[12] *Looking at CLASSrooms*[TM] is only for participants working with preschoolers and toddlers in 2013-14. It is anticipated to be available for participants working with infants in 2014-15. See Appendix H for a more detailed description of this evidenced-based tool.

Description of the Online CORE Requirements

i. *Introduction to the CLASS™* – 1-2 hours

All CARES Plus participants will be required to participate in an approximately 2-hour web-based training: ***Introduction to the CLASS™.*** This tool is currently geared toward those working with preschoolers and toddlers. It is anticipated the *CLASS™* tool geared toward infants will be available in 2014-15.

ii. *Looking at CLASSrooms™ (LAC™)* – 20 hours (approximately)

All CARES Plus participants working with preschoolers and toddlers will complete a self-reflection guided study via a *LAC™* web-based system. In 2014-15, or when available, participants working with infants also will complete *LAC™* for infant teachers. A self-study guide, given to participants, will help them to maneuver through the online video library and related activities. The video library allows participants to view footage on exemplary child/teacher interactions. Lead Agencies will be able access program management reports through the Teachstone data system. Additionally, participants must keep a written log of their use of this resource using the Looking At *CLASSRooms™* Viewing Log (Form P.6) to be shared with their CARES Plus Advisors and local CARES Plus program administrator.

iii. *Kids and Smoke Don't Mix* – 1 hour

This is a self-guided online course. The subject of the training is the effects of second hand smoke on young children. This training is available in both English and Spanish.

iv. *CLASS™* Observation Selection

Annually a subset of CARES Plus participants from Component A, B and CORE-only will be selected to participate in an in-person observation, or to record a two-hour continuous videotape of normal classroom activities. These in-person observations or video recordings will occur twice in the Fall and the Spring of a single academic year. The observations or video recordings will be submitted for *CLASS*™ observation coding. If selected, participants must comply with this requirement or they may be at risk of losing program eligibility. Feedback from the Fall observation will be provided for use in the Spring advising session.

County programs may increase the minimum requirements, including the Component requirements as defined in this RFA, as long as the program continues to demonstrate participation of early educators from Priority Zones and FCC Homes. Counties are responsible for monitoring and enforcing additional requirements. CARES Plus participants must meet the state requirements each program year to be eligible for stipends.

Participants working with **preschoolers and toddlers** will be eligible for a CARES Plus stipend after completing the CORE Requirements and are not required to add an additional Component until their second year of participation in CARES Plus.

Participants working with **infants** will be eligible for a CARES Plus stipend after completing the CORE Requirements of meeting with CARES Plus Advisor, developing a CARES Plus Professional Growth Plan, completing *Kids and Smoke Don't Mix*, selecting one other component (either Component **A, B, or D)** and completing the annual CARES Plus Participant Survey. When the infant tools become available participants must complete *Introduction to CLASS*™ and *Looking at CLASSrooms*™ in order to be eligible for a stipend that year.

C. CARES Plus Professional Development Component Requirements

The CARES Plus Professional Development Components are designed to offer a variety of professional growth activities. As part of its application and design of its local CARES Plus Program, each Lead Agency identifies which of the components it will offer to its participants. Based on the offerings of these components in the local CARES Plus program, with the help of the CARES Plus Advisor, participants will choose the appropriate professional development activities, including whether to participate in and complete one of these professional development components, in addition to meeting other mandatory CORE or annual requirements. Completion of CORE requirements must be completed within the first year of participation. During the first year of participation, a participant may add an additional component (A, B or D) with the approval of the CARES Plus Advisor.

i. <u>Component A: State Research-Based Resources</u>

Component A provides access to trainings on California Department of Education (CDE) research-based resources. The following training requirement is unique to Component A participants**:**

- Complete a minimum of 21 hours of CDE-sponsored trainings that may include but are not limited to one or more of the following areas. Additional trainings, subject to CDE approval, may be added during the three years of CARES Plus Program Round 2.
    - *California Infant/Toddler and Preschool Learning Foundations*
    - *California Preschool Curriculum Framework*
    - Learning and Development System
    - California Early Childhood Educator Competencies
    - Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP 2010)
    - Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC)
    - *Preschool English Learners (PEL),* also called the English Learner Guide
    - Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations in Early Learning (CSEFEL).

Selected trainings offered through the First 5 California Child Signature Programs including the Early Education Effectiveness Exchange (E4) and also through CDE's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant may be eligible for approval. Approval of Component A courses and trainers will be provided by CDE's Child Development Division.[13]

ii. Component B: Higher Education

Component B focuses on degree attainment in early childhood education and encourages early educators to complete requirements eventually needed for their site to qualify for higher ranking on the proposed Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS). The following requirements are unique to Component B participants:

- Complete a minimum of 6 academic units (or approved equivalent) with a grade "C" or better.
- All units must either be applicable to obtaining an early childhood education or child development degree, child development permit and/or credential, or help a participant gain the necessary skills needed to obtain the degree or permit. The desired degree can have a focus on ECE special needs. If the participant is pursuing a credential, it must be an early education credential or multiple subject elementary school credentials.

- Eligible units or courses include:
    - English as a Second Language (ESL), linked, study skills classes, or unit-based ECE and General Education (GE) classes.
    - Courses that allow for participants to build skills needed to take courses required for degrees or permits.
    - Non-unit-based ESL courses taken through adult education programs that are based on comparable hours. For example: 54 hours in a non-unit-based course would be equivalent to 3 academic units.
    - Degree needs to be related to ECE/Child Development and can have a focus on ECE special needs.
    - Credential must be Early Education credential (as available) or Multiple Subject elementary school credential.

- Courses must be taken in the following priority order:
    - California Community Colleges Curriculum Alignment Project Lower Division 8 Courses[14].
    - Courses covering content related to improving children's outcomes or of key interest to First 5 California and areas highlighted by research as key to children's later academic and life success: Infant/Toddler, Language

[13] Please refer to CDE's website at http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/compatraining.asp for the current list of approved courses. This list is updated as new courses and trainers are approved.
[14] Appendix B.

and Literacy, Dual Language, Numeracy, and Social/Emotional Development.
- Other courses that contain content that covers areas as designated for improvement on participants' *CLASS*^{TM} scores, Professional Growth Plan, and subsequent conversations with CARES Plus Advisors.
- Other courses as required to achieve an AA or AS degree.
- Other courses as required to achieve a BA degree.

iii. <u>Component C: CARES Plus Advisors</u>

To be eligible for Component C, participants must have a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in early childhood education, child development, or a related field. Component C is designed to allow local entities the ability to train and compensate (through a stipend) a group of participants to be CARES Plus Advisors

The following requirements are unique to Component C participants, and each must be completed by each Component C participant:

