



Agenda Item 6

Next Steps for CSP and CARES Plus: California Quality System of Support (CQSS) Initiative



“In today's economy, when having both parents in the workforce is an economic necessity for many families, we need affordable, high-quality childcare more than ever. It's not a nice-to-have – it's a must-have. It's time we stop treating childcare as a side issue, or a women's issue, and treat it like the national economic priority that it is for all of us.”

- President Obama
State of the Union, 2015

What is the objective of this item?

The objective of this item is to enact the First 5 California (F5CA) mission to “convene, partner in, support, and help lead the movement to create and implement a comprehensive, integrated, and coordinated system for California's children prenatal through 5 and their families,” as stated in F5CA’s Strategic Plan.

- F5CA will look to accomplish this mission through the proposed California Quality System of Support (CQSS) Initiative
- It builds off F5CA’s past and current program investments and integrates current research along with federal, state, and local direction to support F5CA’s vision that, “California’s children receive the best possible start in life and thrive.”

What is the staff request?

In anticipation of the CSP and CARES Plus end dates in June 2015 and June 2016, respectively, F5CA staff request support for a two-part item designed to:

1. Support a CQSS Initiative open to all First 5 counties to promote a high-quality and comprehensive Early Childhood System across the state
2. Create a transition path for CSP 1 and 3 from a direct-services approach to a systems-level approach (Action Item 6a)

What is CQSS?

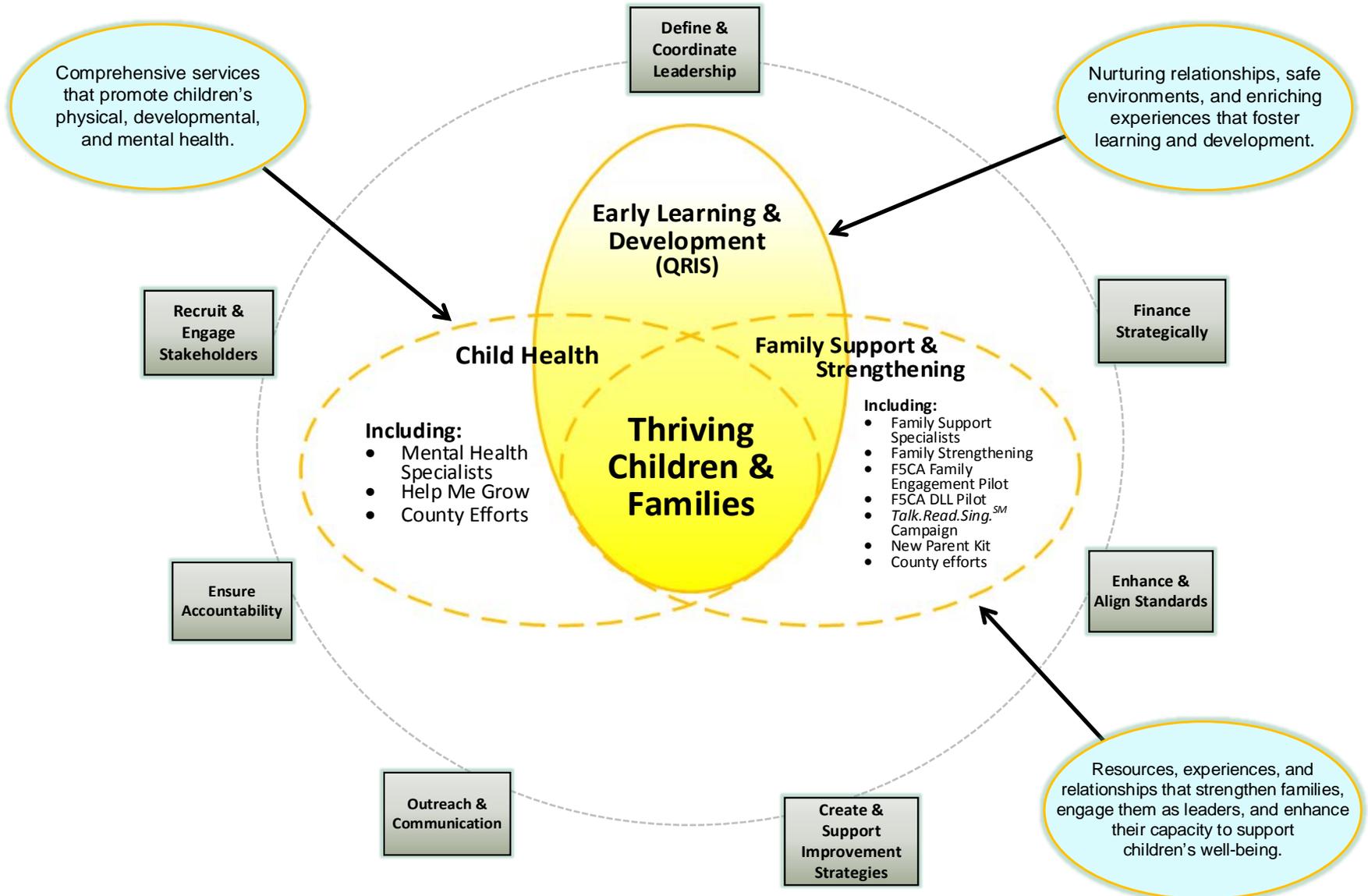
- Promotes a comprehensive Early Childhood System open to all First 5 counties and aligns with counties' current systems' work and investments
- Builds off F5CA's past and current program investments, integrating research, and aligning with federal and state direction
- Incorporates comprehensive elements in the areas of early learning, health, and family support, all with the goal of continuous quality improvement
- Supports parents and families as their children's first teachers by providing them with information and support they need to optimize their children's development and learning
- Builds off the RTT-ELC QRIS framework that utilizes common tools and resources to improve the quality of early learning programs and services for high need children and their families
- Creates a messaging platform around the importance of a high-quality Early Childhood System, helping inform parents, the public, and legislators

