



## Executive Director Report – October 27, 2022

This report provides an update about project work and key activities staff have engaged in since the July 2022 Commission Meeting framed by the Strategic Priority Areas. It includes relevant highlights, rather than a summary of all staff work.

### Priority Area II: Child Development

*GOAL: All Children birth through age 5 have high-quality, nurturing environments that ensure their learning readiness.*

#### 1. IMPACT 2020

Efforts to address inequities within Quality Counts California (QCC) are continuing through the equity audit, as called for in the Master Plan for Early Learning and Care (MPELC). Through leadership and funding from First 5 California (F5CA), a contract with School Readiness Consulting is supporting the facilitation of focus groups and partner surveys. Extensive outreach to participating and non-participating early learning and care (ELC) providers and parents will identify system inequities and issues of access. The 42 planned focus groups will represent all regions of the state, including tribal lands.

The recruitment efforts for facilitators successfully resulted in the hiring and training of an ethnically and linguistically diverse group of facilitators representing American Indian Alaska Native (AIAN), Black, Latinx/a/e, Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI), and white. In addition, these facilitators will be conducting focus groups in English, Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Korean.

In partnership with the California Department of Education (CDE) and the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), outreach efforts are under way to recruit focus group participants and survey respondents. Focus groups will be conducted with families; Family Child Care (FCC) providers; Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) providers; center-based teaching staff; and ELC program administrators. The focus groups are planned to begin at the end of October 2022 and wrap up within a month.

Surveys are available now for respondents and are offered in six languages and in both electronic and paper formats. The surveys gather data about current stakeholder experiences, as well as opportunities for enhancing equity for those already within the QCC system and those who might potentially benefit from QCC quality supports and resources. Surveys are tailored for six different audiences,

including families, ELC teachers, administrators, FFN providers, FCC providers, and other ELC stakeholders and partners.

School Readiness Consulting will analyze data from the focus groups and surveys, and work with F5CA, CDE, and CDSS to create a final report with actionable, stakeholder-oriented findings, takeaways, and recommendations. The final report is expected to be complete by early 2023.

## **Priority Area III: Family Functioning**

*GOAL: All families have the knowledge, skills, and resources to support their children's optimal development.*

### **1. Refugee Family Support**

The Refugee Family Support (RFS) grants are a \$3 million investment approved by the F5CA Commission in October 2021. Implementation of the RFS grants will cover the period of September 1, 2022, through August 31, 2023. Six First 5 county commissions received the RFS grant funding to implement three priority areas of supporting socio-cultural adjustment and system navigation, short-term emergency childcare, and emergency housing. Grantees are partnering with 52 local partners, including 9 other local counties in providing services through this grant.

Grantees and their partners will participate in quarterly network meetings starting November 2022 to learn about program implementation, successes, best practices, challenges, and lessons learned. Staff from the CDSS, Refugee Programs Bureau will also be present in these meetings to share their expertise and resources. These network meetings will be a space to learn from each other, exchange knowledge, identify problems, and find solutions. The network meetings will be hosted by F5CA staff and facilitated by the Glenn Price Group.

### **2. Home Visiting**

F5CA staff are in the process of closing out phase one of the Home Visiting Coordination (HVC) grants approved by the Commission in October 2019. The HVC grants were intended to help counties create a sustainable, unified system that supports families with home visiting services they need and maximize available funding to serve more families. Between 2020 and 2022, 50 counties received approximately \$9 million of funding to develop or strengthen a cross-agency, cross-system understanding of the role home visiting plays in supporting family well-being, increase access to culturally and linguistically responsive home visiting, and integrate home visiting into other child- and family-serving systems. Phase two, which continues and expands on this work with a focus on regional coordination, will begin in July 2023 after an extended Request for Applications timeline to allow more time for regions to develop their applications.

