# California Early Learning Quality Improvement System (CAEL QIS) Advisory Committee

# 2010 Public Hearings

## CAEL QIS – Public Hearings

I. Background
II. Proposed Design for a California Early Learning Quality Rating Structure
III. Support Systems, including How CAEL QIS Builds on CA's Existing ECE Infrastructure:
   a. Technical Assistance;
   b. Workforce Development;
   c. Family/Provider/Stakeholder Engagement
   d. Data Systems
   e. Financial and other Resources for Future Funding
IV. Next Steps for QRIS:
   a. CAEL QIS to ELAC
   b. Ideas on Oversight, Participation, and Pilot Projects
   c. Outreach and Communication Plan

APPENDICES:

Resources developed by the CAEL QIS Subcommittees and approved by the CAEL QIS Advisory Committee are provided for review and comment:

    White Paper on Family Involvement
    Draft Communication Plan for Families, Providers/Programs, and Stakeholders
    Draft Report of the Finance and Incentives, Including Funding Model, Subcommittee

THE 2009 INTERIM REPORT INCLUDES APPENDICES THAT WILL BE UPDATED FOR THE FINAL REPORT. THESE RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE ON-LINE AND ADDITIONAL PUBLIC INPUT WILL BE CONSIDERED.

    Committee Process and Timeline
    Expanded Assessment of California's Early Learning and Care Infrastructure
    Local Early Learning Quality Improvement Models in California
    Quality Rating and Improvement Systems in Other States
    Draft Matrix of Current Early Childhood Education Data
    Conceptual Funding Model and Matrix of Child Care Programs

## Acknowledgments

This California Early Learning Quality Improvement System (CAEL QIS) Advisory Committee's document for the September 2010 Public Hearings reflects the work of Advisory Committee members; early learning and care program staff; child care licensing officials; county superintendents of education; child care resource and referral and local child care planning council leaders; higher education representatives; CDE/Child Development Division staff; and nationally known experts and content specialists who shared their knowledge about successful quality rating and improvements systems and relevant research. The report also reflects the input of presenters and participants in the five full Advisory Committee meetings and monthly meetings of the five Subcommittees.

A list of the groups that contributed to California's QIS development process will be included in the CAEL QIS Final Report. We deeply appreciate the major contributions of expertise, time, resources, and commitment to our youngest children that is represented in the work to date on California's QIS.

**CAEL QIS Advisory Committee Members**

The CAEL QIS Advisory Committee is a broadly based, diverse group with the following 13 members appointed in accordance with statute:

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| (1) The Superintendent of Public Instruction or his or her designee | 1. **Geno Flores,** and previously, Gavin Payne, Chief Deputy Superintendents of Public Instruction; and Camille Maben, Director, Child Development Division as Designee. |
| (2) The Secretary of Education or his or her designee | 2. **Kathy Gaither**, Undersecretary of Education. Previously, Glen Thomas, Secretary of Education, and Anne McKinney, Deputy Secretary of Education. |
| (3) The President pro Tempore of the Senate or his or her designee | 3. **Dave Gordon**, Superintendent, Sacramento County Office of Education |
| (4) The Speaker of the Assembly or his or her designee | 4. **Joan Buchanan**, Assembly Member; Sarah Tomlinson, designee |
| (5) The Director of the Department of Finance or his or her designee | 5. **Jeannie Oropeza**, Program Budget Manager, Department of Finance |
| (6) The Director of the Department of Social Services or his or her designee | 6. **Venus Garth, Branch Chief**, Department of Social Services |
| (7) The Governor shall appoint two representatives | 7. **Dennis Vicars**, Chief Executive Officer, Human Services Management Corporation/PACE |
| | 8. **Celia Ayala**, Chief Executive Officer, Los Angeles Universal Preschool |
| (8) The Chairperson of the California Children and Families Commission or his or her designee | 9. **Kris Perry**, Executive Director, First 5 California |
| (9) The Senate Committee on Rules shall appoint two representatives from the early care and education community, one who is a program administrator of a child development program funded by the department, and another who is a caregiver for infants and toddlers | 10. **Cliff Marcussen**, Executive Director, Options – A Child Care and Human Services Agency |
| | 11. **Consuelo Espinosa**, Infant/Toddler Specialist, WestEd |
| (10) The Speaker of the Assembly shall appoint two representatives, one from the early care and education community who has experience with English learners, and one who is a local educational agency teacher who teaches kindergarten | 12. **Yolie Flores Aguilar**, Board Member, Los Angeles Unified School District (resigned June 2010) |
| | 13. **Toby Boyd**, Kindergarten Teacher, Elk Grove Unified School District |

**CAEL QIS Subcommittee Chairs and Vice-Chairs**

- Design Ideas for Licensing, Quality Rating, and Improvement Systems
  - Dennis Vicars, Chair, and Consuelo Espinosa, Vice-Chair
- Workforce and Professional Development and Incentives
  - Dave Gordon, Chair
- Family Involvement and Stakeholder Engagement and Advocacy
  - Celia Ayala, Chair, and Toby Boyd, Vice-Chair
- Data Systems for Program Improvement and Research
  - Toby Boyd, Vice-Chair
- Finance and Incentives, Including Funding Model
  - Cliff Marcussen, Chair, and Jeannie Oropeza, Vice-Chair

**Expert Consultants**

Abby Cohen, National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center
Lynn Karoly, RAND Corporation
Susan Muenchow, American Institutes for Research (AIR)
Marcy Whitebook and Fran Kipnis, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley
Gail Zellman, RAND Corporation

**California Department of Education Staff**

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# CAEL QIS
# Information for Public Hearings

**OVERVIEW:**

The purpose of the California Early Learning Quality Improvement System (CAEL QIS) Advisory Committee (hereafter referred to as the "Advisory Committee") is to develop a plan to improve outcomes for children and promote school readiness by improving the quality of early learning and care programs for children from birth to five years old.

A broad partnership created the legislation (Senate Bill [SB] 1629 Steinberg-Chapter 307, Statutes of 2008) that established the 13-member Advisory Committee and called for the creation of the new quality rating and improvement system (QRIS). Sponsored by Senator Darrell Steinberg, with principal co-author Assemblymember Dave Jones, the legislation was supported by a wide range of child advocacy, education, and civic groups and signed into law by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

As envisioned by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell's P-16 Council in 2007, any effort to close the achievement gap must begin with a system that includes high-quality preschool and other early learning programs. Governor Schwarzenegger's Committee on Education Excellence (2008) called for a comprehensive early childhood system as a foundation for school reform, noting that a culture that puts students first should start with its youngest children. This *2009 Interim Report* described the CAEL QIS Advisory Committee's progress in assessing California's existing early learning and care infrastructure and in designing a new system.

**An important component of the CAEL QIS development process is holding Public Hearings to coordinate input on the design and implementation of California's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). These comments, in addition to the extensive work by CAEL QIS Subcommittees, expert consultants, and CDE/CDD staff, will inform and support the recommendations and Final Report of the CAEL QIS Advisory Committee members. The draft of the CAEL QIS Final Report will be available for review in late October, prior to review by the Advisory Committee at their scheduled meetings in November and December. By December 31, 2010, the Advisory Committee is statutorily required to finalize its recommendations for the creation of the early learning quality improvement system.**

The Advisory Committee has an expanded role and membership with the functions of the California State Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) that were added in November 2009 through the Executive Order of Governor Schwarzenegger. The pilot phase of California's QRIS and phased-in implementation will occur under the leadership of ELAC. The transition to ELAC leadership is underway and will continue through 2010.

