



April 27, 2017

<p>SUBJECT</p> <p>EDUCARE LOS ANGELES AT LONG BEACH</p> <p>Strategic Priority Area 1. Children and Families: Support children prenatal through age 5 and their families by providing culturally and linguistically effective resources, knowledge, and opportunities for them to develop the skills needed to achieve their optimal potential in school and life.</p> <p>Goal 1.2. Early Learning: Children birth through age 5 benefit from high-quality early education, early intervention, family engagement, and support that prepares all children to reach their optimal potential in school and life.</p> <p>Strategic Priority Area 2. System and Network: Provide leadership to the First 5 movement and the development of a support system serving children prenatal through age 5, their families, and communities that results in sustainable and collective impact.</p> <p>Goal 2.2. Resource Exchange and Stewardship: Strategically fund and co-fund, align resources, facilitate the exchange of information and best practices, and seek new opportunities to maximize positive impact for children prenatal through age 5 and their families.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Information</p>
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SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

The vision of First 5 California (F5CA) is for the state’s children to receive the best possible start in life and thrive. To achieve this vision, F5CA has long invested in programs and strategies to prevent the school readiness gap by addressing the early childhood opportunity gap that presents itself as early as 18 months of age for many children of color, children living in poverty, and dual language learners (DLL). Research shows that, without effective early intervention, this opportunity gap continues to widen and leads to an achievement gap for children who are most at risk.

One of the broadly targeted prevention and early intervention strategies F5CA has invested in since 2010 is Educare, a nationally recognized, evidence-based model proven to mitigate the achievement gap for the most vulnerable children before they start school, which also provides significant professional development opportunities for early learning teachers far beyond the Educare locations. At the October 2016 Commission Meeting, the Commission received an update on its direct investment as a member of the public-private partnership, Educare California at Silicon Valley (ECSV), the first Educare program in California.

In this Item, the Commission will receive an update on California's second Educare site, Educare Los Angeles at Long Beach (ELALB), which will begin serving children in the 2017–2018 school year. The Commission will hear a presentation from ELALB community partners, Dr. Claudia Sosa-Valderrama from the Long Beach Unified School District, and Sonia Campos-Rivera from the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce. The Commission also will consider F5CA staff's recommendation to approve a no-cost, time-only extension of previously approved funding for Educare until June 30, 2019.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Commission approve a no-cost, time-only extension of the \$2.7 million in remaining committed funds for ELALB to expend over a two-year contract period.

This two-year extension will align the previously approved funding with a two-year contract cycle commencing with the opening of ELALB in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017–2018. The remaining funds will be expended by June 30, 2019, and will support enhanced program quality and independent program evaluation, in line with the intent of the Commission's previous Educare funding approvals in both 2010 and 2014.

BACKGROUND OF KEY ISSUES

The Educare Model and Educare Learning Network

Educare provides the comprehensive early learning services that early brain science shows are necessary in order to narrow the achievement gap for at-risk children beginning at birth. Educare is a state-of-the-art, evidence-based, full-day and full-year program for at-risk children birth through age 5 and their families that is supported by public-private partnerships, including the Ounce of Prevention Fund, the Buffet Early Childhood Fund, and other national and local philanthropic organizations and public-private groups.¹

Educare programs are designed to meet the needs of low-income, working families who are recipients of a mix of federal Early Head Start and Head Start programs and state infant/toddler and preschool services. The Educare Quality Early Learning Model (Educare model) has a central focus on meaningful teacher-child interactions, positioning highly skilled, highly qualified adults as the cornerstone of its programs.

¹ Retrieved September 26, 2016, from: <http://www.educareschools.org>

All classrooms have high adult-to-child ratios led by highly qualified lead teachers, assistant teachers, and aides, who receive ongoing support and mentoring from on-site coaches. In addition, the Educare model integrates comprehensive family supports, which includes employing family support staff to address each family's comprehensive needs.

