



AGENDA ITEM: 9
DATE OF MEETING: January 26, 2010
ACTION: X
INFORMATION: _____

FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA POWER OF PRESCHOOL BRIDGE PROGRAM

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

First 5 California requests approval to fund the Power of Preschool (PoP) Bridge Program for an additional year while staff proceeds in fiscal year (FY) 2011-12 with the development of the Request for Application (RFA) for the Child Signature Program.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

In January 2010 the State Commission approved \$19 million to extend the Power of Preschool Program for FY 2010-11 as a bridge during the development of the statewide Child Signature Program. This interim extension of funding known as the PoP Bridge Program encouraged county programs to expand their services to infants and toddlers. By allowing the PoP counties to operate for an additional year, the PoP Bridge Program is continuing early learning services to children ages 0-5.

The PoP Bridge Program funding authorization terminates on June 30, 2011. The PoP counties will no longer receive First 5 California quality enhancement reimbursement, and PoP as a demonstration program will no longer exist. The statewide and local infrastructure that was developed over the last six years of program operations will be disbanded.

The PoP Bridge Program one-year extension will permit First 5 California to design and develop the comprehensive and fully functional Child Signature Program without interruption in critical services to infants, toddlers, preschoolers and their families. Therefore, it is imperative to seek an extension of the PoP Bridge Program for FY 2011-12.

THE CHILD SIGNATURE PROGRAM

The Child Signature Program was discussed at the January 2010 State Commission meeting. Commissioners requested that staff return to the Commission with more detailed information on the Child Signature Program and a request for approval of a significant amount of funds from First 5 California's yearly revenue starting in FY 2011-12. At this point, the Child Signature Program is envisioned to serve at-risk children ages 0-5 in high-quality early learning programs designed to promote children's readiness for school. It will support the recently published final report of the California Early Learning Quality Improvement System (CAEL QIS) Advisory Committee and the work of the Early Learning

Advisory Council (ELAC). This will include the piloting of the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). In addition, the Child Signature Program will build on California's preschool efforts. It is consistent with Goal 1 of the First 5 California Strategic Plan, which is to implement a comprehensive policy agenda that elevates the needs of children ages 0-5, and builds on First 5 California's past and current programs as outlined in Attachment A, including CARES Plus.

Building upon the success of PoP and other First 5 California programs, a Child Signature Program is being designed in which positive child and teacher outcomes can be realized and sustained. It is envisioned that the proposed Child Signature Program represent a fiscally sound investment that will strengthen the existing early learning infrastructure. Program development will take approximately one year, during which time it is crucial that early learning services be continued to children through an extension of PoP Bridge.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

First 5 California staff recommends the Commission approve \$19 million for the Power of Preschool Bridge Program for an additional year. Staff will proceed with the development of the Child Signature Program and will return with a specific request in April 2011.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Description of Alternative 1

Not to approve the one-year extension of PoP Bridge Funding.

Pros

- Returns funding back to the Education account for other uses.

Cons

- Children participating in the PoP Bridge Program will no longer receive the higher quality standards provided by First 5 California enhancement funding.
- The effective early learning infrastructure supported by the PoP Bridge Program will be eliminated at the State and county levels.

ATTACHMENT

- Attachment 9a (First 5 California Past and Current Programs)

ATTACHMENT 9a

PAST AND CURRENT PROGRAMS

- ***Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards (CARES)*** was launched in 2000 and ended in December 2009. It supported local early learning programs by addressing the professional development and retention of early childhood educators through incentives and supports. CARES became a model for increasing the quality and stability of the early learning workforce.
- ***Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards (CARES) Plus***, the new Teacher Signature Program, is funded from FY 2010-11 through FY 2012-13. It was designed to increase the quality of early learning programs for children ages 0-5 and their families by supporting the education and preparation of an effective, well-compensated, and diverse early learning workforce. Continuing the CARES Program through CARES Plus allows First 5 California to build on the organizational infrastructure and the positive momentum already created by the original program throughout the state and to leverage additional federal and local funds.
- ***Migrant Education Even Start (MEES)*** was implemented in June 2003 and ended in December 2009. It expanded the existing California Department of Education Migrant Early Even Start (MEES) Program. The MEES Program provided educational services to migratory families. Parents received services to enhance literacy levels, expand parenting skills, and learn English-as-a-second language (ESL). Children ages 0-5 were provided early childhood and preschool services.
- ***Power of Preschool (PoP)***, a demonstration program, was designed as an investment in voluntary, free, and high-quality preschool for three- and four-year old children from FY 2005-06 through FY 2009-10. This funding established the PoP Demonstration Program that provided enhancement funding to raise preschool standards throughout California. The objective of PoP was to assist preschoolers in becoming personally, socially, and physically competent and effective learners who are ready to transition into kindergarten.

In response to First 5 California's PoP Request for Applications (RFA), nine counties began operating the PoP Program during FY 2005-06. The nine counties were Los Angeles, Merced, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Ventura, and Yolo. PoP demonstration projects provided the blueprint for making high-quality preschool more accessible to all children and their families. With a focus on developing preschool in low-performing school¹ areas and underserved communities, the PoP program sought to make quality preschool available to three- and four-year old children in participating counties, including children with special needs and dual language learners.