What are the benefits of CQSS?

- Builds an infrastructure that supports a clear path to higher quality care and education and helps parents and the public identify key characteristics of high quality programs
- Creates an umbrella for quality improvement that is inclusive of the entire Early Childhood System, including health, family support, and early learning
- Provides an integrated continuum of programs, services, and policies through shared systems work
- Creates an opportunity to refocus existing public and private investments on evidence-based and promising practices
- Focuses funding on critical components that facilitate positive developmental outcomes for young children and their families
- Creates a shared focus on a common desired result – **thriving children and families**

What is the supporting science?

A robust body of research demonstrates high-quality early learning and development programs and services can improve young children's health, social-emotional and cognitive outcomes, enhance school readiness, and help close the wide school readiness gap that exists between children with high needs and their peers at the time they enter kindergarten.

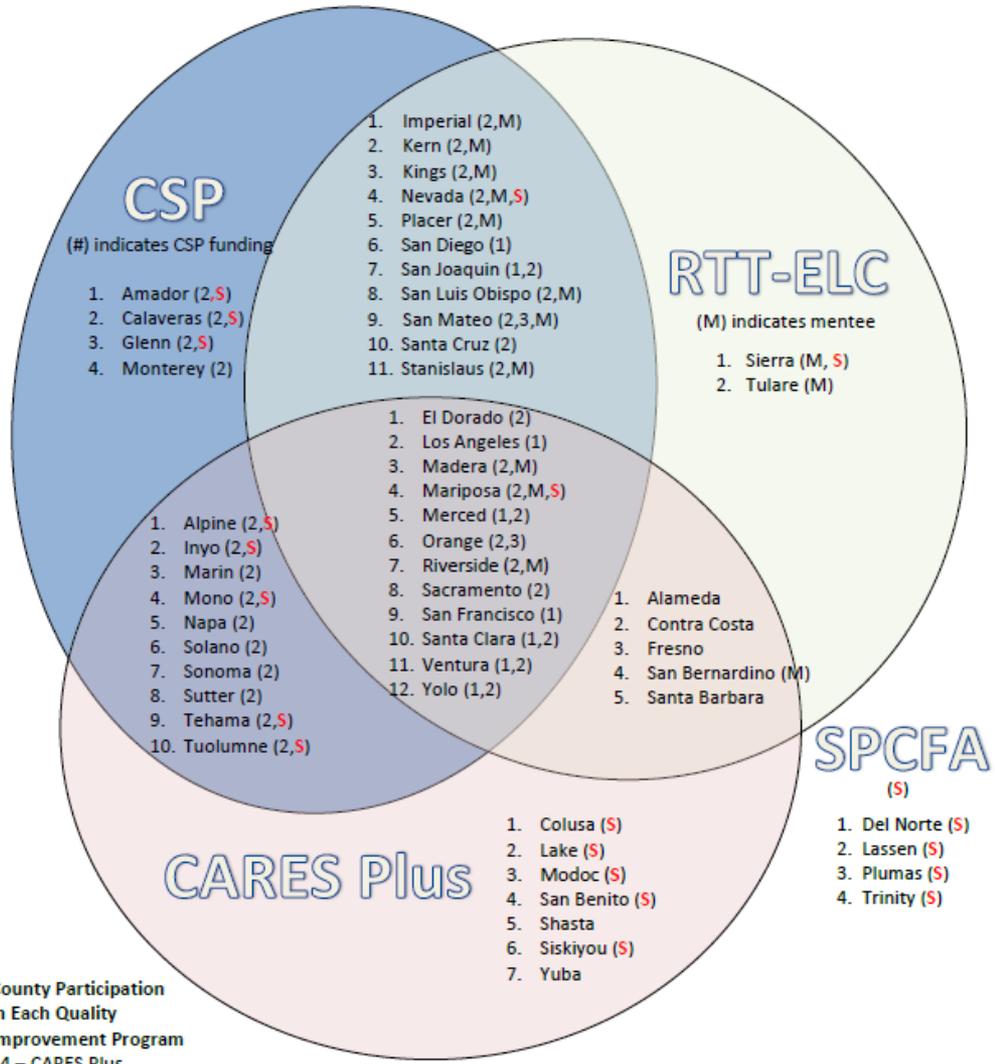


How does a QRIS align with F5CA's current programs?

QRIS Core Areas	Comprehensive Early Childhood System			F5CA Current Programs	
	Early Learning & Development	Child Health	Family Support & Strengthening	CARES Plus	CSP
Child Development & School Readiness	X	X	X		X
Observational Assessments & Learning Foundations	✓	✓	✓		✓
Developmental & Health Screenings	✓	✓	✓		✓
Social Emotional Development	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Health, Nutrition, & Physical Activity	✓	✓			✓
Teachers & Teaching	X	X	X	X	X
Education & Professional Development	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Effective Teacher-Child Interactions	✓	✓		✓	✓
Program & Environment	X	X	X		X
Director Qualifications & Professional Development	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Leadership & Program & Business Administration	✓		✓		