## **Priority Area IV: First 5 California Workplace Development and Culture**

*GOAL: Foster the creation and maintenance of a positive and productive work environment to support successful implementation of the plan.*

### **1. Change Management**

F5CA began work with Arabella Advisors to assess its strategic vision and the organization's long-term sustainability. Beginning in September, the Arabella team has interviewed 18 external stakeholders and commissioners to hear their perspective on the North Star, Audacious Goal, and F5CA's Strategic Plan. The Arabella team will analyze and compile the data into a set of recommendations to help F5CA meet its current organizational needs. Some preliminary feedback includes the North Star resonates strongly with most stakeholders; that they encourage F5CA to prioritize high-leverage work (e.g., research, pilots, advocacy, public education), but are not aligned on what that should look like; and that it is important to narrow in on activities and initiatives that clearly connect back to the Strategic Plan. Arabella will work with F5CA to make sense of the feedback in their analysis. The next step for the Arabella team is to interview F5CA staff members in a set of focus groups in November, and then a presentation to the Commission during the January 2023 meeting.

## **Personnel Update**

### **New Hires**

Dr. Angelo Williams, the new Chief Deputy Director, joined F5CA on September 6. Prior to this, Dr. Williams served as Chief of Staff in the California State Assembly, Deputy Director of the California Black Health Network, Legislative Director at the California Student Aid Commission, Assistant Executive Director at the California School Boards Association, Program Officer at the WK Kellogg Foundation (Michigan), and Assistant Vice Chancellor at the California Community College Chancellors Office.

James Lindsay, the new Chief Counsel, joined F5CA on August 1. James has been a licensed attorney in California for nearly 30 years. Prior to joining F5CA, he served as Senior Litigation Counsel for the California State Teachers' Retirement System.

### **Personnel Requests in Progress**

Staff is working to readvertise for the Deputy Director position in the Program Innovation and Evaluation Division. Interviews were conducted and no selection was made from the previous recruitment.

Interviews are currently being conducted for the Staff Services Manager I position in the Prevention, Equity, and Opportunity Office.

The Staff Services Manager I position in the External and Governmental Affairs Office is currently advertised with a final filing date of October 20.

## State Legislative Update

On September 30, 2022, Governor Newsom finalized signing or vetoing bills that made it to his desk. This report highlights the major actions on legislation supported by First 5 California that aligns with the Commission's [2022 Children's Policy Agenda](#).

### ***Resilient Families and Communities***

- [AB 1728 \(Rivas, R\): CalWORKS: Welfare-to-Work: exemptions](#) – This bill expands the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) welfare-to-work (WTW) exemptions to recipients who are pregnant, and for parents and other relatives who have primary responsibility for providing care to children from up to six months to up two years of age and under, as specified. This bill also requires a county to provide a notice of action (NOA) regarding an individual's exemption and how they may voluntarily participate in WTW activities, as specified, and further requires the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to issue implementation instructions to counties by April 1, 2023, as specified.

**Current location:** Stalled in Senate Appropriations Committee

**Position:** Support

**Level:** 3

- [AB 2300 \(Kaira\): CalWORKs and CalFresh: work requirements](#) – This bill adds paid family leave (PFL) benefits to those benefits included as disability-based unearned income for the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program and exempts a recipient receiving PFL from CalWORKs aid time limits. This bill also prohibits sanctions from being applied for failure or refusal to comply with CalWORKs work requirements if the anticipated work hours are unpredictable or certain labor law protections were violated, requires that good cause exists for a CalFresh recipient who has voluntarily quit a job or reduced work hours based on the same circumstances that prohibit a CalWORKs recipient from being sanctioned, and permits a person to requalify for CalWORKs benefits by attending school on a full-time basis.

**Current location:** Signed into law

**Position:** Support

**Level:** 3

- [AB 2466 \(Cervantes\): Foster children](#) – This bill prohibits a placing agency, when placing a foster child, from declining to place a child with a resource family because of a resource family's parent's actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender

identity, or gender expression; and removes the term “hard to place children” from certain statutes.