# I.    Background

**Legislative Charge**

Specifically, SB 1629 requires the Advisory Committee to report to the Legislature and the Governor on the following four tasks related to the development of a quality rating and improvement system:

1. An assessment and analysis of the existing early care and education infrastructure, including other state and local early learning quality improvement systems
2. The development of an early learning quality rating scale for child development programs, including preschool as well as programs for infants and toddlers
3. The development of a funding model aligned with the quality rating scale for child care and development programs
4. Recommendations on how local, state, federal, and private resources can best be utilized to complement a statewide funding model as part of a comprehensive effort to improve the state's child care and development system

**Goals of an Early Learning Quality Rating and Improvement System**

The Advisory Committee is developing a policy and implementation plan for a QRIS that will include a quality rating structure, as well as support systems and technical assistance across a broad range of early learning and care programs to improve quality. The goal of the QRIS is to increase the programs that have the features shown to improve child development outcomes, including readiness for school and success in life. The QRIS is a model of continuous program improvement that will be linked to child outcomes through pilot projects and on-going evaluation and research.

**Reducing the Achievement Gap**

More than 40 percent of third graders in California do not meet state educational standards in language and mathematics, but the roots of the achievement gap start much earlier (Cannon and Karoly, 2007). Differences in language, social, and pre-mathematics skills are apparent when children enter kindergarten, and the groups of children who start school behind tend to stay behind.

The good news is that there is strong evidence that quality early learning and care programs can help improve children's kindergarten readiness, providing lasting benefits in school attendance, school completion, and lifetime earnings:

- Research shows that high-quality programs for the most vulnerable children birth to age five can lead to higher cognitive test scores from the toddler years through young adulthood, and are associated with higher achievement in school and a greater likelihood of attending college (Campbell et al., 1995; Ramey et al., 2000).
- Early intervention programs for disadvantaged children are more economically efficient and produce higher returns than remedial programs to help teenagers

and young adults catch up later, according to Nobel Laureate economist James Heckman (2006).
- Children who attend effective preschool programs have stronger language skills in the first years of elementary school and are less likely to repeat a grade or drop out of school. By reducing grade retention, use of special education, welfare, and involvement in crime, these quality programs are estimated to save from $4 to $17 for every dollar invested (Reynolds et al., 2007; Schweinhart, 2004; Karoly and Bigelow, 2005).
- While the benefits are less dramatic for children from more advantaged backgrounds, attending a quality preschool program is associated with higher achievement in elementary school for children in all income groups (Gormley et al., 2005). In short, the quality of early learning and care is important for all children.

## Who Are California's Children Birth to Age Five?

- California is home to more than 3.1 million children ages birth through five years old, representing more than one in eight of the children in this age group nationwide (California Department of Public Health, 2008; Children Now, 2009).
- 52 percent of the babies born in California in 2008 were Latino, 27 percent white, 6 percent Asian, and 5 percent black (California Department of Public Health, 2008).
- At least 41 percent of the children under age five in California have little exposure to English at home (California Department of Education [CDE], 2009).
- A growing number of young children in California live in poverty. Based on current trends, half of the children birth to age five in California are likely to qualify for free and reduced-price lunch when they enter kindergarten (CDE, 2009).
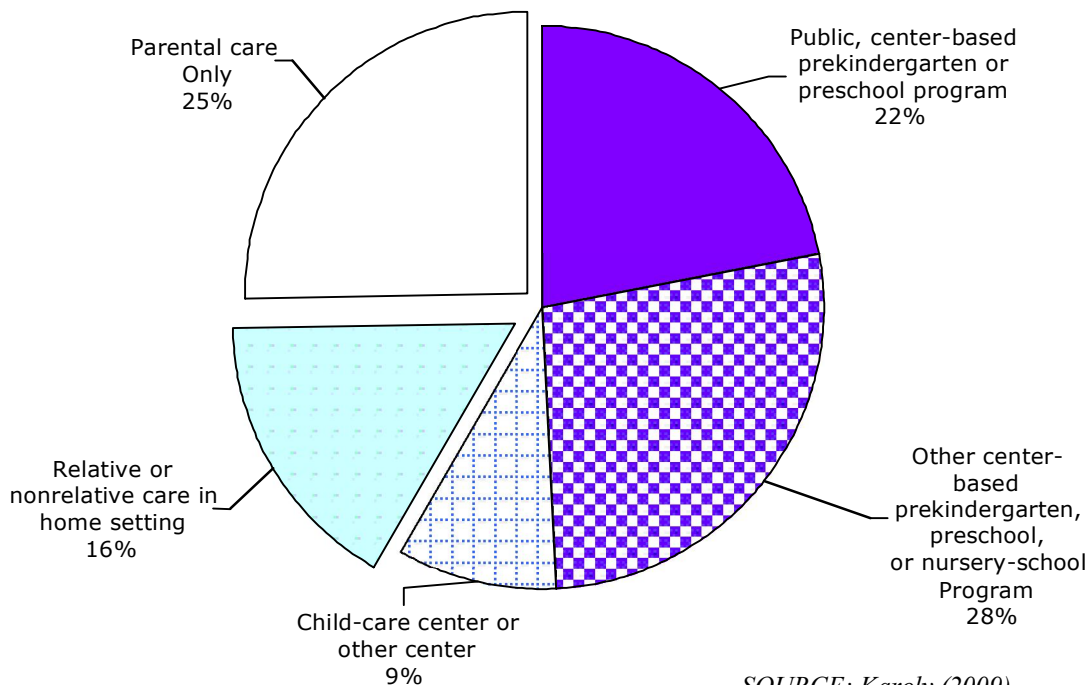
## Which Children Have Access to Quality Early Learning and Care Programs?

California has 57,605 licensed centers and family child care homes that have a capacity to serve more than 1.1 million children, including not only children birth to age five but also school-age children (California Department of Social Services [DSS], 2009). Licensure is designed to protect children's health and safety, which is necessary but not sufficient to guarantee that a facility provides a quality educational program.

Most families use center-based programs for preschool-age children, both to promote school readiness and to help families with their work schedules. Based on a RAND Corporation survey, 59 percent of three- and four-year-olds participate in some type of center-based program, whether preschool, prekindergarten, or child care (Karoly, 2009). Child care centers have programs very similar to those offered by preschools and prekindergartens, and generally provide service during times that more closely match family work schedules. Another 16 percent of preschool children participate in some type of home-based arrangement, including licensed family child care and license-

exempt arrangements with relatives, friends, or neighbors. Only 25 percent of all children in this age group are cared for exclusively by their parents.

**Use of Center-Based Programs Is the Norm for California's Preschool-Age Children**



Parental care Only 25%

Public, center-based prekindergarten or preschool program 22%

Relative or nonrelative care in home setting 16%

Other center-based prekindergarten, preschool, or nursery-school Program 28%

Child-care center or other center 9%

*SOURCE: Karoly (2009)*

For children birth to three, the utilization of early learning and care looks much different. While more than half of mothers of this age group are in the labor force, only five percent of center-based programs in California offer services for children birth to age two (Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 2007). Most children living in two-parent or single-parent working families are cared for through home-based arrangements, including licensed family child care homes; license-exempt care by family, friends, or neighbors; or parental care. Many families prefer home-based arrangements for infants and toddlers with people they know and trust. Forty-one percent of the families calling child care resource and referral agencies are looking for infant care, suggesting that quality early learning and care in any setting for this age group is difficult to find (Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 2007).

