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## **FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA COMMISSION APPROVES \$190 MILLION FOR EARLY EDUCATION QUALITY IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM**

Sacramento, CA — The California Children and Families Commission today approved an unprecedented \$190 million investment to improve early learning systems in California.

Called First 5 IMPACT (Improve and Maximize Programs so All Children Thrive), the five-year initiative will promote and support a more comprehensive and coordinated early learning and development system for young children and their families across the state. First 5 IMPACT is intended to promote strong family engagement, develop a strong early learning and care work force, and leverage existing local, state, federal, and First 5 state and county funding.

“All children deserve high quality in all care settings,” said First 5 California Executive Director Camille Maben. “Next to their families, quality early learning and care programs are the cornerstone in a child’s healthy development and are essential in closing or preventing the academic achievement gap.”

A key component of First 5 IMPACT is increasing the quality of existing licensed and legally licensed-exempt early learning and care centers and homes. It is designed to support professional learning with a focus on continuous teaching improvement. It also encompasses child health and family support and strengthening components.

Children who participate in high-quality infant care and preschool programs have better health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes than those who don’t, setting them up for success in school and in life. Research shows effective early learning helps ensure children enter kindergarten with the skills, knowledge, and dispositions necessary to be successful. Since its inception with the passage of Proposition 10 in 1998, First 5 California has invested tobacco tax revenues in early learning programs and professional learning supports for early learning teachers and administrators.

The First 5 IMPACT funding decision comes on the heels of a new federal report released by the U.S. Department of Education citing the need for high-quality early learning programs in America and the importance of investing in such programs. The end goal of California’s early learning effort is that all young children, particularly those who are living in poverty, are dual language learners, or have special needs, have access to high-quality early learning programs so that they thrive in these settings and succeed in kindergarten and beyond.

**About First 5 California**

*First 5 California, established through a voter approved initiative in 1998 known as the California Children and Families Act (Proposition 10), oversees the expenditure of tobacco tax revenues to support, promote, and optimize early childhood development through coordinated programs that emphasize child health, parent education, child care, and other services and programs for children prenatal through age 5. First 5 California's overarching goal is to improve the lives of young children and their families to ensure California's children receive the best possible start in life and thrive.*

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