

First 5 Commission of San Diego
October 8, 2021
First 5 CA Shared Services Alliance (SSA) Pilot Grant

Request

The request before the Commission is to approve the receipt of the 2-year First 5 CA Shared Services Alliance pilot grant award.

On July 30, 2021, the Executive Director submitted a grant proposal for the Share Services Alliance pilot RFP that was made available by the F5 CA Commission and award notification was made on September 8, 2021. The grant award amount is \$250,000 over 2 years, October 1, 2021 to June 30, 2023.

Background

First 5 San Diego has supported quality early learning since 2006, that began with the Preschool for All Demonstration project, that led to the creation of the Quality Preschool Initiative (SD-QPI), to our presently funded Learn Well Initiative. Over these years, First 5 SD has supported the quality improvement of both center based (CB) and family child care (FCC) that included sites funded via the CA Dept of Education, Head Start, Early Head Start and now privately funded providers.

The Federal system for supporting quality early learning system is called the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) (refer to attachment #1), and in the State of CA it is known as Quality Counts California (QCC) (refer to attachment #2). In San Diego County there is a QCC consortium that advises the direction of the local quality early learning system. Representatives of the QCC consortium membership includes First 5, SDCOE, R&R, CDSS, Head Start, Alternative Payment, Early Head Start /Head Start, Public Higher Education and Tribal regions. It is through this structure that SD County is able to leverage investments from First 5 SD, CDE and First 5 CA.

Historically, the QRIS work focused on traditional center-based (CB) sites. As the funding climate continued to change for First 5 CA, this led them to assess the statewide QCC system to better understand the state commissions future investments. This report, which was presented to the First 5 CA commission in April 2019, identified a new priority to leverage F5 CA funds towards quality improvement for early education and care settings not addressed by other funding efforts and lay the foundation for an integrated, quality early learning system. The focus then began to shift to alternative childcare and early care and education settings that include FCC and alternative settings.

The Shared Services Alliance pilot grant will engage two community partners, YMCA Childcare Resource Services and Child Development Associates to explore the viability and sustainability of a shared services mode through a Planning, Pilot and Assessment Cycle.

This pilot will engage up to 15 providers, a minimum of 5 childcare centers and 10 family childcare homes to inform and build a shared services model to increase enrollment, maximize fee collection, and ensure that program pricing covers the program costs.

A shared service model provides efficiencies to early care and education providers, the majority of whom are low-income women of color, expanding care for low-to-moderate income communities by strengthening business and pedagogical leadership and creating technology and staff infrastructure that enable sharing of staff, information, and resources as well as increased business efficiencies.

First 5 San Diego, Child Development Associates and the YMCA CRS have deep provider relationships, strong content area expertise, and robust technology infrastructure and are positioned to pilot a successful shared service model. This model would allow participating providers to access technology supports and pool and share resources to improve their long-term business capacity and provide high quality care.

Link to the Strategic Plan

The services support the following Strategic Plan Objective:

- Increase the percentage of children ages 0 through 5 enrolled in a quality early care and education (ECE) program with a highly qualified workforce.

Link to *Live Well San Diego*

These services support the County's *Live Well San Diego* plan to provide healthy, safe and thriving communities as they promote opportunities to increase active and meaningful living, including improving avenues for physical activity for San Diego's youngest residents.

Staff Recommendation

- 1) Receive the grant award for \$250,000 over 2 years, October 1, 2021 to June 30, 2023.
- 2) Award a contract and approve funding to the local R&R agency, YMCA Childcare Resource Services in the amount of up to \$250,000 as a project length budget for a twenty-one-month period (October 1, 2021 to June 30, 2023).

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$250,000 awarded by First 5 CA.