To help low-income families afford early learning and care as well as before- and after-school programs for school-age children, California subsidizes the cost of spaces for more than 423,000 children.[1] Approximately 115,000 of these spaces are in license-

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[1] This includes 347,111 children in CDE-administered programs (General Child Care, CalWORKS Stage 2 and 3, Alternative Payment Program, Part-Day and Full-Day Preschool, Part-Day and Full-Day Pre-K Family Literacy, Extended Day, General Migrant Care, and Severely Handicapped, as of April 2008) and approximately 76,000 in the DSS' CalWORKS Stage 1.

exempt settings, with the remainder being in licensed centers or family child care homes.[2] The federally funded Early Head Start and Head Start programs serve nearly 105,000 children birth to age five (California Head Start Association, 2009). Some of these spaces are supported by both State Preschool and Head Start funds. But more than 149,000 children under age five are still waiting on the county centralized eligibility lists for state-subsidized early learning and care services (CDE, 2009). The number of children waiting includes 3,145 children with exceptional needs, meaning those with either an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

The use of center-based early learning and care for preschool-age children is lowest among those Latino children whose mothers have less education, those with low family incomes, and those in linguistically isolated families (Karoly et al., 2008). While cultural preference may play a role (Shore, 2005), 91 percent of Latino parents responding to a New America Media poll (2006) said they supported preschool programs that would prepare their children for kindergarten, and 50 percent said there was no quality preschool program in their neighborhood that they could afford.

While access to early learning and care is uneven, shortfalls in quality affect children in all income groups. A RAND study involving onsite observations of 251 centers in California found that the quality of services was mixed (Karoly et al., 2008):

- Between 20 to 50 percent of preschool-age children with the largest gaps in school readiness and achievement are estimated to participate in center-based programs that meet quality benchmarks in terms of staff-child ratios and teacher qualifications. Based on these structural measures of quality, California's Title 5 State Preschool, public prekindergarten, and Head Start programs are among the highest quality programs in the state. For example, 47 percent of children in a Title 5 or public school prekindergarten program are estimated to have a teacher with a Bachelor's (BA) degree or higher, as compared with only 11 percent attending private preschools.
- However, if quality is measured by the kind of instruction in thinking and language skills that is most closely linked to school readiness, *only 10 to 15 percent of the disadvantaged children shown to derive the greatest benefit from a quality preschool program are estimated to be enrolled in such a program*. Additionally, programs serving all income groups fall short on measures of the quality of teacher instruction.

What is striking is that no statewide system currently measures the quality of early learning and care in California (California Legislative Analyst's Office, 2007). The absence of an objective assessment hinders development of policies to promote and ensure quality of services.

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[2] Of the 347,111 children in CDE-administered programs in April 2008, 64,895 children or 19 percent were in license-exempt care. Of the DSS-administered CalWORKS Stage 1, approximately 66 percent of the 76,000 children served are estimated to be in license-exempt care.

**Why Develop a Quality Rating and Improvement System?**

Based on current federal policy and resources supporting quality early learning programs and the experience in states and communities across the nation, a QRIS has the potential to:

- Effectively improve child outcomes and close our school readiness gap by improving the quality of early learning programs.
- Objectively and consistently rate program settings across the wide span of licensed center and licensed home-based early learning and care settings.
- Improve family and stakeholder awareness of early childhood education program quality and connection to improved outcomes for children.
- Implement research-based recommendations related to improvements in teacher preparation that affect child development and school readiness outcomes.
- Serve as the basis for technical assistance to help programs improve.
- Link reimbursements to quality standards and thereby create incentives for programs to improve.
- Improve accountability for public investments (Mitchell, 2005).

**Process**

The Advisory Committee focused the majority of its work during 2009 on the tasks of assessing the current status of early learning and care programs in California and examining QRIS models in counties and other states, and framing the initial elements of the quality rating structure and improvement system for California. The focus in 2010 has been on specific recommendations for the design of an early learning quality rating structure (scale) and quality improvement systems for California. To guide its work over the two years, the Advisory Committee began by defining a model to frame its deliberations on the development of an early learning quality improvement system. Central to the model is an early learning quality rating structure to assess the quality of programs; produce summary ratings; and publish results to inform families, providers, and policymakers.

While the rating structure is a key part of an improvement system, the broader system must also be accompanied by technical assistance and financial resources to support improvements in program quality. As shown in the model below, the Advisory Committee identified four major mechanisms to support program improvements in early learning and care programs: (1) workforce and professional development; (2) family involvement and program/stakeholder engagement and advocacy; (3) data for program improvement and research; and (4) finance and incentives. The Advisory Committee established five Subcommittees to focus on the above topics.

**Model for California Early Learning Quality Rating and Improvement System**
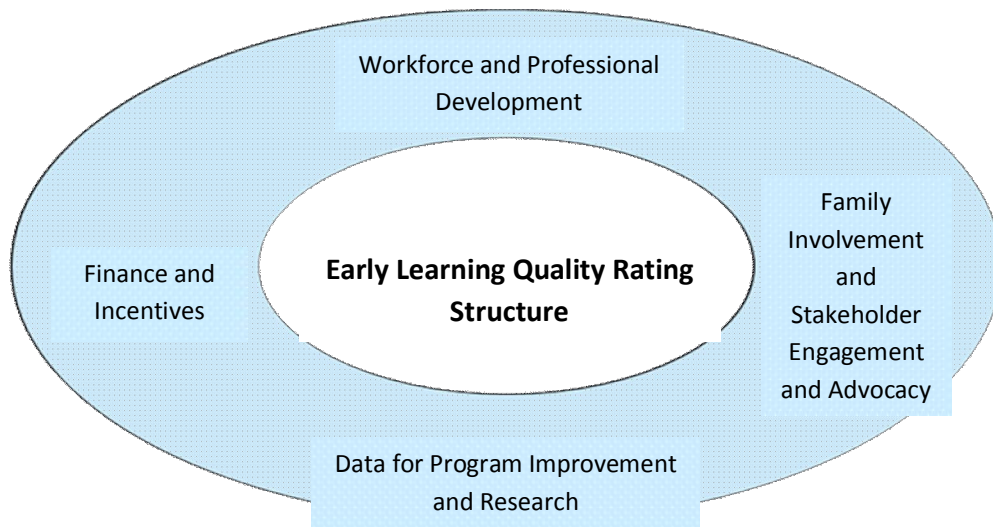


## Assessment and Analysis of Existing Early Care and Education Infrastructure in California

Any careful redesign of a system begins by assessing its strengths and weaknesses. To address this first legislatively assigned task, the Advisory Committee listened to many presentations and conducted a thorough assessment of the existing status of the early learning and care infrastructure in California. The major finding is that California has many promising programs, systems, practices and initiatives to improve the quality of early learning and care. These resources are vitally important to the implementation of California's Quality Rating and Improvement System and will be built upon, improved, and integrated to serve the needs of our youngest children. At the same time, several of the key building blocks required to establish a QRIS have major weaknesses that need to be addressed so a more coherent, accountable, and customer-friendly Early Learning System is available for California children.

A summary of the status of California's early learning and care program standards and policies infrastructure is included here while information on finance incentives and funding, early learning resources, workforce development, family and community involvement and education, and data systems are included in their respective sections.