- Complete a special Advisors section of *Introduction to CLASS*^{TM} in each age group of children as available, regardless of the age group the participant serves.
- Complete *LAC*^{TM} in each age group of children as they are available, regardless of the age group the participant serves.
- Attend a local CARES Plus program training that addresses First 5 California RFA requirements and information on local resources.
- Attend any CARES Plus Advisor Training chosen locally.
- Provide advising services to CARES Plus program participants including developing participants' Professional Growth Plans.
- Complete the online course: *Kids and Smoke Don't Mix.*

CARES Plus participants in Component C who are acting in an Advisor role for their local program do not need to meet with a CARES Plus Advisor themselves nor do they need to complete a Professional Growth Plan.

iv. <u>Component D: State Coaching Program</u>

Through Component D, First 5 California will offer an evidence-based professional development strategy aligned with the *Classroom Assessment and Scoring System (CLASS*^{TM}), called *MyTeachingPartner*^{TM} *(MTP*^{TM}*)*. Due to limited resources, Component D may not be available to all participants, and will consist of approximately 500 participants each academic year. <u>Lead or master teachers (owner/operator) will be given priority to participate in Component D.</u>

MTP^{TM} is a research-based, 8-10-month, intensive and ongoing coaching program that has been proven to boost effective classroom/program interactions and improve child outcomes. These strong outcomes are reflected in greater gains in language, math, and early literacy development. *MTP*^{TM} provides interactive, relevant, and ongoing feedback to early educators through web-mediated consultation and on-line resources. *MTP™* coaches and teachers focus their work together using classroom/program videos and the *CLASS™* assessment tool to identify specifically what areas need improvement to effectively help children learn. Participants and coaches use the *CLASS™* Dimensions Guide to frame their work. Prior evaluations of *MTP™* indicate improvement in the quality of services provided by early educators participating in this professional development.[15]

The following requirements are unique to participants selected for Component D and are in addition to the annual participant requirements:

- Complete a two-hour videotape of continuous classroom activity in early fall prior to beginning state coaching and again in late spring. The participant will submit the videotapes to a state-trained *CLASS™* observer who will code the videotapes using the *CLASS™* observation tool.
- Fully participate in *MyTeachingPartner™ (MTP™)*, an 8-10-month, video-based, one-on-one coaching model professional development tool. *MTP™* participants digitally record portions of their classroom activities every two weeks and send them to an assigned coach.
- The delivery method for this evidence-based professional development is digitally-recorded classroom interactions sent via email biweekly to coaches, a web interface, and bi-weekly telephone calls.
    - Component D participants will receive one-on-one coaching support, all *MTP™* materials, a video camera kit, and a *CLASS™* Dimensions Guide to support their work, and the *MTP™* web interface.
    - To be eligible participants must have access to a computer with high-speed Internet and participate in a conference call outside the classroom every other week.
- Component D participants will work closely with their coaches to:
    - Explore their interactions with children using regular video recordings from their classrooms to Identify areas of strength.
    - Build on strengths and find new, effective ways to interact with children that increase child learning and school success.
    - Respond to questions and feedback from a coach including a biweekly telephone conference call between participants and their respective coaches.

Approximately 500 CARES Plus participants will participate annually in Component D, with priority given to lead or master teachers, or Family Child Care (FCC) owners/operators. The total three-year program participation will consist of approximately 1,500 early educators. CARES Plus participants in Component D must remain in this part of the program for one year to complete *MTP™*. Continued participation in Year 2 in another program component (Component A, B, or C) is

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[15] Pianta, R., Mashburn, A., Downer, J., Hamre, B., & Justice L. (2008). *Effects of web-mediated professional development resources on teacher-child interactions in pre-kindergarten classrooms.* Early Childhood Research Quarterly, pp. 431-34, 451.

strongly encouraged. Participants may receive evaluation follow-up for several years that will impact the results of this program.

Participants will be chosen as follows:

- 2013-14 – approximately 500 preschool and toddler teachers and FCC owners/operators.
- 2014-15 – approximately 500 preschool, toddler, and infant teachers and FCC owners/operators.
- 2015-16 - approximately 500 preschool, toddler, and infant teachers and FCC owners/operators

D. Continuation Requirements for Participants from Year to Year

During the second year and any subsequent year of participation, CARES Plus participants must continue to meet eligibility and have successfully completed prior year program requirements. Although participants are required to complete the online CORE requirements only once, they must continue to meet bi-annually with a CARES Plus Advisor and complete an updated Professional Growth Plan.

If a participant begins to work with a different age group of children, he/she may request to complete the new age-appropriate online courses. This request will only be granted as follows:

- If additional program licenses are available (first priority will be given to those participants who have not completed any of the CORE online courses)
- If the request is approved by the local Lead Agency
- If it is part of the participant's Professional Growth Plan

Participants working with infants must complete the *Introduction to CLASS*™ and *LAC*™ geared specifically to that age group once those courses are available.

Continuing CARES Plus participants in subsequent years must choose one of the Components (A, B, C or D) and follow the requirements specific to the chosen Component. Components available to participants are dependent on program availability as designed and implemented by the Lead Agency. Participants must work with their CARES Plus Advisor and/or local program staff to determine which locally offered component best fits their Professional Growth Plan.

E. Issuance Of Stipends Upon Annual Completion

Before a Lead Agency may issue a stipend, the participant must complete all of the following program requirements:

- CORE requirements (first year of participation)
- Annual participant requirements

- Component requirements available in the Lead Agency's local program, as identified in the participant's Professional Growth Plan
- Verification of Completion of the Professional Growth Plan
- Maintain continued employment in a licensed or license-exempt program for a minimum of nine months working a minimum of 15 hours per week during the academic year (time of service requirement may be adjusted for participants working in Seasonal and other Migrant programs)
- Participate in the Fall and Spring observation if selected
- Complete annual CARES Plus Participant Survey

The Lead Agency must maintain documentation that each of these program requirements were met for evaluation, compliance and audit purposes.

VI. PROGRAM EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

A. Overview

Data collection is critical for statewide program evaluation, allowing assessment of progress toward program goals and objectives. Previous evaluation efforts of the original CARES program showed the benefits of an educated, trained, and stable early learning workforce. CARES Plus builds upon the success of CARES.

The CARES Plus program evaluation is designed to address three primary questions:

1. Does training provided by CARES Plus improve teacher effectiveness in the classroom?
2. Do program participants consider training provided by CARES Plus to be useful for their work in Early Childhood Education?
3. Does training provided by CARES Plus improve retention of teachers working in Early Childhood Education?

Program evaluation findings, at the aggregate level, will be distributed to summarize the cumulative effects of CARES Plus training, education, and coaching strategies. Findings will inform First 5 California's policy direction and funding decisions for future workforce initiatives.

The Conceptual Framework Logic Model[16] depicts the program focus, program model, short term objectives and ultimate goals of the CARES Plus program.

[16] Appendix K.