**Current location:** Chaptered

**Position:** Support

**Level:** 3

- **[SB 860 \(Rubio\): Personal Income Tax Law: Young Child Tax Credit](#)** – This bill allows qualified taxpayers who earned no income for the taxable year to receive the Young Child Tax Credit (YCTC).

**Current location:** [SB 194 \(Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review\)](#) adopted the changes proposed in SB 860, as part of the 2022-23 State Budget Act.

**Position:** Support

**Level:** 3

- **[SB 951 \(Durazo\): Unemployment insurance: contribution rates: disability insurance: paid family leave: weekly benefit amount](#)** – This bill revises the formula for the computation of State Disability Insurance (SDI) and Paid Family Leave (PFL) benefits. Specifically, this bill extends the existing wage replacement rates for SDI and PFL (set to sunset on January 1, 2023) to January 1, 2025. The bill also revises the formula for computing SDI benefits (available for 52 weeks) for periods of disability commencing on or after January 1, 2025, and revises the formula for the computation of PFL benefits (available for eight weeks) for periods of disability commencing on or after January 1, 2025.

**Current location:** Signed into law

**Position:** Sponsor

**Level:** 1

- **[SB 1058 \(Durazo\): Disability insurance: paid family leave: demographic data](#)** – This bill requires the Employment Development Department (EDD) to collect demographic data, including race and ethnicity data, for individuals who claim disability benefits under the State Disability Insurance (SDI) and Paid Family Leave (PFL) programs.

**Current location:** Signed into law

**Position:** Support

**Level:** 3

- [\*\*SB 1083 \(Skinner\): CalWORKs: pregnancy and homeless assistance\*\*](#) – This bill makes various changes to the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) homeless assistance (HA) program, including extending CalWORKs HA to families facing eviction, expanding the definition of perpetrator of domestic violence for the purposes of HA to include a roommate, and allowing a family who is receiving CalWORKs HA benefits to remain eligible for HA following termination of CalWORKs participation due income ineligibility.

**Current location:** Signed into law

**Position:** Support

**Level:** 3

### ***Child Health***

- [\*\*AB 2402 \(Rubio\): Medi-Cal: continuous eligibility\*\*](#) – This bill requires the Department of Health Care Services to seek federal authority to allow children to remain on Medi-Cal, the Medi-Cal Access Infants Program, and the County Children's Health Initiative Programs until age five, without the need for a redetermination of eligibility, except in specified circumstances.

**Current location:** [\*\*AB 204 \(Committee on Budget\)\*\*](#) adds the County Children's Health Insurance Program to the Medi-Cal programs for children 0-4 years of age will remain continuously eligible.

**Position:** Support

**Level:** 3

### ***Early Learning***

- [\*\*AB 92 \(Reyes\): Preschool and childcare and development services: family fees\*\*](#) – This bill prohibits: (1) family fees for state preschool and child care services from exceeding one percent of a family's monthly income; and (2) family fees from being charged to a family with an adjusted monthly family income below 75 percent of the state median family income. The bill also specifies that state preschool program providers and providers of subsidized child care are not to absorb any reduction in pay for the space or voucher on account of any waiver of or reduction in families fees; and prohibits the number of contracted spaces/vouchers from being reduced on account of any reduction in the collection of family fees. The bill is to become operative on July 1, 2023, upon a state appropriation.

**Current location:** Vetoed

**Position:** Support

**Level:** 2

- [AB 2465 \(Bonta\): Pupil instruction: third-grade literacy: literacy grant program](#)  
– This bill requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), upon appropriation of the Legislature, to administer the Family and Community Literacy: Supporting Literacy and Biliteracy in Schools, Families, and Communities Grant Program and the California Family Literacy Innovation Project to local educational agencies (LEAs) to support early literacy.