The Educare model represents four main tenets creating:

- A program based on early brain science research and early education best practices that ensure children most at risk are ready to thrive in school and beyond
- A place of early learning for children birth through age 5 and a community center for families that showcases the importance of investing in early childhood education and comprehensive family supports
- A public-private partnership of public agencies, private businesses, and philanthropy committed to narrowing the achievement gap for children within their local community
- A platform to use its exemplar comprehensive, high-quality model to drive broader policy and systems change locally, statewide, and nationally

While the program within the Educare site's walls focuses on providing its children with comprehensive, high-quality early learning and support services, the Educare approach employs the twin goal of translating its best practices "beyond the site walls" out into the larger community to:

- Serve other local families not enrolled in the program through shared community resources
- Help build a more skilled local early childhood workforce
- Serve as a catalyst for advocating for high-quality early childhood education (ECE)

Educare as a Broadly Targeted Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy

Since the passage of Proposition 10 in 1999, First 5 counties, partners, and the state Commission have adopted numerous strategies and funded many services that research indicates are the most successful approaches to address health disparities and the school readiness gap for all Californian children. This includes broadly targeted intervention services and supports to address issues related to poverty such as subsidized child care, health services, income, and housing assistance. Educare is one such strategy that F5CA funds directly.

Educare is built on a foundation of the latest research in child development, early education, and evaluation. Research suggests the more time children spend in high-quality programs, the more they benefit in positive developmental outcomes, particularly for DLLs.

For those children starting in Educare programs as infants, findings point to the absence of a later achievement gap.² Data from twelve Educare programs show promising results in preparing at-risk children from birth to age 5 for later academic achievement. Low-income children, including children with limited English proficiency, who enroll in Educare as infants or toddlers, enter kindergarten with the same skills as their middle-income peers.³

Educare's Influence on First 5 California's Program Design

Prior to a direct F5CA investment, Educare's research-based best practices have been incorporated into F5CA's most significant ECE investments over the last two decades, serving as a foundation for the design of F5CA's Child Signature Program (CSP). The original CSP program was built off of the Educare model, taking the model's core program features beyond the walls of the physical Educare site and scaling up these evidence-based components statewide to enhance quality, build on a multi-leveled approach, emphasize continuous improvement informed by data and feedback, and use evaluation to inform future investments.

The Educare approach continues to inform the evolution of F5CA's efforts to build high-quality systems of care through quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS), including its influence on the state's implementation of the federal Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant, development of California's Quality Continuum Framework Rating Matrix, and design of F5CA's most significant systems investment to date, First 5 IMPACT (Improve and Maximize Programs so All Children Thrive).

These systems-building endeavors strive to improve early learning quality and child outcomes, and to model and support positive adult-child interactions⁴. This approach is based on modeling Educare's core components through F5CA's investments to expand Educare's influence statewide, in order to improve program quality through employing highly skilled teachers, high adult-to-child ratios, small class sizes, age-appropriate curricula and stimulating materials, safe physical settings, language-rich environments, warm and responsive interactions between staff and children, and high and consistent levels of child participation.^{5,6}

² Yazejian, N., Bryant, D., Freel, K., Burchinal, M. & the Educare Learning Network (ELN) Investigative Team. (2015). High-quality early education: Age of entry and time in care differences in student outcomes for English-only and dual language learners. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 23–39. Retrieved October 18, 2016, from: <http://fpg.unc.edu/resources/high-quality-early-education-age-entry-and-time-care-differences-student-outcomes-english->

³ Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. *Educare Implementation Study Findings*. (2012): <http://fpg.unc.edu/sites/fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/reports-and-policy-briefs/FPG%20Demonstrating%20Results%20-%20August%202012%20-%20Final.pdf>.

⁴ ECE Consensus Letter for Researchers | nieer.org. (n.d.). Retrieved October 18, 2016, from <http://nieer.org/publications/ece-consensus-letter-researchers>.

⁵ *A Science-Based Framework for Early Childhood Policy: Using Evidence to Improve Outcome in Learning, Behavior, and Health for Vulnerable Children*. Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University. National Forum on Early Childhood Program Evaluation; National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. Retrieved October 18, 2016, from http://developingchild.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Policy_Framework.pdf.

⁶ See Attachment B: *Features of quality in early care and education: Recent, rigorous evidence on what matters most for children*. Bridges, M., Dagys, N., Ly, J., & Fuller, B. (2012). University of California, Berkeley and UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families, and Communities.