Environment	✓	✓	✓		✓
Family Engagement & Strengthening	✓	✓	✓		✓

First 5 County Program Participation

The diagram to the right shows counties participating in F5CA's CSP, CARES Plus, Small Population County Funding Augmentation (SPCFA), and federal Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC).



County Participation in Each Quality Improvement Program
 34 – CARES Plus
 37 – CSP
 16 – RTT-ELC original consortia
 14 – RTT-ELC mentees
 20 – SPCFA counties

First 5 County Program Participation

The map to the right shows counties participating in F5CA's CSP, CARES Plus, Small Population County Funding Augmentation (SPCFA), and federal Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC).



How does CQSS align with federal direction?

Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014

- Includes significant advancements by defining health and safety requirements for providers, outlining family friendly eligibility policies, and ensuring parents have transparent information about child care choices
- Requires states to spend quality funds on specified quality activities, one of which is implementing a QRIS

Early Head Start/Child Care Partnership Grants

- Multiple awards across California totaling \$63.8 million

Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC)

- In 2011, California was awarded a highly competitive \$75 million RTT-ELC federal grant, which is implementing a QRIS locally across the state
- RTT-ELC served as a catalyst for state expansion of QRIS, which is now being implemented in 39 states

How does CQSS align with state direction?

California's 2014–15 state budget included nearly \$273 million for early learning and child development—the biggest investment in over a decade. Other highlights include:

- \$70 million to provide 11,500 full-day, full-year spaces in the California State Preschool Program (CSPP) for low-income 4-year-olds from working families
- \$25 million for professional development for transitional kindergarten and CSPP teachers
- \$50 million for the QRIS Block Grant for CSPP

How did we get to CQSS?