**Current location:** Stalled in Senate Appropriations Committee

**Position:** Support

**Level:** 2

- [AB 2806 \(Rubio\): Childcare and developmental services: preschool: expulsion and suspension: mental health services: reimbursement rates](#) – This bill expands the existing prohibition on expelling children from state preschool programs to also prohibit the suspension of children enrolled in state preschool programs, and extends the prohibition on suspension and expulsion of children to include those enrolled in child care programs, with exception.

**Current location:** Chaptered

**Position:** Support

**Level:** 3

- [AB 2832 \(Rivas, R\): Whole Child Community Equity](#) – This bill establishes the End Racial and Economic Inequities in Childcare in California Initiative, which requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) and Department of Education (CDE) to develop the Whole Child Equity Framework and Whole Child Community Equity Screening Tool. The bill also requires DSS and CDE to convene a workgroup, which will include First 5 California, to receive input for the development of the Framework, the Equity Tool, and recommended uses of the Equity Tool for early childhood investments and whole child resources to address racial and economic inequities for California's youngest children.

**Current location:** Signed into Law

**Position:** Support

**Level:** 3

- [SB 70 \(Rubio\): Elementary education: kindergarten](#) – This bill requires, beginning with the 2024-25 school year, a student to have completed one year of kindergarten before being admitted to the first grade of a public school. Therefore, this bill expands compulsory education to include kindergarten.

**Current location:** Vetoed

**Position:** Support

**Level:** 3

- [SB 952 \(Limon\): Pupil instruction: dual language programs: Pathways to Success Grant Program](#) – This bill establishes the Expanding Culture and Language Learning in Schools Grant Program, administered by the California Department of Education (CDE), to provide grants for the establishment of dual language immersion programs in preschools, elementary, and secondary schools.

**Current location:** Stalled in Assembly Appropriations Committee

**Position:** Support

**Level:** 3

- [SB 976 \(Leyva\): Universal Preschool Act](#) – This bill establishes the “Universal Preschool Act”, to provide a universal high-quality, free, inclusive, mixed-delivery, and cost-effective preschool to all three- and four-year old children, regardless of family income.

**Current location:** Stalled in Assembly Education Committee

**Position:** Sponsor

**Level:** 1

A full list of priority legislation is in attachment A1.

## **State Budget Update**

The 2022-23 State Budget Act provides significant investments that support financial relief to California families, address women’s reproductive health rights, and commit to the state’s infrastructure from public education to broadband and energy resilience. This report provides a highlight of programs and supports focused on uplifting families and children.

### ***Financial Relief for Californians***

- Appropriates \$17 billion for rental assistance, outstanding utility costs, and health care and child care subsidies. The major proposal of this package is the refund of up to \$1,050 that families will begin receiving October 2022.
- Provides \$17 million in 2022-23 and 2023-24, and \$18 million in 2024-25 for the Foster Youth Tax Credit.
  - Creates a tax credit of up to \$1,000 per individual against the personal income tax as specified:



- Eligible individuals: in foster care placement, while 13 years of age or older; between 18-25 years of age; eligible to claim the earned income tax credit (EITC) in the taxable year of the credit.
- Provides \$69 million in 2022-23, \$98 million in 2023-24, \$128 million in 2024-25, and \$157 million in 2025-26 for the Young Child Tax Credit. The budget expands the definition of a “qualified taxpayer” to include an eligible individual who has a qualified child and would have received the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), but has earned income of zero dollars or less in the taxable year. Indexes the value of the Young Child Tax Credit to inflation
- Amends statute to specify that the phase-out of the EITC in years after the taxable year in which the minimum wage is set at \$15 per hour is set at the phase-out percentages for the prior taxable year.