B. Evaluation Objectives

Each of the three primary evaluation questions will be addressed in further detail:

1. Does training provided by CARES Plus improve teacher effectiveness in the classroom?
   a) Does improvement in teacher effectiveness vary by the type of professional development chosen (CORE, or Components A, B, D)?
   b) Does improvement in teacher effectiveness vary by amount of prior participation in CARES or CARES Plus?
   c) Does improvement in teacher effectiveness vary by teacher characteristics (e.g., years of education, prior training in ECE, and years in the ECE workforce)?

2. Do program participants consider training provided by CARES Plus to be useful for their work in Early Childhood Education?
   a) Do participants perceive the content of the training as useful and beneficial for their daily work?
   b) Does program participation result in concrete benefits to teachers by the end of the year of participation as indicated by:
      i. Coursework achieved?
      ii. Degree attainment?
      iii. Permit attainment?

3. Does training provided by CARES Plus improve retention of teachers working in Early Childhood Education?
   a) Is retention in the ECE workforce influenced by factors such as:
      i. CARES Plus program participation (CORE, or Components A, B, and D)?
      ii. Teacher experience (e.g., total years of education, prior training in ECE, years in the ECE workforce)?
      iii. Degree attainment?
      iv. Permit attainment?

Data to address the three core evaluation questions will be collected by the following methods: 1) participant demographic and program information collected from enrollment through program completion, each fiscal year; 2) classroom observations coded with the *Classroom Assessment Scoring System*^{TM} (*CLASS*^{TM}) to assess teacher effectiveness twice for selected participants, each fiscal year; 3) a CARES Plus Participant Survey each fiscal year; and 4) a post-program participant survey at some time following the program fiscal year. First 5 California will use CARES Plus program data to analyze the effectiveness of professional development strategies. Evaluation data may also be used for cost-effectiveness analyses of each program strategy.

C. Lead Agency Data Responsibilities

Participating CARES Plus Lead Agencies must agree to **fully participate** in the CARES Plus statewide evaluation by complying with and taking the following steps:

1. Meet requirements of the evaluation protocol approved by the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS), as further explained in Section VI(C)(i) below.
2. Enter and maintain timely and accurate CARES Plus participant and program completion information described in Section VI(C)(ii) below and consistent with the CARES Plus Data Element Requirements[17], using the CARES Plus data system.
3. Comply with the data reporting schedule established by First 5 California in Section VI(C) (iii) below.

4. Follow the CARES Plus data system transition plan described in Section VI(C) (iv) below.
5. Complete an annual Quality Performance Report (QPR) via an online tool to be provided by First 5 California, including program data and information described in Section VI(C)(v) below.
6. Participate in additional program evaluation efforts as determined by First 5 California such as participant surveys, lead agency surveys, and other efforts reasonably related to the evaluation objectives, as summarized in Section VI(C) (vi) below.

i. <u>Requirements of the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects</u>

Evaluation activities of the CARES Plus program receive oversight by the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS), the state government institutional review board. First 5 California annually submits the CARE Plus evaluation protocol for review and approval by CPHS. Key provisions of the protocol that must be observed by Lead Agencies include:

- **Provide to each program participant required documents related to the evaluation protocol.** Key forms are the Limitation of Data Sharing Form and the Non-Medical Research Bill of Rights. Because CARES Plus is a government program, and not an academic research program, participants can be required to meet government participation requirements such as providing basic demographic data and participating in classroom observations. However, participants can control the use of their program evaluation data that might potentially be shared beyond First 5 California.* For example, a non-contracted evaluation entity, such as a university or research organization, might request access to data for their own research. These data could not be shared by First 5 California for program participants who have chosen to limit data sharing.

[17] Appendix D.

- **Ensure no misuse of data related to program participation or evaluation of the CARES Plus program.** It is the firm policy of First 5 California, and a requirement of CPHS, that data such as CLASS™ observations or other information may not be used for individual evaluation of teachers including personnel actions such as promotion, retention, or discipline. The purpose of CARES Plus evaluation is to assess the aggregate effects of public investment in early childhood teacher training.

- **Immediately notify First 5 California management in the event of any adverse event or unanticipated problem with regard to program participants as the result of program evaluation activities.** First 5 California is required to report these events and problems within 48 hours to the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects. Adverse events or unanticipated problems include but are not limited to:
  - Use of evaluation data for personnel review of individual teachers rather than program evaluation.
  - Injury, death, or other adverse outcomes for program participants as a result of program participation.
  - Theft, loss, or breach of program evaluation data. A breach is defined as access to evaluation data by non-approved program persons.

  - **Meet data security requirements as described in the *CPHS Data Security Requirements.*[18]** This CPHS document outlines three safeguard strategies to be followed: administrative, physical, and electronic. The most sensitive data to protect are Personally Identifiable Data (PID) defined as eighteen (18) identifiers listed in the glossary of the document. For purposes of CARES Plus program evaluation, the most relevant PID are the following: Name, geographic location for areas smaller than a state (e.g., address, ZIP code), dates related to individuals including birth dates, telephone numbers, electronic mail addresses, social security numbers, and any other unique identifying number (excluding a random identifier code for the subject that is not related to or derived from any existing identifier).

  ➢ Note: The CARES Plus evaluation protocol must be approved annually by the state Committee for Protection of Human Subjects. During annual protocol review, CPHS may require revisions to existing protocol forms and procedures (e.g., Limitation of Data Sharing form). First 5 California will notify Lead Agencies about any updates to forms and procedures as required by CPHS.

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[18] See http://www.oshpd.ca.gov/Boards/CPHS/DataSecurityRequirements.pdf

ii. CARES Plus Data System: Participant Data Requirements

All CARES Plus Lead Agencies must collect, enter and maintain timely and accurate participant enrollment and program completion information using the CARES Plus data system. Following initial enrollment, Lead Agencies must update participant and program participation data by the last day of each calendar month. Important data updates for program operations are participant withdrawals and changes in address or contact information.

The required data elements and formats are listed in Appendix D. Some data elements, previously required in Round 1, are no longer required. A few new data elements have been added to better support program operations and evaluation analyses.

iii. CARES Plus Data System: Data Reporting Schedule

The PRO0F data system or a new CARES Plus data system will be used for collecting participant and program participation data. During the three-year period of CARES Plus Program Round 2, First 5 California plans to implement a new data system to replace PRO0F. Therefore, the system used to maintain data will change. However, the data reporting schedule will not change during the data system transition.

- Note: Refer to Appendix D for a list of data elements required for the initial enrollment, final enrollment and program completion deadlines.

Data related to program operations and evaluation will follow the schedule below in Table B for each fiscal year.

