



AGENDA ITEM: 25-14
DATE OF MEETING: March 12, 2025
ACTION:
INFORMATION:

**APPROVE CONTRACT WITH
RIVERSIDE COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION FOR
THE FIRST 5 RIVERSIDE COUNTY HYBRID ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT PROGRAM
FROM JULY 1, 2025 – JUNE 30, 2027
(CONTRACT NO. CF25121)
[\$6,400,000 – PROP 10 FUNDS]**

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

Approve Contract No. CF25121 with Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE) for an amount not to exceed \$6,400,000 effective July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027, for the First 5 Riverside County Hybrid Alternative Payment Program (F5 RHAP) to support up to 150 monthly subsidized childcare scholarships, to support approximately 200 Quality Start Riverside County Alternative Payment (AP) providers with flat rate quality reimbursements, and to build provider capacity by providing incentives for up to 125 newly enrolled AP providers.

BACKGROUND

Since 2016, the partnership with RCOE has supported Riverside County families with the high cost of quality infant and toddler care. The F5 RHAP is a subsidized reimbursement program that provides scholarships to families with children from 0 through 4 years of age, prioritizing children through the age of 3. RCOE administers the California Alternative Payment Program (CAPP), CalWORKs - Stage 2 Alternative Payment Program (C2AP), and the CalWORKs - Stage 3 Alternative Payment Program (C3AP) to enroll families into childcare services in the Alternative Payment (AP) System. The F5 RHAP program supplements and enhances the state-subsidized system by addressing gaps in the eligibility requirements and funding in the existing system. F5 RHAP allows rapid enrollment to meet the immediate needs of the families of special populations, providing immediate access to services while families are completing the enrollment process for the AP System. Special populations are defined as, but not limited to, families in crisis, migrant families, children living in foster care, children with special needs, grandparents raising grandchildren, and families impacted by displacement or relocation.

The F5 RHAP scholarships allow flexibility to support Alternative Payment providers with direct referral opportunities to provide immediate access to services. F5 RHAP layers

additional funding to enhance program quality improvements for eligible Quality Start Riverside County participating providers.

F5 RHAP expands the number of licensed providers that accept childcare subsidies. Utilizing the existing system that supports children, families, and providers, RCOE will incentivize currently licensed providers to join the AP System, and Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) providers to become licensed so they can enter into the AP System as well. The intent is to increase the pool of licensed providers to serve children through the RHAP and the AP Systems. Performance benchmarks for RHAP will include provider retention rates, scholarship utilization rates, and quality improvement measures. Regular updates will be provided to the Commission on progress toward meeting a minimum 85% provider retention goal.

May 10, 2023 (Action Item 23-28) the Commission approved Contract No. 24121 with RCOE for an amount not to exceed \$7,000,000 effective July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2025, for the First 5 Riverside County Hybrid Alternative Payment Program (F5 RHAP) to support 150 subsidized childcare scholarships and to support approximately 200 Quality Start Riverside County, Alternative Payment providers with flat rate quality reimbursements as continuation of financial support for quality improvements.

March 10, 2021 (Action Item 21-08) the Commission approved Contract No. 22116 with RCOE for an amount not to exceed \$6,000,000 effective July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023, for the continued RHAP Program. The contract was increased in May 2023 to an amount not to exceed \$7,094,680 to support the direct referral opportunities to enroll families up to 12 months and bridges enrollment of Migrant families in the Eastern Coachella Valley to provide immediate access to services through RHAP while families are completing the enrollment process for the California Alternative Payment Program.

May 11, 2016 (Action Item 16-09), the Commission approved Contract No. 16121 with RCOE for RHAP to support a subsidized reimbursement and quality incentive program for low-income children 0 through 5 years of age to access early learning education in quality settings through a systems approach. The contract was reduced in 2019 after RCOE received increased State funding for the California Alternative Payment Program, and in 2020 amended to include subsidy for essential workers under the COVID-19 pandemic.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

That the Commission:

1. Approve Contract No. CF25121 with Riverside County Office of Education for an amount not to exceed \$6,400,000 effective July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027, for the First 5 Riverside County Hybrid Alternative Payment Program in substantially the same form as the draft Contract No. CF25121 attached hereto and authorize the Executive Director to sign the contract on behalf of the Commission, subject to County Counsel approval as to form; and

2. Authorize the Executive Director based on the availability of fiscal funding and as approved by County Counsel to sign amendments that exercise the options of Contract No. CF25121, on behalf of the Commission including modifications of the statement of work that stay within the intent of said contract without requiring further action from the Commission.

BUDGET IMPACT

If approved, adequate appropriation will be included in the FY25-26 and FY 26-27 budget requests.

527980-25800-938001-92950-CF25121

STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE

Goal: 1 Quality Early Learning

POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Commissioner Edwin Gomez, Ed. D, County Superintendent of Schools

Commissioner Elizabeth Romero, Riverside County Office of Education Board Member

ATTACHMENT

1. CF25121 A0-Riverside County Office of Education for F5RHAP.