F5CA staff led several efforts to obtain feedback and input from First 5 county executive directors on the development of a systems-level framework for all First 5 counties, including the following:

- In November 2014, a survey was sent to each First 5 county executive director to gather feedback on proposed program elements and other implementation issues.
- On December 1, 2014, F5CA and the F5 Association co-hosted a meeting with a regional representative to review survey results, provide an overview of the CQSS concept, and obtain feedback.
- In January 2015, F5CA convened workgroups consisting of First 5 county executive directors and staff to address the CQSS framework.

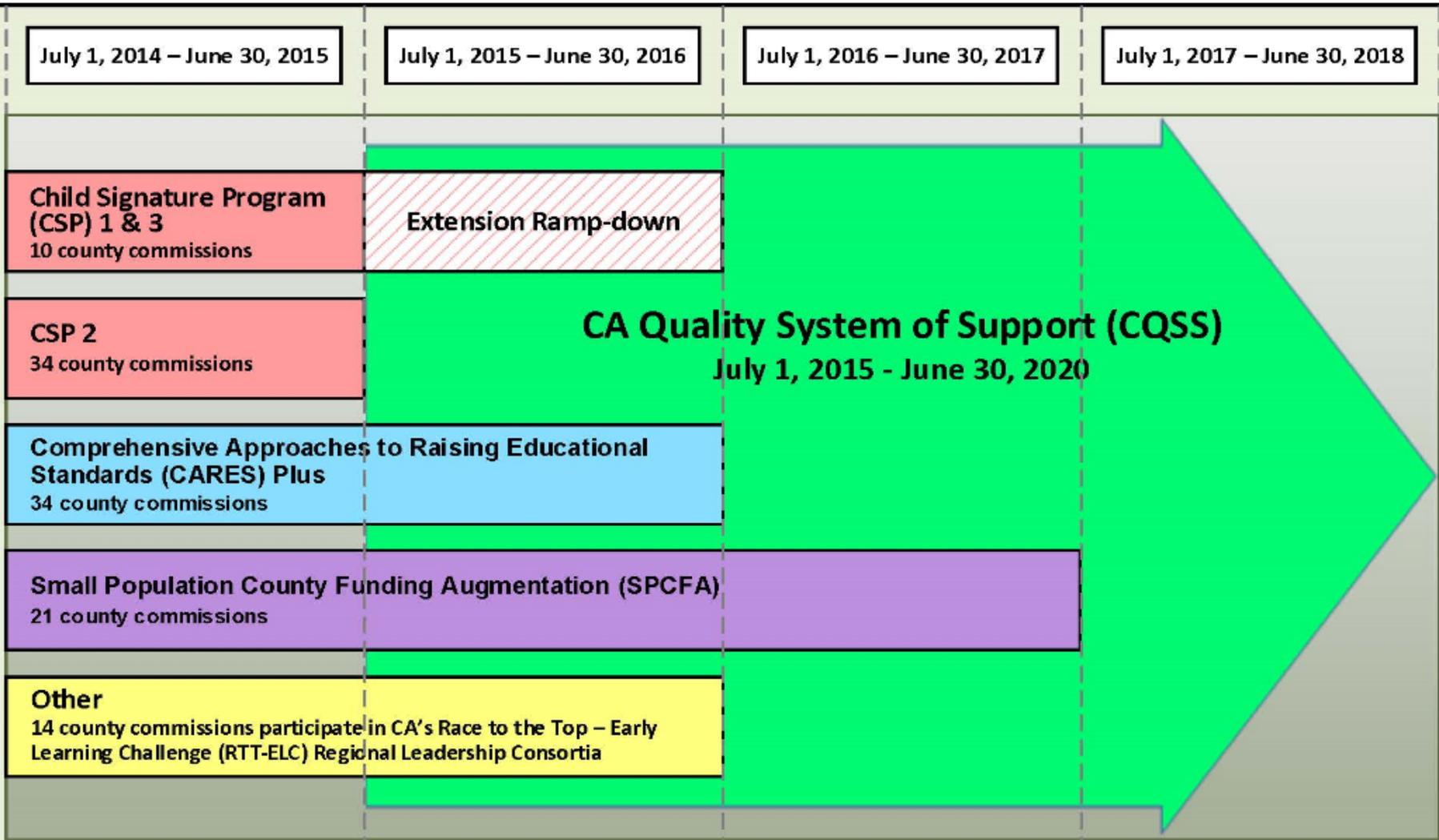
What program elements are most important to counties?