TABLE B
Participant Data Deadlines

Data	**Collection Method**	**Responsible Party**	**Deadline Date**
Initial enrollment for *MTP*™ (Component D)	CARES Plus Data System*	Lead Agency	Aug 20
Initial enrollment for all other participants (Component A, B, C and CORE Only)	CARES Plus Data System*	Lead Agency	Sept 15
Final enrollment data for all participants (Component A, B, C, D and CORE Only)	CARES Plus Data System*	Lead Agency	Dec 31
Program completion data for all participants (Component A, B, C, D, CORE Only)	CARES Plus Data System*	Lead Agency	July 31 beginning on July 31, 2014

By August 20th of each year, 100% of the total number of Component D (MTP) participants planned to be enrolled in each fiscal year must be entered in to the Data System with initial enrollment data completed. By September 15th of each year, 80% of the total number of CORE-only, Component A and B participants planned to be enrolled in each fiscal year must be entered in to the Data System with initial enrollment data completed. The remaining 20% of enrollments (including Component C) must have data entered by December 31 of each year. This requirement is to ensure adequate representation for the CLASS™ observation sample and assignment of Component D participants.

Program completion data are due on July 31st following the program year as specified in Appendix D. Lead Agencies must maintain records of supporting documentation, i.e. transcripts, professional growth records, etc.

iv. CARES Plus Data System Transition Plan

First 5 California plans to implement a new CARES Plus Data System to replace the PRO0F data system during FY 2013-14, the Transition Year. The new system will better support the complex statewide operations of the CARES Plus program including enrollment, coach assignments, classroom observation sampling, CLASS™ observations, program completion, and evaluation data. Table C below describes the transition plan:

TABLE C
CARES Plus Data System Transition Plan

Process	**FY 2013-14 (Transition Year)**	**FY 2014-15**	**FY 2015-16**
Standard Process: Entry into PRO0F	By Aug 20, Lead Agencies key data into PRO0F for initial enrollment of Component D participants. By Sep 15, Lead Agencies key data into PRO0F for initial enrollment data for CORE, Component A and Component B participants.	PRO0F will no longer be used for data reporting	PRO0F will no longer be used for data reporting
Standard Process: Entry into New CARES Plus System	By Oct 1, Existing PRO0F data are converted to CARES Plus data system.	CARES Plus data system will be used for key data entry or	CARES Plus data system will be used for key data entry or participant

	By Dec 31, Lead Agencies complete enrollment data in new CARES Plus data system By July 31, Lead Agencies report program completion data using new CARES Plus data system	participant self-registration (if feasible)	self-registration (if feasible)
Exception Process: Digital file transfer	Five counties currently providing digital data may continue during FY 2013-14: *Alameda* *Contra Costa* *Los Angeles* *Riverside* *Santa Clara*	Lead Agencies must meet CARES Plus data system interface requirements for file validation and updates	Lead Agencies must meet CARES Plus data system interface requirements for file validation and updates

As part of the data transition plan, during FY 2013-14, digital data files will be accepted from the five counties that provided them during CARES Plus Program Round 1: Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Riverside, and Santa Clara. No new counties can be accepted for digital data file transfer during FY 2013-14. Beginning in FY 2014-15, Lead Agencies must demonstrate their ability to meet formal CARES Plus data system interface requirements and be accepted by First 5 California for digital file transfers. Otherwise, the Lead Agency will be required to enter data into the CARES Plus data system.

Formal interface requirements will be communicated to Lead Agencies by January 1, 2014. If formal file interface requirements have not been developed and released by First 5 California by January 1, 2014, the File Interface Approval Timeline may be extended into FY 2014-15. In that event, once the requirements are developed and released, the five counties that have been providing digital data files will have six months to attempt and achieve a successful file validation test before being required to enter data using the CARES Plus data system.

TABLE D
CARES Plus Data System Digital File Interface Approval Timeline

FY 2013-14 Data (Transition Year)	FY 2014-15 Data	FY 2015-16 Data
Not applicable	Jan-March 2014: Lead Agencies submit digital data to First 5 California for file validation. Up to 3 file validation tests will be allowed. First 5 California notifies the Lead Agency of acceptance or failure of each file validation test.	Jan-March 2015: Lead Agencies submit digital data to First 5 California for file validation. Up to 3 file validation tests will be allowed. First 5 California notifies the Lead Agency of acceptance or failure of each file validation test.
Not applicable	April-June 2014: If failed, the Lead Agency must prepare to enter data using the CARES Plus data system.	April-June 2015: If failed, the Lead Agency must prepare to enter data using the CARES Plus data system.

v. Annual Quality Performance Report (QPR)

CARES Plus Lead Agencies are required to submit an annual Quality Performance Report (QPR) as part of CARES Plus local program reporting requirements. The purpose of the QPR is to provide First 5 California with program progress and final information regarding implementation of the Lead Agency's local CARES Plus Effectiveness and Access Plan. Each Lead Agency must submit a QPR that includes information based on their local annual Effectiveness and Access (E&A) plan summarizing: the program's local outreach activities; quality program implementation methods including participant services, trainings and program activities; local performance goals, targets and outcomes; local consortium tactics; any local evaluation findings; and other pertinent information, as specified below.

The initial Round 2 QPR report, due no later than October 1, 2014, is intended as a progress report on the first program year 2013-14. The second annual Round 2 QPR will be due no later than October 1, 2015, and the third year's QPR will be due by October 1, 2016. The annual QPR will be submitted on or before October 1 of each year using the online reporting tool provided by First 5 California.

At a minimum, each QPR must include the following information:

- Define program structure including requirements for CORE and Components, A, B, C and/or D.
- Define stipend structure.

- Updated E&A Plan addressing the following items:
    - Who are the local partners, including their roles and resources they bring?
    - How do the local CARES Plus program and AB212 funding operate seamlessly?
    - Describe obstacles and local partners' efforts to reduce barriers to training and support infrastructure for participants.
    - Describe local CARES Plus program goals and objectives, and their integration with other programs and initiatives.
    - Describe efforts focused on improving quality professional development.
    - Describe efforts to support participants' knowledge and skills and Early Childhood Educator Competencies into daily practice and interactions with young children.
    - Describe local efforts for articulation and alignment of higher education.
- Local performance goals, targets and measures
- Participant services and activities not described above or included in the E&A Plan, such as:
    - support services
    - other local program services or activities
- Local outreach strategies and activities
- IT and data collection efforts and support
- Any local evaluation findings

TABLE E
Quality Performance Reporting Schedule

Data	Collection Method	Responsible Party	Deadline Date
Quality Performance Report	QPR Data System	Lead Agency	Oct 1

vi. <u>Additional Evaluation Efforts</u>

First 5 California will use program data to monitor program progress. Data will inform continuous quality improvement and technical assistance activities. Additional evaluation efforts may require input from local CARES Plus programs through periodic meetings, focus groups, interviews, or other strategies as deemed reasonably appropriate and necessary by First 5 California.

First 5 California may contract with an independent evaluator to augment program evaluation described above. Additional evaluations may include a survey of participants following their program completion, or the effect of teacher training on child outcomes at the classroom and community level. Lead agencies will be notified in advance of planned research activities. Additional evaluation activities will be performed in compliance with protocols approved by an appropriate institutional review board.