First 5 California's Investment in Educare

In April 2010, the Commission voted to invest \$6 million in the Educare model through public-private partnerships comprised of local government health and education agencies, private businesses, and philanthropy. Funding was approved to support the design, operation, and evaluation of the first California Educare centers in Santa Clara and Los Angeles counties. In January 2014, the Commission approved a time-only extension of these funds through FY 2016–2017.

The original intent of the Commission's investment in Educare programs was to enhance the quality and funding levels of communities' existing federal and state early learning programs to reach the Educare model's higher level of quality services, and to increase Educare programs' capacity to ensure their program is coordinated, aligned, and integrated with state and national quality early learning efforts. These efforts include CSP, Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards (CARES) Plus, First 5 IMPACT, the RTT-ELC, and the California QRIS Consortium, as well as local efforts. F5CA funds supplement and leverage public-private partnership funds with Early Head Start, Head Start, Title 5 early learning programs, local First 5 dollars, local educational agencies, and philanthropic dollars.

The April 2010 Commission Meeting highlighted the larger implications an investment in Educare would have on increasing the quality of California's community and regional ECE programs and workforce, and on positively influencing the state policy landscape, stating: "Educare is intentionally designed to 'radiate out' into the community, to transform practice and to help build a more skilled early childhood workforce. It is a multiplier with regard to advocacy for high quality early childhood education and also with regard to greater workforce development in the larger community."

Educare California at Silicon Valley

At the October 2016 Commission Meeting, the Commission received an update on Educare California at Silicon Valley's (ECSV's) operations beginning in the 2015–2016 school year. The intent of this \$3.1 million, two-year agreement with First 5 Santa Clara is to supplement the high-quality elements in the classroom to meet the Educare Core Features program requirements and conduct an independent program evaluation to implement the national Educare Implementation Study.

Educare Los Angeles at Long Beach

The original 2010 Commission approval of direct investment in Educare committed \$6 million to Educare sites in California, specifically in Santa Clara and Los Angeles Counties. The current \$2.7 million in remaining F5CA funds previously approved for Educare are targeted for ELALB, which will begin enrolling children this spring for the 2017–2018 school year. The program opening represents the culmination of years of collaboration on planning, development, fundraising, and operations management amongst ELALB's partners, which include city, county, state, and national public and private organizations, such as the Long Beach Education Foundation, Long Beach Unified School District, Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, Advancement

Project, LA Partnership for Early Childhood Investment, Ounce of Prevention Fund, Buffett Early Childhood Fund, and Educare Learning Network.

The site will be co-located on the Barton Elementary School campus within the Long Beach Unified School District, and will provide full-day, high-quality ECE for around 200 of the community's most vulnerable children ages 0 to 5. The ELALB site leadership position, the school principal, was hired a full year prior to the official 2017–2018 opening to orchestrate a strategic and deliberative program development process.

Additional staff will be hired to enroll 3- and 4-year-olds beginning this spring for the inaugural preschool program's start in September 2017. Infants and toddlers will be served in the 2018–2019 school year beginning in summer 2018 when the site will be fully operational to serve children 0 to 5.

In addition to providing direct services, the school also will serve as a training and professional development center for ECE professionals throughout the region and will be utilized intentionally by its leaders and partners as a catalyst for ECE policy change in the region and statewide.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Historically, the Commission has considered numerous related presentations weighing F5CA investment in research-based approaches to prevent the achievement gap through broadly targeted prevention and early intervention strategies. Such investments include, but are not limited to: the inception and continuation of CSP and CARES Plus beginning in 2000; the decision to fund Educare models in California with \$6 million in one-time funds in April 2010; and the time period extension for funding committed to Educare programs in January 2014.

Over the past two decades, F5CA's ECE investments, including First 5 IMPACT, have been inspired by and built upon elements of the Educare model as a research-based, comprehensive, high-quality ECE program, and as an integral part of a local community, expanding positive impacts beyond the children served in its classrooms to families and ECE professionals across the state and region, and driving local and state policy change towards greater investment in comprehensive ECE and family support systems.

ATTACHMENTS

None.