- Base funding on “*specific program component(s) selected by the county*”
- Offer a funded planning period prior to expected implementation
- Release a single RFA with a menu of program options related to improving child outcomes
- Align program and reporting requirements with other major state and federal efforts
- Allow early learning and development programs of all quality levels to participate in new program funding initiatives
- Support statewide work around a system of early identification and referral services (e.g., develop a state plan to address universal screening, assessment, referral, and treatment)
- Support statewide infrastructure related to family engagement and support (e.g., home visiting, resource centers, or use of Strengthening Families Framework)

What elements are most important regarding data and evaluation?

- Allow flexibility for local data system use with the ability to provide required data to F5CA
- Provide training and technical assistance resources to counties for program design and evaluation to assess outcomes
- Use uniform, standard assessment tools
- Develop common data elements all counties must collect and submit to F5CA

Next Steps for CSP & CARES Plus: CQSS



County commissions not participating in F5CA programs, as well as county commissions involved in the programs mentioned above, are eligible to participate in CQSS starting in July 1, 2015.

What will participating counties need to do in CQSS?

- Focus on raising quality in the Early Learning and Development System while linking with and coordinating improvement efforts within the Child Health and Family Support and Strengthening Systems
- Include the full spectrum of early learning and development settings while prioritizing those serving children and families with high needs
- Use evidence-based models/frameworks, promising practice models/frameworks, high-quality local models, or promising practice local models
- Support administrative, program, and evaluation services, and the seven systems functions

How will F5CA assist counties in the transition to CQSS?

- Support CSP 1 and 3 counties to transition CSP sites to an alternate funding source (i.e., CQSS, QRIS Block Grant)
- Support transition of CARES Plus counties by aligning CARES Plus program components to CQSS
- Support counties not participating in CSP 1 and 3 and CARES Plus by providing specialized technical assistance in designing and implementing a QRIS

What is the fiscal impact of CQSS?

- This investment requires up to \$190 million over five years (FY 2015–16 to 2019–20).
- Participating counties will be evaluated on an annual basis to assess progress and ensure funding accountability

