



April 23, 2020

ACTION ITEM

SUBJECT: DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNER PILOT INVESTMENT

Strategic Plan Priority Area: II Child Development

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

SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

This request is for approval to add six months to use funding for the Dual Language Learner (DLL) Pilot Study investment, which was authorized through June 30, 2021. If approved, the six-month, time-only extension for the DLL Pilot Study would be through December 30, 2021, to compensate for the delay in implementation due to the COVID-19 restrictions. This extension will provide the 16 counties participating in the third study phase – the Expansion Phase – ample time to expand effective strategies for supporting young DLLs and their families, and for First 5 California (F5CA) to assess their scalability. Counties may choose from one or more of three options for their Expansion Phase efforts: 1) professional development; 2) family engagement; or 3) DLL support infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Commission approve a six-month, no-cost, time-only extension of the DLL Pilot authorization dedicated to the expansion phase of the study (\$10 million). If approved, F5CA will implement the Expansion Phase as soon as possible after COVID-19 related work restrictions are lifted.

BACKGROUND OF KEY ISSUES

In 2016, the Commission authorized \$20 million for a DLL Pilot Study to evaluate the effectiveness and feasibility of existing early learning, professional development, and family engagement strategies for DLLs in early learning and care settings.

The study framework was carefully designed to ensure staff and the contractor included the most current research and input from DLL experts:

- In February 2017, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine published *Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth*

Learning English: Promising Futures (see Promising Futures) that assessed the educational landscape for DLLs and provided additional guidance to refine the study's framework for defining effective strategies.

- In July 2017, the California State Board of Education adopted the *California English Learner Roadmap State Board of Education Policy: Educational Programs and Services for English Learners* (see EL Roadmap) with a call to action for ensuring the early childhood and K-12 education systems.

Building on these seminal documents, the study was designed in three phases: 1) Background; 2) In-Depth; and 3) Expansion. Half of the funds were designated to carry out the background and in-depth phases of the study, and the other half was earmarked for the expansion phase. Each phase of the study builds on the other. Findings from phase one informed the framing of phase two. Information gleaned from phases one and two led to the development of the phase three design.

Sixteen counties with significant number of DLLs were selected to participate in the study and have been working with F5CA and its evaluation contractor since the study began. The first (background) phase was completed in late 2019 and provided information about county priorities, policies, and infrastructure to support learning outcomes for DLLs and challenges in carrying out efforts to implementing priorities and supporting DLLs. A report summarizing the findings was released on February 6, 2020, with a Legislative Briefing at the State Capitol, and a copy of the report was emailed to Commissioners. The second (in-depth) phase is currently underway and is designed to identify the range and distribution of learning experiences for DLLs in California and understand how these experiences are linked to positive child and family outcomes.

Phase three, the Expansion Phase, is designed to study scalability of effective professional development, family engagement, and infrastructure-building strategies to support DLLs across the early learning and care system. Policy leaders and state agency partners are carefully tracking the DLL Pilot Study, and are interested in the outcome of the expansion phase, in particular. In February 2020, the Advancement Project California and Early Edge California released *The Dual Language Learner Policy Platform: Informing California's Early Learning and Care Policies and Investments in 2020–21 and Beyond* (see [DLL Policy Platform](#)). The goals of the expansion phase align with the recommendations in the Policy Platform, and will provide the data needed to further advocate for comprehensive policies to support DLLs.

F5CA is managing the Expansion Phase of the DLL Pilot Study and dissemination of the \$10 million to counties in the study. The Expansion Phase and its evaluation are designed to take place over 12 months, providing counties time to expand strategies, and F5CA time to collect data to understand the factors that support or impede expansion, and policy implications for scaling and sustainability. Staff had planned to release the DLL Pilot Expansion Phase funding during a March 23, 2020, webinar with representatives of the 16 counties, however, the webinar was cancelled after receipt of the Administration's COVID-19 guidance, and feedback from counties about the impact of the pandemic on their communities and their ability to carry out day-to-day work functions. To account for the anticipated delay of several months or more, staff request

a six-month, time-only extension for the DLL Pilot Study funding authorization (through December 31, 2021).

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

The DLL Pilot was authorized at the July 28, 2016, Commission Meeting for \$20 million over five years.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

This is a time-only request. There is no additional fiscal impact.

ATTACHMENTS

None.