

First 5 California  
Child Signature Program (CSP)  
RFA #2  
Frequently Asked Questions  
April 24, 2012

**Program Questions**

1. **Q:** Do classrooms selected to participate in RFA #2 have to meet the CSP Baseline Criteria and teacher/provider: child ratio at entry?

**A:** No, meeting the CSP Baseline Criteria and/or teacher/provider: child ratio at entry (July 1, 2012) is not a requirement for selecting classrooms to participate in RFA #2. Also, classrooms selected to participate may be at different quality levels at the time of application for RFA #2 as described below:

- Counties may choose to select some classrooms they believe meet all the CSP Baseline Criteria and teacher/provider: child ratio and may be eligible for RFA #3 funding.
- Counties may select classrooms that do not yet meet all the CSP Baseline Criteria and teacher/provider: child ratio at entry but are close enough to possibly meet these requirements during FY 2012-13 making the classrooms eligible to apply for RFA #3.
- Counties may choose to include classrooms that do not meet the CSP Baseline Criteria and/or teacher/provider: child ratio. Those classrooms will remain as “Promise Sites” throughout the term of RFA #2 (July 1, 2012, through June 30, 2015).

**Please note, classrooms must participate in RFA #2 in order to be included in the application for RFA #3.**

2. **Q:** Will a Family Child Care center be considered one classroom or will it be based on the number of students served?

**A:** A Family Child Care center is considered one classroom provided it meets the classroom minimum number of preschool children and/or infants and toddlers. (See RFA #2, Section IX, Part A)

3. **Q:** Who will participate in RFA #2? Is it the center director or all center staff?

- A: The center director will likely participate in some of the activities of this RFA, especially in providing assistance with completion of the Readiness Assessment. The implementation of the quality improvement plans will likely include participation of all classroom staff and perhaps the center director when appropriate. Staff of the county commission will also be engaged as they may have additional resources to commit in support of ECE quality enhancement.**
4. **Q:** Attachment D indicates teacher education levels. Do RFA #2 participants need to meet this requirement?
- A: Participants in RFA #2 do not need to meet the “Teacher/Provider Qualification Quality” levels from Attachment D at entry. However, a classroom that will be included in a county’s application for RFA #3 must meet those qualifications at time of application. The Attachment D requirements may be selected as an area of improvement a classroom will focus on during the 3-year program period.**
5. **Q:** Who will be conducting the Readiness Assessments and verify that the results meet the CSP Baseline Criteria?
- A: Completion of the Readiness Assessment is the responsibility of the classroom with the assistance and support from the ELSS. A sample of classrooms may receive site visits to verify Readiness Assessment reporting (refer to RFA #2, Section VII).**
6. **Q:** Has First 5 California determined who will be conducting the assessments of classrooms? Will there be a cadre of assessors available? How will you ensure reliability and validity across the state?
- A: The ERS and CLASS assessments only need to be completed on classrooms that the county projects will apply for RFA #3. Counties should be looking toward their own resources or available resources within their county to ensure the completion of child-level and classroom assessments (e.g., ERS or CLASS). Assessments need to be completed by external assessors however, not all classrooms will need to be assessed. The county may establish protocols for when an assessment would be warranted as they are a costly investment. The E4 will not be conducting these assessments for sites.**
7. **Q:** How can a county identify sites and obtain their commitment to participate in RFA #2 by the application deadline if sites that are identified may be eliminated due to state budget cuts?

**A: First 5 California recognizes that the state is experiencing challenging fiscal times and that there is uncertainty about future funding of early childhood programs. Therefore, we expect counties to include classrooms that can make a commitment to participate at the time of application. For a limited time before program implementation begins, First 5 California will allow a county to replace classrooms that have been eliminated or find that they are no longer able to participate due to funding cuts. The county must request and provide substantiation for the classroom replacements to First 5 California by June 15, 2012.**

**8. Q: In RFA #2 on page 21, there is a reference to the “CSP Program Coordinator.” What is the function of this position relative to the E4 and ELSS?**

**A: The “CSP Program Coordinator” pertains only to PoP Bridge counties funded in RFA #1. The CSP Program Coordinator (previously the PoP Coordinator) is one of the essential (required) staff to implement RFA #1. The expectation for RFA #1 counties that also participate in RFA #2 is for the CSP Program Coordinator to collaborate with the ELSS and coordinate county-specific training and technical assistance each will receive from the E4.**

### **Eligible Applicants Questions**

**9. Q: If a county is unable to secure participation of classrooms in API deciles 1-3 because of unwillingness of classrooms to participate, can the county request an exception to extend participation to classrooms in API deciles through 5?**

**A: If a county has solicited participation from all classrooms in elementary school catchment areas with current API scores in deciles 1-3 and are unable to secure their participation, the county may request an exception to extend the API to deciles 1-5 (unwillingness to participate in RFA #2 by all classrooms in API deciles 1-3 is comparable to having “no elementary schools with an API ranking at or below the 3<sup>rd</sup> decile” as described in Section V). The county must provide supporting documentation with its application that corroborates the exception request. Counties must have attempted to establish relationships with the classrooms in catchment areas with an API in deciles 1-3 within the past 12 months.**

**10. Q: Can Head Start classrooms participate in RFA #2?**

**A: Head Start classrooms and centers can be included as CSP Promise Sites in the county application. Additionally, Head Start may serve as**

a subcontractor to county commissions; however, Head Start cannot apply directly or be a Lead Agency for RFA #2.

### **Staffing Questions**

**11. Q:** Will First 5 California allow flexibility for who staff can report to in cases where it is problematic for the ELSS to report to the county commission?

**A. A county may include in its application an alternative designee to whom the ELSS will report and provide documentation that substantiates the need for an alternative reporting structure.**

### **Fiscal Questions**

**12. Q:** What is the difference between classrooms reported on Form 4a and classrooms reported on Form 4b?

**A: The classrooms reported on Form 4a are those supported with First 5 California funding through RFA #2. If a county commission elects to include additional classrooms in their application, the county commission must fund those classrooms at a level equal to or greater than the funding to classroom ratio reflected in the chart in Section XI, Part A. Form 4b will only be completed in cases where the county commission has elected to fund additional classrooms that will be eligible to receive training and technical assistance from the E4.**

**13. Q:** When completing forms 4a and 4b, how will the county know in advance of completing the assessment whether or not more than 50% is DLL/SN/Migrant? If the answer is “no” or “unknown,” can the classroom still go on the list?

**A: Counties can provide an estimate for those classrooms (based on county or regional demographic data) that they intend to include and indicate that they will verify the information during the Readiness Assessment. The county must notify First 5 California in writing of any changes to the information and data included in its application.**

**14. Q:** What is the suggested allocation for project-related travel?

**A: Estimated project-related travel costs must include costs for the ELSS to attend the annual 2-day training. The E4 will deliver training**

**in the most cost effective way to minimize travel costs. Travel costs will differ from county to county based on the parameters the county establishes for travel and the cost to travel within and outside the county.**

**Evaluation Questions**

**15. Q:** Can RFA #2 funds be used for evaluation activities? If so, where in the budget should this amount appear?

**A: Evaluation expenses are an allowable expense provided the expenditure promotes and supports the requirements of RFA #2. Evaluation costs should appear under “Operating Costs” on the line designated as “Other.”**