### Program Standards and Policies

Program standards and policies reflect the fact that there are in effect four early learning and care "systems" in California:  license-exempt care, Title 22-licensed facilities, Title 5 state-contracted programs, and the federally administered Head Start programs. While programs frequently must meet the standards of more than one system, it is important to understand the distinctions.

- State oversight of license-exempt providers who receive payments through CalWORKS or other subsidized-care programs is limited to state criminal background and "child abuse and neglect" checks. Grandparents, aunts, and uncles are exempt from the background checks.
- Title 22 licensing requirements for centers and family child care homes are primarily designed to protect children's health and safety and can be seen as the foundation, though not the guarantor, of quality in early learning and care. Licensing standards include background checks for staff, but they also include many other requirements that are intended to be monitored through onsite inspections. Compared to nationally recommended standards, however, California's Title 22 standards are relatively lenient, allowing considerably larger staff-child ratios and no group size requirements. The standards have not been updated in many years to reflect effective practice and research.
  - California currently ranks low compared to other states in its licensing inspection rate; only 20 percent of programs are required to be inspected annually as compared to 50 to 100 percent in most states (Karoly, 2009).
  - Although 60 percent of programs in California receive some type of licensing visit, such as to investigate a complaint, the inability to conduct annual or random inspections is a concern (DSS, 2009). As a result of budget reductions, licensing analysts in California have caseloads that are twice the national average.
  - Based on the RAND study of 251 California centers, most centers did comply with staff-child ratio requirements. But programs frequently had lapses in basic health and safety measures, such as having protected electrical outlets, secured exits, a fire extinguisher, and smoke detectors (Karoly et al., 2008).
- Title 5 standards, which apply to a subset of state-contracted programs serving children from low-income families, are explicitly intended to promote child development. Title 5-contracted programs must meet all the requirements for Title 22 licensure plus more stringent criteria in many areas, such as staff-child ratios, child assessment, and teacher qualifications. Nevertheless, compared to nationally recommended standards, the Title 5 provisions are still weak in some key areas, such as teacher degrees and ongoing professional development requirements (Barnett et al., 2008).
- The federal Head Start Performance Standards constitute the most comprehensive set of early learning and care standards. Head Start programs must meet requirements for licensure, plus standards in the area of education and child development, child health and safety, and family and community partnerships. By 2011, every Head Start classroom must have a teacher with at least an Associate's (AA) degree in early learning and care, and by 2013, 50 percent of Head Start classrooms must have a teacher with a BA degree in early childhood education or a related degree. Head Start programs are subject to onsite monitoring by a team of reviewers every three years.

**Local Early Learning Quality Improvement System Models in California**

A number of models for quality improvement systems have already been implemented at the county level in California. First 5 California Power of Preschool (PoP) demonstration programs were established during 2005 and 2006 in nine counties (Los Angeles, San Diego, San Mateo, Santa Clara, San Joaquin, Yolo, San Francisco, Merced, and Ventura) in communities with a high proportion of children who are in poverty, English learners, and in low-performing school neighborhoods. First 5 also initiated School Readiness and Special Needs Projects to expand access to early learning and care for the most vulnerable children.

PoP projects, while currently focused on three- and four-year-olds, illustrate many of the elements of a broader QRIS, such as (1) standards for the learning environment, family involvement, developmental screening, care of children with special needs, licensing status/compliance, staff-child ratios and group size, and teacher/staff educational requirements; (2) external assessments of environmental quality; (3) several tiers or levels; (4) provisions for entry from multiple settings (e.g., school-based, center-based, Head Start, family child care); and (5) tiered reimbursement.

Other local quality improvement initiatives include the Los Angeles Universal Preschool Program (LAUP), which also incorporates a PoP demonstration project; the Steps to Excellence Project (STEP); and quality improvement initiatives in Fresno, Orange, Sacramento counties and other regions. A more complete description of these programs and initiatives, as well as the progress being made on QRIS in other states, will be included in the Final Report.

**Quality Rating and Improvement Systems in Other States**

With assistance from national experts, the Advisory Committee examined the features of early learning quality rating systems that exist in 23 other states. Current state QRISs have several common elements: standards, accountability measures, program and practitioner outreach and support, financing incentives, and parent/consumer education. The Advisory Committee heard testimony on some valuable lessons learned in other states:
- Conduct a pilot and have the training for the rating infrastructure in place before implementing the quality rating system statewide.
- Set clear standards from the outset for the rating system.
- Use environment rating scales as a core element of QRIS, although they can be expensive to administer.
- Determine who should conduct the quality ratings, recognizing that this is a key decision.
- Accompany ratings with financial incentives and technical assistance, given that participation in most QRIS systems is voluntary, and that providers are taking some risk to be rated.

## II.    Design of California's Early Learning QRIS

The Advisory Committee approved the design of the quality rating structure, including the tiers for five quality elements, plus related QRS factors. The Advisory Committee decided to limit the number of elements to include in the Quality Rating Structure to five elements that are linked through research and effective practice to improved outcomes for children. The selected elements are also proxies for the many additional factors that are important to optimum child development. By limiting the number of items to be 'rated' and, therefore, the cost of the quality rating process, the commitment of resources to quality improvement through support systems and technical assistance is emphasized.

It is important to stress that the Quality Rating Scale and support systems will be field tested over the next several years under the leadership of, and with support from, ELAC. Also, there is an intention to create a California-specific quality rating tool in the near future so California is not dependent on proprietary tools and is able to create a resource that reflects California's priorities and resources. The Advisory Committee will review its recommendations as more data, information on effective practices, and stakeholder input become available. However, the key decisions provide the essential foundation for moving forward to test implementation of the QRIS design.

**Overall Structure**

The Advisory Committee approved a non-weighted block system for the rating structure's basic design. In a block system, all the quality criteria in each tier need to be accomplished to obtain that rating, and the criteria included in each tier build on those in previous blocks. In addition, the Advisory Committee approved five tiers for each element, with Title 22 licensing requirements included as part of Tier 1. The top tier will represent a level of quality to which programs will aspire, but only a minority will be expected to attain initially. The QRIS will include both licensed center-based and licensed family child care homes.

As shown in the following table, the Advisory Committee approved five quality elements for the rating structure:  ratios and group size, teaching and learning (1. environment rating scales, and 2. alignment with Early Learning Foundations and Frameworks), family involvement, staff education and training, and program leadership.

## CAEL QIS Block System: Tiers and Elements

| Quality Elements | Tier 1 | Tier 2 | Tier 3 | Tier 4 | Tier 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ratios and Group Size:<br>− Infant:<br>− Toddler:<br>− Preschool: | | | | | |
| Teaching and Learning:<br>1. Environment Rating Scale(s)<br>2. Alignment with Early Learning Foundations and Frameworks | | *Standards* | | | |
| Family Involvement | | | | | |
| Staff Education and Training | | | | | |
| Program Leadership | | | | | |

## Rating Structure Factors

The Advisory Committee also approved commitment to a rating structure that supports integration of:

- Cultural and language competence (using the definition developed in conjunction with the early childhood educator competencies)
- Children with special needs
- Nutrition, health, and physical activity

The Advisory Committee approved provisions to explore partnerships with accreditation agencies and validated performance reviews. The QRIS will set the standards for quality in each tier. Third party accreditation and validated performance reviews will be used in conjunction with tiers but not incorporated into the tiers. Accrediting agencies will be encouraged to map their quality criteria to California's QRIS. Reciprocity with part or all of the QRIS will be considered with time-limited memoranda of understanding. The agency requesting reciprocity will be required to pay for any related costs. The purpose of this policy is to prevent duplication of effort and save expenditures on multiple procedures, such as environment ratings.