TABLE 1
CQSS Funding Breakdown

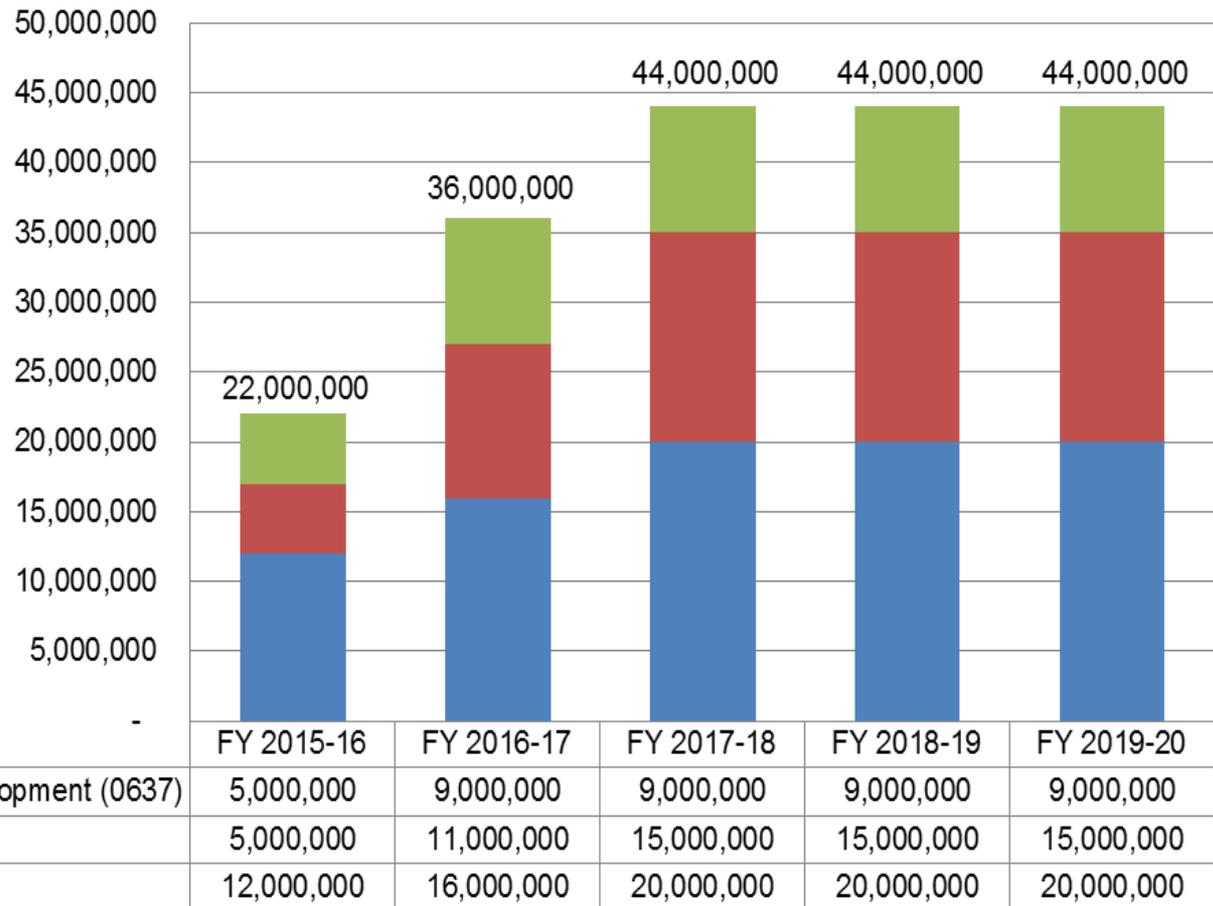
First 5 California Account	Amount	Funding %
Education (0634)	\$88,000,000	46%
Child Care (0636)	\$61,000,000	32%
Research and Development (0637)	\$41,000,000	22%
Total CQSS	\$190,000,000	100%

What is the fiscal impact of CQSS?

The impacted accounts will have excess resources to offset unforeseen fluctuations in tax revenue, or invest in additional opportunities aligning with F5CA’s Strategic Plan.

	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20
Fund Balance, Beginning	\$101.7	\$94.3	\$88.3	\$74.5	\$58.5
Revenue	\$43.5	\$41.4	\$39.4	\$37.4	\$35.5
Expenditures	\$50.9	\$47.4	\$53.2	\$53.4	\$53.2
Fund Balance, Ending	\$94.3	\$88.3	\$74.5	\$58.5	\$40.8

CQSS Funding Breakdown by Account and Fiscal Year



Next Steps

First 5 California staff will return for approval with a detailed description of CQSS at the April 2015 Commission meeting. This will include a request to release a Request for Application and a request for funding the CQSS. Implementation of CQSS is planned to begin July 1, 2015.

What is the staff request?

- F5CA staff requests a one-year extension (FY 2015—16) of CSP 1 and 3 of up to 50 percent of counties' current annual allocation (up to \$13.6 million).
- The CSP 1 and 3 extension will support the F5CA Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Plan Area 1, Child Health, Early Learning, and Family and Community Support and Partnership.

Why extend CSP 1 and 3?

Permitting the CSP 1 and 3 counties to receive an additional year of limited funding to transition into CQSS will provide:

- Counties time to transition current program components into CQSS
- Time for staff participating in current CSP programs to transition
- Time to transition programs to other funding sources as funding becomes available

What are CSP 1 and 3 extension requirements?

- CSP 1 and 3 counties will be offered the opportunity to continue their programs for an additional year.
- CSP counties will submit an Action Plan for approval to F5CA staff with a description of reduced services and a budget.
- A local area agreement will be required between the county First 5 county commission and F5CA that includes:
 - Funding Allocation
 - Reporting Requirements
 - Evaluation Requirements

What is the fiscal impact of extending of CSP 1 and 3?

First 5 California Account	Amount	Funding %
Education (0634)	\$10,604,879	77.77%
Child Care (0636)	\$1,514,983	11.11%
Research and Development (0637)	\$1,516,346	11.12%
Total CSP Extension	\$13,636,208	100.0%