D. Participant Observations: *CLASS™* Assessment Data

First 5 California will use the *CLASS™* observation instrument as an evaluation tool for CARES Plus. The *CLASS™* measures observed teacher-child interactions (a measure of quality) in classroom experience and describes levels of quality aligned with three age groups: Pre-K, Toddler, and Infant (when available). The Pre-K tool looks at classroom experiences in three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support. The Toddler tool uses two domains: Emotional Support and Classroom Organization.

A subset of enrolled CARES Plus participants will be selected for *CLASS™* observations. This observation will be done in-person or through videotaping. Observations will be coded by a certified *CLASS™* observer. Select participants in Component A, B and CORE only, as well as all Component D, participants will be observed. The *CLASS™* observations will occur twice during the program year, once each during the fall and spring. *CLASS™* scores will be used by First 5 California as part of the statewide program evaluation. All *CLASS™* observation data are kept confidential.

CARES Plus participants must agree to in-person observation or to submit a 2-hour videotaped *CLASS™* observation, if selected, during the term of their CARES Plus participation. First 5 California, in collaboration, with a contractor, will assign selected participants to observation by in-person observer or video tape, depending upon available resources. At enrollment into CARES Plus, all participants must agree to program expectations and obtain authorization for videotaping from their program director/owner and post a Notification of Videotaping in the Classroom (included in the Participant Certification and Application (Form P.1)), or obtain the director/owner's written objections to such videotaping. If the director/owner objects, the Lead Agency must submit to First 5 California no later than September 15th a Request for Exemption from Classroom Videotaping (Form LA.2) so that another participant can be selected. Data-entry of *CLASS™* observation codes will be conducted by the *CLASS™* -certified observer into the CARES Plus Data System to support program evaluation and ensure confidentiality of data.

Lead Agencies must collaborate with First 5 California to support the completion of *CLASS™* observations of selected participants. This includes assisting participants in obtaining the director/owner's authorization and assisting with distribution and collection of equipment.

E. Local Evaluation

The First 5 California CARES Plus program evaluation is designed to document program outcomes on a statewide level. This evaluation does not preclude Lead Agencies and consortiums from conducting their own local evaluations. CARES Plus programs are encouraged to coordinate local evaluations to fully demonstrate local outcomes and successes.

All First 5 California-funded CARES Plus programs are required to participate fully in the statewide evaluation and any research studies developed by First 5 California.

VII. COUNTY ALLOCATIONS AND FUNDING METHODOLOGY

A. Program Operations Funds: County Allocations and Match

An annual and total First 5 California allocation amount and match requirement is assigned to each County Category, as represented in the table below (see Appendix J to determine county funding categories).

TABLE F

CARES Plus County Categories, Allocations, and Match Ratios			
County Category	ANNUAL First 5 California CARES Plus Allocation Amount	TOTAL Three-Year First 5 California CARES Plus Allocation Amount	Match (State/Local)
Group A	Up to $20,000 per county	Up to $60,000 per county	2:1
Group B	Up to $50,000 per county	Up to $150,000 per county	1:1
Group C	Up to $150,000 per county	Up to $450,000 per county	1:2
Group D	Up to $300,000 per county	Up to $900,000 per county	1:3
Group E	Up to $400,000 per county	Up to $1,200,000 per county	1:4

Blending and braiding of funding to enhance current program activities is encouraged. Lead agencies may combine their funds with local partners to achieve the required cash match amount. Allowable local cash match funds may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Proposition 10 county tax revenue
- Federal (i.e., Early Head Start, Head Start, etc.)
- Local Workforce Investment Board
- Local Government
- Private foundation
- Grants
- Other gifts

In-kind (non-cash) investments cannot be used toward the local match requirement. Similarly, other state funds may not be included in the local match funds. Also, funding pursuant to AB 212 (Chapter 547, Statutes of 2000) may not be included in the local investment for matching purposes.

All expenditures for the local CARES Plus Program, from both First 5 California funds and from local match funds, must be expended in accordance with the provisions of this RFA. All program funds and expenditures must be documented in a manner that is substantiated, auditable and traceable.

VIII. PROGRAM, ADMINISTRATIVE AND FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Appendix E contains the CARES Plus Fiscal Glossary, and Appendix O contains the Sample Local Area Agreement. Please refer to those documents for the controlling definitions and descriptions of the program, administrative and fiscal rules governing the award and expenditure of CARES Plus Program funds from First 5 California. The provisions in this Section VIII are meant to supplement those documents, and should be read in harmony with the Fiscal Glossary and the Local Area Agreement.

A. Lead Agency Responsibilities

The Lead Agency shall be responsible for the oversight and administration of the CARES Plus Program, including all program requirements, necessary administrative responsibilities to carry out program requirements, and the fiscal responsibility and accountability for state and local funds. **All program, administrative and fiscal responsibilities and requirements described in this RFA are material to the award of CARES Plus funds.** Reimbursement of expenditure claims is contingent on the Lead Agency's performance of and compliance with those responsibilities and requirements.

The Lead Agency's application constitutes its assurances that it will meet all program, administrative and fiscal responsibilities and requirements of the CARES Plus Program, and that it will retain records that substantiates its performance and compliance for monitoring and audit purposes. The Lead Agency will follow all fiscal accounting, reporting and auditing standards required by First 5 California, including but not limited to applicable sections of the First 5 Financial Management Guide.[19]

If the Lead Agency is found to be out of compliance with a material program, administrative or fiscal requirement, subsequent expenditure reimbursements will be contingent upon the Lead Agency's diligence in achieving the objectives provided by First 5 California in a written corrective action plan. In addition, prior reimbursements may be subject to recovery by the State if required by public contracting rules.

[19] See http://www.f5ac.org.

B. Actual and Allowable Costs

CARES Plus Program funds may be expended only for the purposes detailed in the Request for Application (RFA) and consistent with the approved funding application and the Local Area Agreement between First 5 California and the Lead Agency. The Lead Agency will be reimbursed for actual costs that are permissible by the Local Area Agreement and consistent with the approved budget. The Lead Agency may only expend CARES Plus funds received from First 5 California for actual and allowable direct and indirect costs, including support services, stipends, management, evaluation, and on a reimbursement basis only.

The Lead Agency must maintain accurate fiscal data, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and standards for governmental entities, and report actual expenditures by budget category on the CARES Plus Program Operation Expenditures Forms (Forms LA.5.1, LA.5.2 & LA.5.3). All invoices or claims must be substantiated by adequate supporting documentation and based on verifiable financial records.

Payrolls must be supported by time and attendance or equivalent records for individual employees. Lead agencies and wages of employees chargeable to more than one program or other cost objective must be supported by appropriate time distribution records. If an employee is multi-funded on a time accounting basis, then the employee's timesheet must indicate the actual amount of time spent in each program per day.