¹ Low performing schools are defined as having Academic Performance Index scores of one through five.

Due to the success of the PoP Program and results from the 2008 PoP Meta-Analysis that demonstrated improved child and teacher outcomes, First 5 California wanted to build upon and expand on the success of the PoP Program. The PoP Meta-Analysis highlights the impact that high-quality preschool has on young children. The analysis of the available data revealed that all nine counties displayed strong school readiness levels for children and high-quality learning environments based upon self-reported Desired Results Developmental Profile-Revised (DRDP-R) scores and Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) scores for FY 2007-08. Teacher quality was high and there was a commitment to professional development in all counties. Staff, management, and teachers from all counties commented that PoP has impacted how they view themselves as professionals. There was also substantial attainment of National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) benchmarks and compliance with PoP program quality standards. Commonly reported parent involvement included periodic activities such as parent conferences and volunteering in the classroom, as well as more in-depth activities such as participating in classroom learning/play activities. Every county reported an increase in parenting skills and knowledge as well as parent behaviors related to home educational activities.

- **PoP Bridge** was authorized at the January 2010 First 5 California Commission meeting. The Commission approved \$19 million to extend PoP for FY 2010-11 as a bridge during the development of the Child Signature Program. The PoP Bridge county programs were encouraged to expand their services to infants and toddlers with the bridge funding. By allowing the PoP counties to operate for an additional year, the PoP Bridge Program is continuing early learning services to children ages 0-5.
- **School Readiness (SR)** was implemented in 2001 and will end in 2012. It has provided a variety of direct services and supports to children ages 0-5 and their families. These include early education programs with kindergarten transition activities, parent education, access to health insurance and health care, oral health screening and treatment, developmental and health screening, family literacy programs, and nutrition education and assessments.
- **Special Needs Project (SNP)** was implemented in FY 2005-06 and ended in June 2009. SNP provided comprehensive developmental and health screening for young children and their families. In addition, the program emphasized improved service utilization for children with disabilities and increased opportunities to participate in high quality inclusive programs.

FUNDING REQUEST FISCAL DETAIL

Title of Request:	Power of Preschool Bridge Program Extension				<input type="checkbox"/> Contract <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Program Disbursement <input type="checkbox"/> Special Disbursement	
Amount of Current Agreement:	Up to	\$19,000,000	Expenditures to Date:	\$0		
Current Term of Agreement:	July 1, 2010	Through	June 30, 2011			
		Fiscal Year Detail				
		FY 11-12	FY	FY	FY	
New Amount Requested:	Up to	\$19,000,000	\$19,000,000			
Total Amount of Agreement:	Up to	\$	\$19,000,000			
Percent of Available Fund Balance Affected by Agreement						
Proposed Funding Term:	July 1, 2011	Through	June 30, 2012			
First 5 California Account Name:	Education	Account Number	0634	Fund Availability Confirmed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes By: _____	
Statutory Purpose: Health and Safety Code 130105(d)(1)(B)	Five percent shall be deposited in an Education Account for expenditures to ensure that children are ready to enter school and for programs relating to education, including, but not limited to, the development of educational material, professional and parental education and training, and technical support for county commissions, in the areas described in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) of Section 130125.					
Do our funds leverage others?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (explain) <input type="checkbox"/> No	Commission Funds		Leveraged Funds		Total Funds
		\$19,000,000		Local county match		TBD
RFA requires counties to provide "significant contribution" match. Historically counties contributed 87% of total PoP funding.						
Key Deliverable Descriptions					Deliverable Date	
Provide early learning services to children, birth to age five.					June 30, 2012	