## Elements of the Rating Structure

The following section summarizes the decisions made on the five quality elements, and it briefly describes the related policy statements and considerations for each element. For more detail on the work of the five Subcommittees including the meeting highlights, see http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/sb1629committee.asp.

The complete chart of California's Quality Rating Scale is provided on the next page.

| Quality Elements | Tier 1 | Tier 2 | Tier 3 | Tier 4 | Tier 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Ratios & Group Size (Center):** Infant / Toddler / Preschool | 4:1 and 12 / 4:1 and 12 (0-24 mo) / 12:1 and 24 | 4:1 and 12 / 6:1 and 12 (18-30 months) / 12:1 and 24 | 3:1 and 12 or 4:1 and 8 / 4:1 and12 (18-36 months) / 8:1 and 24or 10:1 and 20 | 3:1 and 12 or 4:1 and 8 / 4:1 and 12 (18-36 months) / 8:1 and 24 or 10:1 and 20 | 3:1 and 9 / 4:1 and 12(18-36 months) / 8:1 and 24 or 10:1 and 20 |
| **Ratios & Group Size (FCCH):** | The Advisory Committee approved using current Title 22 Licensing Criteria as QRS Ratio and Group Size Criteria for FCCH. | | | | |
| **Teaching and Learning:** 1. Environment Rating Scale(s) | **Facilitated Self Assessment** *Includes a one-on-one facilitated training after self-assessment completed.* *No requirement for score level.* | **Facilitated Peer-Assessment** *Includes a one-on-one facilitated training after peer-assessment completed.* *No requirement for score level.* | **Independent Assessment** *All subscales completed and averaged to meet overall score level of 4.0.* *Self Assessment with CLASS, PARS measure teacher/child interactions in alternating rating periods.* | **Independent Assessment** *All subscales completed and averaged to meet overall score level of 5.0.* *Plus CLASS, PARS to measure teacher/child interactions in alternate rating periods.* | **Independent Assessment** *All subscales completed and averaged to meet overall score level of 6.0.* *Plus CLASS, PARS to measure teacher/child interactions in alternate rating periods.* |
| **Teaching and Learning:** 2. Alignment with Early Learning Foundations and Frameworks | Awareness (have a copy and receive orientation on Foundations and Frameworks) *Education Plan: Program Philosophy Statement* | Exploring Integration of the Foundations and Frameworks *Education Plan: A developmentally, culturally, linguistically appropriate (DCLA) curriculum* | Developing competency in Integrating Foundations and Frameworks *Education Plan: Social, emotional, cognitive, and physical domains in:* *Lesson plans linked to developmentally, culturally, linguistically appropriate (DCLA) child assessments.* *Professional Development plan for Foundations and Framework* | Building competency in Integrating Foundations and Frameworks *Education Plan: Social, emotional, cognitive, and physical domains in:* *Lesson plans linked to developmentally, culturally, linguistically appropriate (DCLA) child assessments.* *Professional Development plan for Foundations and Framework* | Fully Integrating Foundations and Frameworks *Education Plan: Include all domains of learning in an integrated fashion in:* *Lesson plans linked to developmentally, culturally, linguistically appropriate (DCLA) child assessment.* |
| **Family Involvement** | **Communicate with Parents** a. ERS: Facilitated self-assessment b. If subscale item is less than '3,' an improvement plan is developed c. Title 22 Center requirements d. Comparable Title 22 FCCH requirements | **Educate Parents and Receive Information** a. ERS: Facilitated peer-assessment b. If subscale item is less than '3,' an improvement plan is developed c. Topics offered in support of subscale. Provisions for parents, indicators 3.2 & 5.3 for family info and/or education may include topics such as: how children learn at home and in ECE; developmental levels and brain development; physical activities and nutrition | **Involve Parents** a. ERS Independent assessment b. ERS average score of 4'; when subscale item is less than 4, a quality improvement plan will be developed. c. Provider has a written transition plan which is activated when a child moves into another child care setting or into K | **Engage Parents** a. ERS Independent assessment b. ERS average score of 5; when subscale item is less than 5, a quality improvement plan will be developed. | **Partner and Advocate with Parents** a. ERS Independent assessment b. ERS average score of 6; when subscale item is less than 6, a quality improvement plan will be developed. |
| **Staff Education and Training:** Education | Licensing requirements: * Center: 12 units of ECE * FCC: 15 hours of health and safety | * Center: 24 units of ECE (core 8) * FCC: 12 units of ECE (of core 8) | 24 units of ECE (core 8) and 16 units of Gen. Ed. (same as Title V and current Child Dev. Teacher permit) | AA degree in ECE OR 60 degree-applicable units, including 24 units of ECE OR BA in any field plus 24 units of ECE | BA/BS degree in ECE (or closely related field) with 48+ units of ECE OR Masters degree in ECE |
| Experience | Title 22 teacher with 6 months experience | One year of experience | Two years of experience | Two years of experience | Two years of experience |
| Professional Development | 21 hours per yr. | 21 hours per yr. | 21 hours per yr. | 21 hours per yr. | 21 hours per yr. |
| **Program Leadership** | 12 units core ECE, 3 units admin., 4 yrs. Exp Intro. to PAS/BAS | 24 units core ECE, 16 units GE 3 units admin., 1 yr. mgt or supervisory experience Self-study with PAS/BAS | AA degree with 24 units core ECE, 6 units admin. 2 units supervision 2 yrs. mgt. or supervisory experience Continuous improvement through a PAS/BAS action plan | BA with 24 units core ECE, 15 units mgt... 3 yrs. mgt. or supervisory experience Continuous improvement through a PAS/BAS action plan | MA with 30 units core ECE including specialized courses, 21 units mgt., Or Admin. Credential Continuous improvement through a PAS/BAS action plan |

**A. Ratios and Group Size for 1) Center and 2) Family Child Care Homes (FCCH):**

Staff-child ratios and group size represent complex issues in the development of the QRIS. Providing enough individual attention to young children in a stimulating—though orderly—setting is a key quality indicator. Evidence suggests that protective staff-child ratios may be especially important for infants and toddlers (Shonkoff and Phillips, 2000). However, staff-child ratios, like teacher and provider education requirements, are key factors affecting the cost of early learning and care. Therefore, staff-child ratios are generally consistent with current licensing and program standards except for infants at higher tiers, and the emphasis is placed on the recommendations to strengthen teacher and provider education requirements.