Non-reimbursable direct or indirect costs include:

1. Alcoholic beverages.
2. Costs of promotional items and memorabilia including gifts and souvenirs.
3. Costs of advertising and public relations designed solely to promote the governmental unit, Lead Agency, or partners.
4. Bad debts, including losses (whether actual or estimated) arising from uncollectable accounts and other claims, related collection costs, and related legal costs.
5. Legal costs incurred in defense of any civil or criminal fraud proceeding; legal expenses for prosecution of claims against the State of California.
6. Costs of entertainment, including amusement, diversion, and social activities and any expenses directly associated with such costs (such as tickets to shows or sports events, meals, lodging, rentals, transportation, and gratuities).
7. Capital expenditures for general-purpose equipment, buildings, and land (items with a unit cost greater than $5,000). Unit cost includes all costs required to make the item serviceable, such as taxes, freight, installation costs, site preparation costs, etc.
8. Costs of organized fundraising, including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions.

9. Cost of goods or services for the personal use of the Lead Agency and partners' employees regardless of whether the cost is reported as taxable income to the employees.
10. Cost of idle facilities or idle capacity are unallowable except to the extent that:
    a) They are necessary to meet fluctuations in workload, or
    b) They were necessary when acquired and are now idle because of changes in program requirements, efforts to achieve more economical operations, reorganization, termination, or other causes which could not have been reasonably foreseen. Under the exception stated in this subsection, costs of idle facilities are allowable for a reasonable period of time, ordinarily not to exceed one year, depending on the initiative taken to use, lease, or dispose of such facilities.
11. Lobbying costs and the cost of certain influencing activities associated with obtaining program funding, grants, contracts, cooperative agreements, or loans are not allowable.
12. Out-of-state travel costs are allowable only when the traveler has received prior written approval by First 5 California in direct support of the program objectives.
13. The Lead Agency shall not use current year Agreement funds to pay prior or future year obligations. However, the cost of the annual independent audit may be claimed either in the Agreement period that was the subject of the audit or during the Agreement period in which the audit was completed, whichever period is also reflected on the county year-end financial statements.

C. Administrative Costs

Administrative costs shall not exceed 15% of the total reimbursable costs (expended amounts). It is the responsibility of the Lead Agency to ensure that not less than 85% of annual expenditures are used for direct services to participants.

Costs related to administration may include both **direct** program charges (Lead Agency costs related to preparing program plans, developing budgets, and monitoring activities; rental or purchase of program-specific office equipment or supplies; rental and maintenance of program office space) and **indirect** charges for general administration of the program (personnel, accounting, procurement, data processing). Any cost, direct or indirect, that supports management of the program is considered administrative in nature.

If the Lead Agency has more than one First 5 California program, then the method used to allocate administrative costs must be documented.

D. Annual Audit

The Lead Agency receiving and expending CARES Plus program funds must undergo an annual audit for the local CARES Plus program. **The audit of CARES Plus must be conducted by an independent third party.** The audit must include the expenditure of both state and local match funds. The audit will be conducted and records will be maintained in accordance with Government Auditing Standards (GAS) located at the following website: http://www.gao.gov/govaud/ybook.pdf. The Lead Agency is required to maintain auditable records, which must be made available upon request to representatives of First 5 California or its designee, or the State Auditor, for on-site monitoring, reviews, and audits. The audit is due to First 5 California by **November 1 of each year.**

E. Capital Outlay Expenditures

First 5 California funds may **not** be used for capital expenditures as defined by the First 5 Financial Management Guide and the additional guidance in Fiscal Memorandum No. 01-04 found on the First 5 California web site at (http://www.ccfc.ca.gov/pdf/annual_report_pdfs/FM01-04FixedAssets.pdf.)

F. Carryover Funds

The carryover of funds from CARES Plus Round 1 to CARES Plus Round 2 is not allowed. However, the carryover of funds during CARES Plus Round 2 between fiscal years will be allowed with prior written approval from First 5 California.

G. Cash Match

First 5 California will reimburse the Lead Agency for the State portion of approved CARES Plus expenditures.
Local cash match contribution of funds is required. The Lead Agency may combine its funds with local partners (such as the county, a city, or private foundation) to achieve the total local cash share required to meet the state-match ratio.

Local cash match funds may include funds from Head Start or other federal funds, Proposition 10 county tax revenue disbursements, and other gifts, grants, and funds invested by a local partner. No other state funds may be used for this matching requirement.

First 5 California may determine an overpayment of state funds has occurred if the Lead Agency does not secure adequate matching funds. Overpayment remedies are covered later in this section.

H. Dispute Resolution

The Lead Agency shall attempt to resolve program, administrative or fiscal disputes at the first staff level within First 5 California. If the dispute is not resolved at the first staff level, the executive director of the Lead Agency, designated as the CARES Plus administrator, may appeal the decision. Such an appeal can be made by submitting a written description of the issues and the basis for the dispute to the Chief Deputy Director of First 5 California within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving an initial response from the first-level determination of the dispute.

Within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the Lead Agency's written dispute, the Chief Deputy Director will review the facts of the dispute, and if deemed necessary, will meet with the Lead Agency executive director or designee for purposes of resolving the dispute. The Chief Deputy Director shall make a determination and shall send written notification of the decision to the Lead Agency, together with the reasons for the decision, within sixty (60) calendar days of the receipt of the Lead Agency's notification of the dispute. The decision of the Chief Deputy Director shall be final.

I. Expenditure and Reimbursement Claims

First 5 California will reimburse the Lead Agency for CARES Plus expenditures semi-annually, contingent on compliance with program, administrative and fiscal requirements of the CARES Plus Program, upon receipt and approval of the CARES Plus Program Operation Expenditures Forms (Forms LA.5.1, LA.5.2 & LA.5.3). Participating counties will submit expenditure reports to First 5 California twice a year for actual expenditures incurred by the Program, utilizing the Program Operation Expenditures Forms. The expenditures reported must correspond to the Lead Agency's approved Program Operation Budget (Form R.6) as it may be amended in an approved Revised Program Operation Budget (Form LA.4) Expenditure reports must be submitted semi-annually consistent with the following schedule. First 5 California will consider adjusting the expenditure report schedule for hardship on a case-by-case basis.

Expenditure Reporting Schedule	
Report Period	**Due**
Expenditure Schedule for Each Fiscal Year	
1st Disbursement: July – December	January 31
2nd Disbursement: January – June	July 30

Reimbursement payments will be made only to the Lead Agency executing the Local Area Agreement.

J. Financial Management Guide Compliance

If the Lead Agency is a First 5 county commission, First 5 California requires the Lead Agency to use the First 5 Financial Management Guide (Guide) terms and definitions when reporting to or communicating with First 5 California regarding the CARES Plus program. The guidelines and glossary contained in the Guide provide a common frame of reference and language for use between First 5 California and the Lead Agency when addressing financial matters.[20]

[20] The First 5 Financial Management Guide is available on the First 5 California Web site at: http://www.ccfc.ca.gov/commission/fiscal.asp.