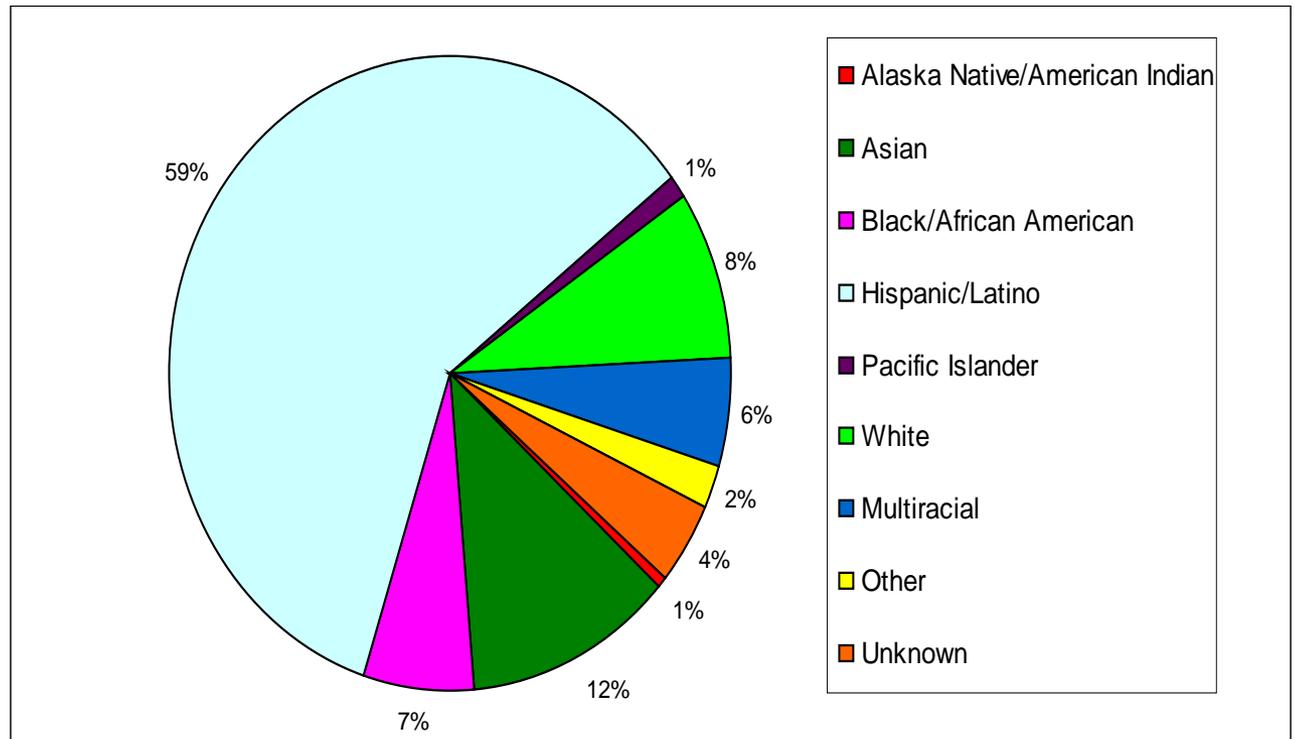


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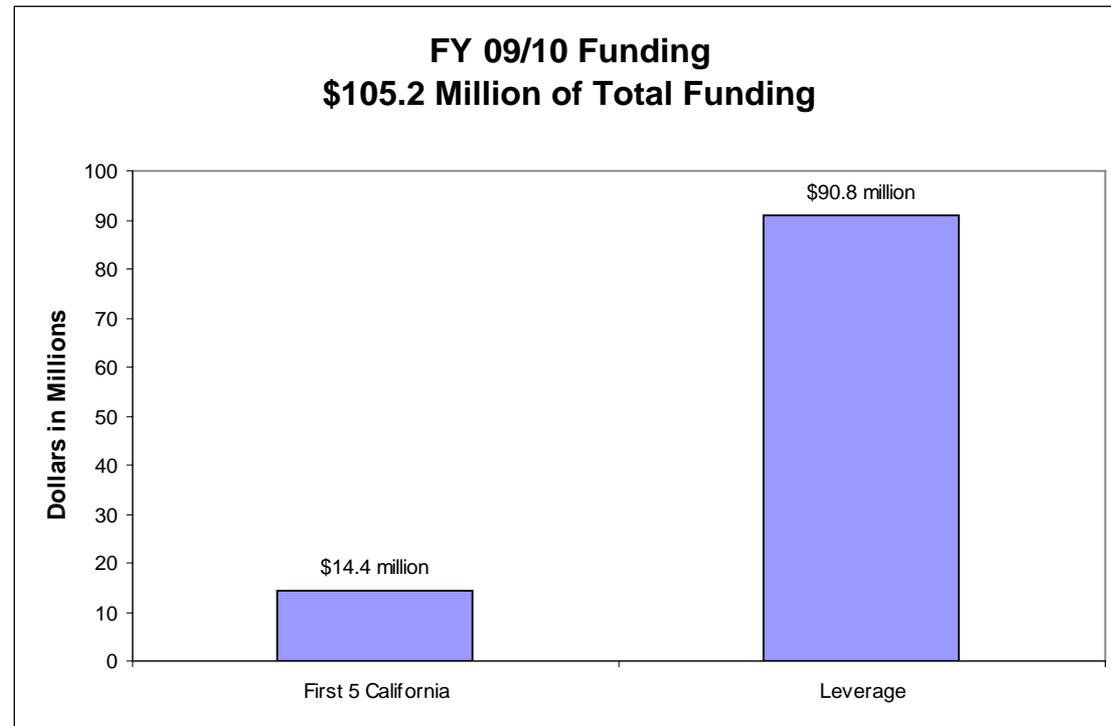




Ethnicity of Children Served by PoP FY 2009/2010



PoP Leverages Available Funds



* Leverage includes County Commission funding, Head Start, Title I, Title 5, and Child Care Food Program





2008 PoP Meta-Analysis

- Children demonstrated strong school readiness levels.
- Programs displayed high quality learning environments.
- Teachers possessed higher qualification levels.
- Programs reported improved parenting skills and knowledge.





RAND Study

A 2008 comprehensive statewide RAND study found that:

“...the results suggest that the PFA* programs are operating at a higher level of quality as measured by the CLASS assessment tool than what has been found for other publicly funded programs in the state and nation.”

*Preschool For All