### ***Education***

- Increases Proposition 98 General Fund by \$35 billion from the 2021-22 Budget Act for K-14 education, for a total of \$128.6 billion, the largest investment in our state’s public education system. The major investments include:
  - Additional funding for community schools
  - Implementation of universal high-quality school meals
  - Fast-track full funding for the Extended Learning Opportunities (ELOP) Program to provide families with 9-hour day educational and enrichment school support
  - Continues to support the implementation of Transitional Kindergarten and the state’s subsidized child care system with \$100.5 million in infrastructure and renovation funds, a one-year family fee waiver, and hold harmless policy for subsidized child care and preschool providers based on maximum authorized care.
  - Provides \$250 million in one-time Proposition 98 General Fund to support the Inclusive Early Education Expansion Program to support inclusive classroom settings for students.
- Invests \$485 million in both Proposition 98 General Fund and General Fund support to increase the State Preschool Program, as follows:
  - Increases the adjustment factors for students with disabilities, dual language learners, and childhood mental health and adds an adjustment factor for three-year olds.
  - Ramps up over three years the requirement that preschool providers be required to serve 5 percent of students with disabilities in 2022-23, 7.5 percent in 2023-24, and 10 percent in 2024-25.

- Provides students with continuous eligibility for 24 months, instead of 12 months, after eligibility is confirmed.
- Allows children with an individualized education program to be eligible to participate in a state preschool program and expands access to eligible families at 85 percent of the state median income to 100 percent of the state median income.
- Provides \$300 million in one-time Proposition 98 General Fund for preschool planning and implementation grants to all local educational agencies.
- Provides \$166.2 million Proposition 98 General Fund to support full-year costs of State Preschool rate increases from January 1, 2022.
- Provides \$148.7 million one-time General Fund to maintain reimbursement rate increases from last year's budget for After School Education and Safety and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community learning Centers programs.
- Provides \$18.3 million to support the California Universal Preschool Planning Grant Program.

### ***Children's Behavioral Health***

- Appropriates \$290 million General Fund to support Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative, including the following components:
  - \$75 million for wellness and resilience building supports for children, youth, and parents, including support of well-being and mindfulness programs and providing support and training for parents.
  - \$10 million for the School-Based Peer Mental Health Demonstration Project, to provide grants to up to eight high schools to establish peer-to-peer support programs.
  - \$40 million to support a Youth Suicide Prevention Media Campaign and Community-Based Organization Mini-Grant Program, no later than December 1, 2022.
  - \$50 million to support the Youth Suicide Reporting and Crisis Response Pilot Program.
  - \$15 million for parent education.
  - \$25 million for career development for high schoolers.
  - \$75 million for digital assessments and interventions.
  - \$10 million for School-Based Peer Mental Health Demonstration Program.

## ***Health Care***

- Appropriates \$20 million General Fund for the Abortion Practical Support Fund, which will provide grants for nonprofit organizations and health care providers that assist patients overcoming barriers to abortion care.
- Appropriates \$1 million to support the Midwifery Workforce Training Act, which allows certified nurse-midwives and licensed midwives to participate in training opportunities through the Song-Brown Healthcare Workforce Training Program.
- Appropriates \$1 million General Fund to support distribution of infant car seats to low-income parents.
- Provides Medi-Cal coverage for individuals ages 26-49, regardless of immigration status.
- Establishes the Office of Health Care Affordability to increase transparency and pricing/cost targets, imposing fiscal consequences for entities that fail to meet state cost targets.

## ***Housing & Homelessness***

- Provides \$2 billion over two years to support the development of affordable housing that are located near employment, schools, and other community support systems to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This investment also provides low-income families support to achieve home ownership.
- Provides \$1.5 billion in a multi-pronged approach to develop and train thousands of mental health professionals and community health workers.

## ***Human Services***

- Provides funding to increase CalWORKs grants levels by 21 percent beginning October 1, 2022.
- Provides \$1.7 million to provide emergency caregiver payments for up to 365 days, under specific circumstance. The payments would go to families that take in children in emergency situations while they await approval as a resource family.
- Provides for the transfer of \$100 million in General Fund to the California Hope, Opportunity, Perseverance, and Empowerment (HOPE) for Children Trust Account Fund. Funds in this account will be used to create trust accounts for children who have lost a parent or primary caregiver to COVID-19 and for children in long-term foster care.