K. Indirect Costs

Indirect costs for the CARES Plus program are considered part of administrative costs. The two costs combined cannot exceed 15% of the annual State allocation amount. Indirect cost rates must be substantiated for the appropriate fiscal year.

L. Information Practices Act

The personal information collected by the Lead Agencies about the CARES Plus participants is subject to the protections afforded by the Information Practices Act (IPA) of 1977 (Civil Code, Sections 1798 *et seq*.). The IPA is designed to protect personal privacy by putting limits on collecting, maintaining and distributing personal information by State agencies. The IPA applies to personal information maintained by State agencies and their agents. It gives individuals the right to review their personal information in State agency records, find out who has had access to the information, and request changes to inaccurate or irrelevant information.

Lead Agencies accepting funding under the CARES Plus Program Round 2 are deemed agents of First 5 California for purposes of the IPA. While local agencies are generally not subject to the IPA, any Lead Agency including an LPE electing to participate in this statewide program will nonetheless be deemed an agency of First 5 California and subject to the requirements of the IPA.

First 5 California and its agents are required to comply with several requirements specified at Civil Code, Sections 1798 *et seq*. These requirements generally include: protecting the information from unauthorized use and access, responding to an individual's request for personal information in a timely manner, tracking disclosures of information, and providing notification to individuals about how the agency will use the information collected. The Lead Agency is responsible to prevent unauthorized use or disclosure of personal information.

Because the Lead Agencies are collecting and storing personal information on behalf of First 5 California, the Lead Agencies are responsible to ensure the secure transmittal and storage of all personally-identifiable information. This security requirement is independent from any procedures or protocols required by the Committee on the Protection of Human Subjects.

The IPA requires each State agency to provide a notice whenever forms are used to collect personal information directly from individuals. The required content of the notice includes:

- The name of the agency and the division within the agency that is requesting the information.
- The title, business address, and telephone number of the agency official responsible for the system of records. (This official responds to IPA requests.)
- The authority for maintaining the requested information.
- The consequences, if any, of not providing any part of the requested information.

- The principle purpose(s) for which the information is to be used.
- Any known or potential authorized disclosures of the information.
- A statement notifying the individual of his/her rights to review records containing personal information maintained by the State agency and its agents.

The Participant Application and Certification (Form P.1) includes such notice and **must** be signed by any applicant upon the Lead Agency's acceptance of his or her application for the local CARES Plus program.

M. Overpayment

If it is determined that the Lead Agency received an overpayment of First 5 California funds, First 5 California will seek recovery immediately upon discovery of overpayment by an invoice to the Lead Agency for a refund of the overpayment amount within thirty (30) days after receipt of notice.

N. Payments

First 5 California will issue payments for CARES Plus Round 2 expenditures on a reimbursement basis upon First 5 California's approval of reimbursement claims submitted in the Program Operation Expenditures Forms (Forms LA.5.1, LA.5.2 & LA.5.3). Payments are contingent on compliance with program, administrative and fiscal requirements of the CARES Plus Program and shall be withheld if reporting requirements are not met.

O. Reduction of Program Funding Authority

If First 5 California determines a Lead Agency demonstrates significant under-expenditure of approved program funds of 20% or more in the first year of the program, First 5 California reserves the right to modify the funding allocation for the current and next fiscal years based on the first year expenditures. First 5 California will inform the Lead Agency of its intent to modify the funding agreement and issue a revised agreement. First 5 California will initiate this action only after consulting with the Lead Agency to assess its capacity to fully expend the annual CARES Plus funding allocations.

P. Major Program Changes

A major program change includes but is not limited to the following:

- Adding or deleting Components from the Effectiveness & Access Plan
- Budget line item shifts of greater than 15%
- Any subcontractor changes
- Major staffing changes

Major program changes are permissible only upon written approval by First 5 California. Lead Agencies must submit a Program Change Request (Form LA.3) at least 60 days prior to the implementation of the proposed change. If applicable a Revised Program Operation Budget (Form LA.4) should be submitted with the Program Change Request if the major program change will result in a change to original Program Operation Budget for one or more fiscal years.

Q. Reporting Requirements (General)

The Lead Agency must adhere to all program, administrative and fiscal reporting requirements included in this RFA, including but not limited the requirements specified in Section VI. In submitting an application in response to this RFA, the Lead Agency agrees to:

- Participate fully in formal evaluation and data collection processes administered by First 5 California and/or its designee, as described in this RFA, including but not limited the timely and accurate submittal of data into the CARES Plus data system.
- Provide all progress reports, reimbursement requests, and evaluation reports specified in this RFA.
- Readily provide substantiation and accounting for all program activities, funds and expenditures (both State and local) of the local CARES Plus program in annual independent audits, informal monitoring by First 5 California and/or its designees, and upon reasonable request.

Failure to submit all required program, administrative or fiscal reports or data as required by this CARES Plus Program shall result in withholding payments to the Lead Agency on this program, and may result in withholding payments to the Lead Agency under other First 5 California programs and initiative funding as well.

R. Retention of Program and Expenditure Records

Records substantiating state funds disbursed by First 5 California to the Lead Agency are subject to examination and audit by First 5 California or its designee, or the State Auditor, for a period of five (5) years, or local policy retention period (whichever is greater), after final payment of expenditures. **Adequate and accurate program and expenditure records that document the allowable costs *must be* retained for this period.** First 5 California shall have access to the Lead Agency's offices and/or the local CARES Plus program project sites, upon reasonable notice, during normal business hours for the purpose of interviewing employees and participants, and inspecting and copying books, records, accounts, and other material that may be relevant to a matter under investigation and for the purpose of informal monitoring or determining compliance with the allowable uses of the CARES Plus Program funds.

S. Supplement not Supplant

CARES Plus funds must not supplant existing local, state or federal funding; only supplemental costs may be charged. CARES Plus funds are intended to supplement and not supplant local funds. To the extent that the Lead Agency and/or the members of its consortium have implemented any early education professional development programs funded separately from CARES Plus, the Lead Agency and/or the members are required to maintain that existing level of service with separate funding. The CARES Plus funds are intended to supplement the existing level of service.

No project or activity can be approved that proposes to provide a service required by State law. For example, any project to singly provide special education for children with disabilities cannot be approved because special education is already required by State law with special funds appropriated to pay for it. In like manner, basic kindergarten programs cannot be approved for the same reason.

In most cases, compensation for supervisory personnel (including superintendents of schools, directors of education, supervisors of instruction in regular curriculum areas, and principals) falls within the category of expenses that would be incurred if a school was not participating in CARES Plus. Such compensation would not be eligible for reimbursement unless additional administrative personnel are necessary and hired specifically for the purposes of the CARES Plus program, and is subject to prior written approval by First 5 California.