**RATIOS AND GROUP SIZE – Center-Based Programs**

|  | Tier 1* | Tier 2* | Tier 3** | Tier 4** | Tier 5*** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Infant** | 4:1 and 12 | 4:1 and 12 | 3:1 and 12or 4:1 and 8 | 3:1 and 12 or 4:1 and 8 | 3:1 and 9 |
| **Toddler** | 4:1 and 12 (0-24 mo) | 6:1 and 12 (18-30 months) | 4:1 and12 (18-36 months) | 4:1 and 12 (18-36 months) | 4:1 and 12 (18-36 months) |
| **Preschool** | 12:1 and 24 | 12:1 and 24 | 8:1 and 24or 10:1 and 20 | 8:1 and 24or 10:1 and 20 | 8:1 and 24or 10:1 and 20 |

*Notes to the chart above, include:*

- *Title 22 programs use Infant (birth to 24 mo) and preschool (24-60 mo) age categories.*
- *The toddler option for Title 22 programs is: Infants (birth-18 mo), Toddlers (18-30 mo) with 6:1 ratios and group size of 12.*
- *For Title 5 programs, a toddler is 18 to 36 months.*
- *Group size is the number of children assigned to a care giver or team of caregivers.*
- *Group size for Infants in Tiers 3, 4 and for all age groups in tier 5 will indicate the maximum number in an individual classroom.*
- *Group size for Infants in Tiers 1 and 2, and toddlers and Preschool in tiers 1 to 4 may include "well-defined spaces" in a larger room.*
- *Same criteria for preschool in Tiers 3-5 assumes increased staff qualifications.*

**Ratio and Group Size for FCCH:** The Advisory Committee approved using current Title 22 Licensing Criteria as QRS Ratio and Group Size Criteria for FCCH.

| Ratios and Group Size   FCCH | Small FCCHs | Large FCCHs |
|---|---|---|
| **Infant*** **Toddler*** **PreK*** **School-Age*** *per AB 529, Chaptered 744, Statutes of 2003 | 1:4 infants including own children under 10 years of age **OR** 1:6 children, no more than 3 of whom are infants, including own children under 10 years old **OR** 1:8 if all conditions are met -At least 1 child is enrolled and attending kindergarten or elementary* and a second child is at least 6 years old, -No more than 2 infants are cared for when caring for more than 6 children, -Licensee notifies all parents, and -Licensee obtains written consent of property owner. | 2:12 if no more than 4 infants including licensee's and attendant's children under 10 years old **OR** 2:14 if all conditions met: -At least 1 child is enrolled and attending kindergarten or elementary* and a second child is at least 6 years old, -No more than 3 infants are cared for when caring for more than 12 children, -Licensee notifies all parents, and -Licensee obtains written consent from property owner. |

Considerations for future improvement to policy and operations through ELAC include:

1. Review Title 22 Licensing criteria as:
   o There are complications with FCCH group size plus two allowances.
   o We need a common definition for infants and toddlers, so consider changing Title 22 'toddler' to 18-36 months.
2. Reinstate annual visits for Community Care Licensing for Centers; every two years for FCCH.
3. Safety is a primary issue. Recommend health and safety training (first aid, safety, CPR) every two years, moving to annual.
4. Keeping FCCH ratio/group size constant assumes increased staff qualifications to improve program quality.
5. Center-based programs also assume increased staff qualifications with no change to Ratio and Group Size criteria for preschool in Tiers 3 through 5.

## B.    Teaching and Learning

The Advisory Committee is committed to measuring a few criteria for each element as proxies for the many important criteria and focus efforts on the training, technical assistance and supports/incentives that improve the effectiveness of early learning programs/providers. The Advisory Committee recommends the development of a

California-specific early learning quality rating tool. In the meantime, the the Advisory Committee agreed that the "Teaching and Learning" quality element will have two criteria:

- Environment Rating Scales (ERS) focus on structural quality and teacher/provider-child interaction at entry level and move to higher levels of both quality areas along the progression of tiers with the inclusion of Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) at Tiers 4 and 5. Advisory Committee members want the Quality Rating Structure to ensure that all tiers include an adequate measure of teacher-child interaction, one of the factors most strongly related to improved child outcomes.

- Alignment with the Early Learning Foundations and Frameworks. The Advisory Committee recommends using this criterion as a proxy for curriculum, child assessment, screening/referral, inclusion of children with special needs, and cultural and language competence. Additional information on these resources is provided in the Technical Assistance, Support Systems section.

## Teaching and Learning Element:

|  | Tier 1 | Tier 2 | Tier 3 | Tier 4 | Tier 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Use "ECERS Family" as the tool (ITERS-R, ECERS-R, FDCRS)**<br><br>**Use CLASS, PARS to measure teacher/child interactions at Tiers 3, 4 & 5** | **Facilitated Self Assessment**<br><br>*Includes a one-on-one facilitated training after self-assessment completed.*<br><br>*No requirement for score level.* | **Facilitated Peer-Assessment**<br><br>*Includes a one-on-one facilitated training after peer-assessment completed.*<br><br>*No requirement for score level.* | **Independent Assessment**<br><br>*All subscales completed and averaged to meet overall score level of 4.0.*<br><br>*Self Assessment with CLASS, PARS measure teacher/child interactions in alternating rating periods.* | **Independent Assessment**<br><br>*All subscales completed and averaged to meet overall score level of 5.0.*<br><br>*Plus CLASS, PARS to measure teacher/child interactions in alternate rating periods.* | **Independent Assessment**<br><br>*All subscales completed and averaged to meet overall score level of 6.0.*<br><br>*Plus CLASS, PARS to measure teacher/child interactions in alternate rating periods.* |
| **Integrate Infant/Toddler & Preschool**<br><br>**Foundations/Frameworks integrated into the program as measured by the Education Plan** | Awareness (have a copy and receive orientation on Foundations and Frameworks)<br><br>Education Plan:<br><br>*Program Philosophy Statement* | Exploring Integration of the Foundations and Frameworks<br><br>Education Plan:<br><br>*A developmentally, culturally, linguistically appropriate (DCLA) curriculum* | Developing competency in Integrating Foundations and Frameworks<br><br>Education Plan:<br><br>*Social, emotional, cognitive, and physical domains in:*<br><br>*Lesson plans linked to developmentally, culturally, linguistically appropriate (DCLA) child assessments.*<br><br>*Professional Development plan for Foundations and Framework* | Building competency in Integrating Foundations and Frameworks<br><br>Education Plan:<br><br>*Social, emotional, cognitive, and physical domains in:*<br><br>*Lesson plans linked to developmentally, culturally, linguistically appropriate (DCLA) child assessments.*<br><br>*Professional Development plan for Foundations and Framework* | Fully Integrating Foundations and Frameworks<br><br>Education Plan:<br><br>*Include all domains of learning in an integrated fashion in:*<br><br>*Lesson plans linked to developmentally, culturally, linguistically appropriate (DCLA) child assessment.* |

Representatives from nutrition programs provided input on criteria important to nutrition, health, and physical development. Including comparable and consistent nutrition requirements in Title 22 licensing standards for FCCH is a consideration for future work. A comparison of the proposed 'Nutrition Criteria' and the ERS family of tools, Title 22 Licensing requirements, and the Early Learning Foundations and Frameworks indicate that following items will be included in the QRIS through the use of these tools:

- Meals/snacks meet Child Care Food Program requirements (centers)
- Meals/snacks served at regular time
- Children have access to water throughout day
- Menus are posted
- Program decides what is offered; child decides what to eat and how much
- Meals are served family style; adults sit with children during meals

In addition, nutrition criteria' would be provided through orientation to Child Care Food Program nutrition guidance and state nutrition standards, with encouragement for participation at Tier 1,

## C.     Family Involvement Quality Element:

The five tiers of Family Involvement Quality Element focus on relationship building, shared goals, and family demographics. These partnering strategies extend and deepen in intentionality and variety as programs advance through the five tiers. ECE programs need a full range of options and opportunities for family engagement. Families have the option to choose the type of engagement activities based on their priorities.

The Family Involvement Element integrates three components of effective partnering:

- Develop partnering relationships with families and recognize the primacy of family.
- Address diversity; acknowledge the differences of culture and family values and practices.
- Build trusting relationships that grow out of shared knowledge.

| Tier 1 | Tier 2 | Tier 3 | Tier 4 | Tier 5 |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Communicate with Parents | Educate Parents and Receive Information | Involve Parents | Engage Parents | Partner and Advocate with Parents |

## Policy Recommendations:

1. Adopt the Environment Rating Scales for Family Involvement and Title 22 licensing requirements related to family engagement as a proxy for the family engagement element of the rating scale. Include Parent Education topics appropriate to the community beginning at tier 2 and those appropriate to Transition Planning beginning at tier 3.
2. When assessing a classroom using an Environment Rating Scale, the independent assessor will have knowledge and experience with the type of setting being reviewed (Infant/Toddler care versus Family Child Care or Preschool Center-based care).

3. Pilot studies will include the implementation of the Family Involvement element of the rating system.
4. When Title 22 is updated make the requirements for Family Child Care providers and Centers consistent and comparable regarding written information and orientation for families at time of enrollment.
5. Cultural and language competency will be integrated into all family involvement strategies.

**Tiers for Family Involvement:**

Family Involvement tiers reference the ECERS subscale "Parents & Staff", item 38; ITERS subscale 'Parents & Staff' item 33; and FCCERS subscale Parent & Provider, item 35.

| Tier 1 Communication | Tier 2 TwoWay Education | Tier 3 Involvement | Tier 4 Engagement | Tier 5 Partnership and Advocacy |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. ERS: Facilitated self-assessment<br>b. If subscale item is less than '3,' an improvement plan is developed<br>c. Title 22 Center requirements<br>d. Comparable Title 22 FCCH requirements | a. ERS: Facilitated peer-assessment<br>b. If subscale item is less than '3,' an improvement plan is developed<br>c. Topics offered in support of subscale. Provisions for parents, indicators 3.2 & 5.3 for family info and/or education may include topics such as: how children learn at home and in ECE; developmental levels and brain development; physical activities and nutrition | a. ERS Independent assessment<br>b. ERS average score of 4; when subscale item is less than 4, a quality improvement plan will be developed.<br>c. Provider has a written transition plan which is activated when a child moves into another child care setting or into K | a. ERS Independent assessment<br>b. ERS average score of 5; when subscale item is less than 5, a quality improvement plan will be developed. | a. ERS Independent assessment<br>b. ERS average score of 6; when subscale item is less than 6, a quality improvement plan will be developed. |

## D.    Staff Education and Training

The Advisory Committee approved tiers for early childhood educator professional development, with consideration of early childhood educator competencies and the professional development delivery system. The Advisory Committee also recommended timelines with systemic support for an articulation and transfer process within and between colleges and universities to improve degree completion. Addition information is provided in the Support Systems section.

| | Tier 1 | Tier 2 | Tier 3 | Tier 4 | Tier 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Education** | Licensing requirements<br><br>* Center: 12 units of ECE<br><br>* FCC: 15 hours of health and safety | * Center: 24 units of ECE (core 8)<br><br>* FCC: 12 units of ECE (of core 8) | 24 units of ECE (core 8) and 16 units of Gen. Ed. (same as Title V and current Child Dev. Teacher permit) | AA degree in ECE OR<br><br>60 degree-applicable units, including 24 units of ECE OR BA in any field plus 24 units of ECE | BA/BS degree in ECE (or closely related field) with 48+ units of ECE OR Masters degree in ECE |
| **Experience** | Title 22 teacher with 6 months experience | One year of experience | Two years of experience | Two years of experience | Two years of experience |
| **Professional Development** | 21 hours per yr. | 21 hours per yr. | 21 hours per yr. | 21 hours per yr. | 21 hours per yr. |

Notes to the chart include:
a. Staff education and training criteria vary at each tier of the QRIS, encompassing components of: 1) formal education: credit-bearing courses, including degrees and credentials; 2) practicum: credit and non-credit bearing professional practice experiences such as reflective practice, internships, college practicum experiences, fieldwork; and
3) on-going professional development: non-credit courses and seminars, including coaching and mentoring. ECE coursework requires a 'C' or better grade.
b. Professional development hours will be based on the current eleven "professional growth" categories recognized by CTC, and can be provided during work and non-work hours.
c. QRIS 'staff education and on-going professional development' criteria apply to all Lead Teachers as the proxy for the education and professional development of staff in the ECE program. Sampling could be used for the purposes of QRIS.
d. Family child care homes will use the Staff Education and On-Going Professional Development QRS element and will not be asked to also meet the Program Leadership QRS element criteria for the Program Director. The BAS instrument for technical assistance will be used.

**Issues for further study:**

1. The current ECE workforce needs substantial support to persevere and succeed in attaining degrees.
2. Tiered entry points must link together to create a pathway toward a degree, without creating pockets or dead ends for the ECE workforce. The QRIS must support the attainment of a degree to ensure an educated workforce qualified to support the learning and development of our children.

3. There need to be hard-to-resist incentives and supports to encourage teaching staff to move up the tiers.
4. Additional study of the focused support needed by family child care home providers and small centers is needed to ensure success.
5. Affordable and accessible classes will be needed, especially for full-time working students.
6. Clear articulation between two-year and four-year colleges is essential.
7. Community Care Licensing regulations must be revised to address the quality challenges with license exempt care.
8. Experience must be defined.
9. Ensuring a process on measurement and accountability for teaching and learning effectiveness.

## E.  Program Leadership

For program leadership, the Advisory Committee adopted the program director's education and professionalism as the proxy that is related to effective to administrative policies and procedures, leadership development, staff compensation, support for professional development, and program evaluation.

### Program Leadership Element Considerations:
- A wide array of knowledge and skills in administration, staff management, and leadership policies/processes are included in this quality element. The Program Director's qualifications are used as a proxy based on available research, and the effectiveness of this measure will need to be evaluated.
- Program Administration Scale (PAS-centers) and Business Administration Scale (BAS-FCCH) are highly correlated with Program Director qualifications and are a helpful TA tool (not appropriate for rating all programs).
- Use information on: Administration Rating Tools including BAS/PAS, Coordinated Management Review, NAEYC, and others for TA to improve program leadership.
- Ensuring a process on measurement and accountability for program leadership effectiveness.

### Proposed Program Leadership Element

|  | Tier 1 | Tier 2 | Tier 3 | Tier 4 | Tier 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Program Director Education** | 12 units core ECE, 3 units admin., 4 yrs. exp | 24 units core ECE, 16 units GE 3 units admin., 1 yr. mgt or supervisory experience | AA degree with 24 units core ECE, 6 units admin. 2 units supervision 2 yrs. mgt. or supervisory experience | BA with 24 units core ECE, 15 units mgt., 3 yrs. mgt. or supervisory experience | MA with 30 units core ECE including specialized courses, 21 units mgt., Or Admin. Credential |

| BAS*/PAS* Professional Development only | Intro. to PAS/BAS | Self-study with PAS/BAS | Continuous improvement through a PAS/BAS action plan | Continuous improvement through a PAS/BAS action plan | Continuous improvement through a PAS/BAS action plan |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

*(PAS) Program Administration Scale - designed to reliably measure the leadership and management practices of center-based early childhood organizations.

*(BAS) Business Administration Scale - measures management practices and quality of care in the family child care settings.