T. Termination of Agreement

First 5 California retains the option to terminate this Agreement without cause at First 5 California's discretion, provided that written notice has been delivered to the Lead Agency at least thirty (30) days prior to such termination date. If First 5 California terminates this Agreement at its discretion, the Lead Agency will be entitled to compensation upon submission of an invoice and proper proof of claim, in that proportion which its services and products were satisfactorily rendered or provided and its expenses necessarily incurred pursuant to this Agreement, up to the date when notice of termination is received by the Lead Agency ("the notice date"). The Lead Agency will not be entitled to reimbursement for any expenses incurred for services and deliverables pursuant to the Agreement after the notice date, unless the Lead Agency receives written advance approval from the State.

IX. RFA APPLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A. Request for Application (RFA) Information Session

One CARES Plus RFA Information Session will be held via conference call to review the content of this RFA with potential applicants and to address questions. Due to a limited number of spaces, multiple callers from the same county are encouraged to call from a single site.

This call will provide the opportunity to ask questions and receive information. Two phone lines are reserved for each county. The date, time, and location for the session are listed below.

Any county/agency submitting an application is encouraged to participate in this RFA Information Session.

Information Session/Conference Call
Date: March 19, 2013
Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Dial-in number: 1 (800) 369-1846
Pass code: 52567

Questions regarding this RFA will be answered during the information session. Additional questions regarding this RFA will be accepted **by e-mail, in writing, or by fax.** Please use “CARES Plus RFA Question” as the subject heading and send all questions to First 5 California:

E-mail: caresplus@ccfc.ca.gov
or
Fax: (916) 263-1379

B. Application Submission

Applications must be developed in accordance with the terms described herein. First 5 California **must receive the following by 5:00 p.m. on May 10, 2013.**

- An original signed application;
- Three copies of the original application (total of four hard copies); and
- An electronic version of the application sent to caresplus@ccfc.ca.gov with the title “XX County CARES Plus Application” as the **Subject Header**.

Applications received after 5:00 p.m. on May 10, 2013 will not be accepted or reviewed.

Applications must be complete when submitted. First 5 California holds no responsibility for the receipt or handling of applications that are not hand-delivered or received by the deadline. Applicants are encouraged to use express, certified, or registered mail, return receipt requested to confirm the date First 5 California receives the application.

Mail or hand-deliver applications to:

First 5 California
CARES Plus Application
2389 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 260
Sacramento, CA 95833

All applicants agree that by submitting an application, they authorize First 5 California to verify all claimed information.

C. Application Format and Components

All applicants must use either the CARES Plus Program Round 2 Application for Lead Agency New to CARES Plus (Form R.4), or Application for Returning Lead Agency (Form R.5), as applicable. Be sure to **address each question and provide detail if requested**. If a question is not fully addressed or these instructions are not followed, the application may be deemed incomplete.

Applicants must adhere to the following formatting instructions for submitted applications:

- Arial 12-point font, single-spaced, one-sided, and sequential page numbering.
- Do not include information other than that requested (e.g., videos, portfolios).
- Please staple; do not bind or clip.
- Do not submit an application in a three-ring binder, folder, or with a cover.
- Do not exceed the 40-page maximum limit for the application, budget forms and narrative.

Applications deemed incomplete, or that do not follow the instructions outlined herein will be returned as non-responsive.

X. RFA APPLICATION FORMS

This Section includes all forms necessary to submit an application in response to this RFA.

1. Form R.1 - Letter of Intent to Apply for FY 2013-16 CARES Plus Instructions
2. Form R.2 - Letter of Intent to Apply - First 5 County Commissions
3. Form R.3 - Letter of Intent to Apply - Local Public Entity
4. Form R.4 - CARES Plus Application - Lead Agency New To CARES Plus
5. Form R.5 - CARES Plus Application - Returning Lead Agency
6. Form R.6 - Program Operation Budget for FY 2013 -16
7. Form R.6.1 - Program Operation Budget Instructions
8. Form R.7 - Program Budget Narrative FY 2013 -16
9. Form R.7.1 - Program Budget Narrative Sample
10. Form R. 8 - CARES Plus Local Cash Match

XI. PARTICIPANT AND PROGRAM FORMS

This Section contains forms required to be completed by the Lead Agency and participants to implement, participate in and complete the local CARES Plus program.

As indicated, some forms provided here are samples. One reason that the forms may not be finalized is that, as explained above in Section IV(C)(i), the research and evaluation protocol has not yet been finally approved by the Committee on the Protection of Human Subjects. Final copies of these forms will be included with the award letters and Local Area Agreements. All forms will also be placed on the CARES Plus Implementation webpage at www.ccfc.ca.gov.

The Lead Agency is responsible for obtaining wet signatures on all agreements, certifications, and verifications contained in these forms.

If a Lead Agency wishes to use its own form or other methodology for collecting the information in the Participant Application and Certification (Form P.1), or Participant Completion and Change Form (Form LA.4), it must receive prior written consent of the form or methodology from First 5 California. However, all certifications and agreements must still be signed using these forms supplied by First 5 California.

A. Participant Forms that cannot be modified

NOTE: The final version of these forms will be released with local area agreements and posted on the CARES Plus Implementation webpage. There may be additional required forms posted as well.

1. Participant's Bill of Rights for Non-Medical Research (**Form P.2)** Subject to CPHS Approval)
2. Participant Limitation of Data Sharing Form (**Form P.3**) (Subject to CPHS Approval) NOTE: This form is used if the Participant does not wish to allow their data used beyond the government uses of First 5 California and its county partners. If signed, the Lead Agency must file a copy and send the original to: Results and Evaluation Division, First 5 California.
3. Video Camera Kit Liability and Checkout Agreement (**Form P.4**) (If signed ,the Lead Agency sends a copy to Child Development Training Consortium (CDTC) for processing)
4. First 5 California CARES Plus Program Certification of Program Compliance (**Form P1, page 2)** (This form is retained by the Lead Agency)

B. Program Forms that cannot be modified

1. Notification of Observation (**Form LA.1**) (Participant posts this as needed to notify parents 5 days prior to observation)
2. Request for Exemption from Classroom Observation (**Form LA.2**) (Lead Agency submits to First 5 California as needed)
3. Program Change Request (**Form LA.3**) (Lead Agency submits to First 5 California as needed)

4. Revised Program Operations Budget (**Form LA.4**) (Lead Agency submits to First 5 California as needed)
5. Program Operation Expenditures Forms (**Forms LA.5.1, LA.5.2 & LA.5.3)** (Lead Agency submits to First 5 California)

C. Sample Forms that <u>may be</u> modified for local use

Although these may be modified to meet local need, the information gathered using these forms is required regardless of the form used.

1. CARES Plus Participant Application and Certification (Sample) (**Form P.1, pages 4-8 including the Lead Agency page, are the only pages within this form that can be modified).** (The data elements specified in RFA Appendix D must be entered into the CARES Plus data system regardless of the form used).
2. Professional Growth Plan (**Form P.5**) (sample)
3. Looking at *CLASSRooms*™ Viewing Log (**Form P.6**) (sample form, however this form or similar form must be completed by each participant)

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