(1) Each ECE program shall identify the 'Program Director. *Program Director is defined as the person who administers and/or manages a center or program.*
(2) Use McCormick definition, McCormick Center for Early Leadership; National - Louis University, of management experience for Tiers 2-5; and Title 22 Licensing definition of 'experience' for Tier 1.
(3) Tier 1: use Title 22 licensing criteria for 12 units core ECE and experience
(4) Tiers 2-4: use Core 8 ECE courses (Curriculum Alignment Project – CAP described in the Workforce Policy Statements #2) 24 units include: Child Growth and Development; Child, Family and Community; Principles and Practices; Introduction to Curriculum; Observation and Assessment; Health, Safety and Nutrition; Teaching in a Diverse Society; and Practicum
(5) Tier 5: plus 6 additional units in ECE, including specialized courses.

## III.     Support Systems:

### 1. Technical Assistance:
While most of the Advisory Committee's work has focused on the design of the rating structure, the Committee has approved actions to guide the technical assistance (TA) that will accompany the rating structure to form a complete QRIS. Upon entry into the QRIS, every early learning program will obtain a "quality improvement plan" that explains the rating and provides clear direction on how to improve and move up to the next tier. The Committee approved the following factors for QRIS technical assistance:

- TA on achieving and maintaining the quality improvement plan
- TA comprised of both internal and external resources
- Greater level of TA support for entry-level programs
- TA support to assist programs in maintaining higher tier ratings
- TA for all providers and resources for license-exempt providers, including preparation for licensing
- TA for Family/Friend/Neighbor Care:
  - TA best served through information to parents
  - Channel TA through local agencies such as Resource and Referral agencies, First 5, Alternative Payment Programs, Local Planning Coouncils, County Offices of Education, and others
  - Parents/Families are key, especially in informing and supporting parental choice

- Goal is to have all children in quality educational program, at least part-day
  - TA provided by separate groups, rather than those that assess or rate programs, to avoid conflict of interest

The Advisory Committee also approved the following considerations for technical assistance for QRIS:

- Build on TA using resources and expertise of early QRIS champions and ECE Associations
- Prior to implementation, review TA local models in CA and in other states that have QRIS experience
- Explore use of reciprocal reviews and TA support to build a QRIS learning community and program leadership/ownership
- TA resources focus on improving:
  - Quality of the 'teaching and learning' and the learning environment, primarily to improve outcomes for children; and
  - Operational considerations, such as: personnel administration, management, leadership, and program resources.
- Use a coaching model and other techniques that encourage continuous improvement
- Coaching model is a client-driven approach and begins with a baseline QRIS assessment of the ECE program
- QRIS coaches need to have (or acquire) training in specific skill areas
- Statewide oversight is needed on QRIS coaches' credentials and approaches used
- Aspects of TA need to be included in Pilots
- Quality Improvement Action Plans:
  - Tool for improvement and not a grading or punitive system
  - Enables training to be offered (not required)
  - More fundamental in the early tiers; more comprehensive or detailed in the higher tiers
  - In early tiers, focus on moving up; in higher tiers, focus on sustaining higher quality levels and continuous improvement
- Develop pilot phase to include simultaneous statewide TA with current resources:
  - Maximize use of technology (webinars, teleconferences, resources posted on web)
  - Consider resources already available, such as PITC, CPIN, R&R, LPC, SEEDS and other organizations
  - Examine alternatives for a 'local broker' to identify regional and local TA resources, such as Local Planning Councils.

**The QRIS will build on California's Early Learning Resources, including Foundations, Curriculum Frameworks, and Child Assessment tools.**

California has developed some important resources to help early learning and care programs improve child outcomes, including the following:

- California's *Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Foundations* provide a comprehensive understanding of young children's learning and development during the first three years of life. *The Foundations* outline key knowledge and skills that most children can achieve when provided with the kinds of interactions, guidance, and environments research has shown to promote early learning and development. The *California Preschool Learning Foundations* describe the knowledge, skills, and competencies that children typically attain at around 48 and 60 months of age when they participate in a high-quality preschool and receive adequate support.
- The curriculum frameworks are designed as companion documents to the *Foundations* and are being released in 2010. The frameworks include information on the environment and experiences to support each learning domain, suggested interactions with children and families, and teaching strategies in a format that allow early childhood educators to reflect on their teaching practice. Local programs have the choice of specific curricula that will define a sequence of integrated experiences, interactions, and activities to help young children reach specific learning goals.
  - Based on the RAND study of California centers, currently fewer than half of the three- and four-year-old children attend programs that use a named curriculum based on child development research (Karoly et al., 2008).
  - Widespread use of the *Foundations* and curriculum frameworks will require support for broad dissemination and training for both public and private early learning and care programs through pre-service and in-service professional development delivery systems.
- California's Desired Results Developmental Profile-2010 (DRDP–2010) and DRDP-Access represent other key components of the state's efforts to improve the quality of early learning and care programs by focusing on child outcomes. These observation-based assessments are being aligned with the *Foundations.*
- The Desired Results system also includes a family-based assessment in the form of an annual family survey and a program-based assessment using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale.
- The use of the above CDE-developed resources is currently only required for children participating in California's Title 5-contracted programs, special education, and Head Start.  However, the resources are available for use in private programs and by license-exempt providers.

## 2. Workforce Development System based on Early Childhood Educator Competencies

The primary workforce development challenge in the field of early learning and care is to set up a system to provide training to an already experienced workforce coming from very diverse educational backgrounds. One of the strengths of the existing workforce is that licensed family child care providers and center teachers are ethnically diverse and similar in demographics to the population of children they serve (Whitebook, 2009).

However, the workforce's level of training varies widely from basic health and safety certification to higher degrees in early learning and care.

Given the diverse composition of the early learning and care workforce, the Advisory Committee supports a professional development "highway" based on Early Childhood Educator competencies that are linked with positive child outcomes. The 'highway' needs to include easily accessible starting points, promote professional preparation and renewal, and support lasting and rewarding careers linked to higher compensation. Further evaluation and research on the effects of QRIS, particularly teacher effectiveness, will inform improvements in California's workforce and professional development system. Key features of this "highway" would include:

- Greater coherence in the early learning and care education and training offered, both pre-service and in-service
    - California is a leader in developing early childhood educator competencies to describe core knowledge, skills, and dispositions for early childhood educators working with children birth to age five. The Early Childhood Educator Competencies are being finalized. These competencies will be developed into a common and comprehensive course of study and a career ladder for early learning professionals.
    - Although California has many innovative pre-service and in-service professional development projects, they are generally organized by program type or market sector and do not yet provide a systemic approach on a scale that is accessible to the early learning and care workforce statewide. A description of these efforts will be updated and included in the Final Report.
    - Currently, the content of training for providers is inconsistent across program settings. Both center teachers and family child care providers would benefit from training aligned with the *Infant /Toddler Learning and Development* and *Preschool Learning Foundations* and curriculum frameworks.
    - It is important to ensure that training provided for the staff working with children ages birth to three is just as comprehensive and evidence-based as that provided for preschool and elementary school children.
- Portability across higher education institutions
    - Half of the community colleges and public universities in a survey conducted five years ago reported problems with transfer of credits and articulation of courses (Whitebook et al., 2005). Some community college graduates found they had to start over and take many of the same courses again when they entered a four-year state university.
    - Almost all community colleges are now working with state universities on an important effort to improve articulation and alignment. Each individual community college and state university campus must adopt curriculum changes, a very time-consuming process. State support and a timeline for the completion of the work is needed, as well as a next step to a statewide BA course of study for ECE professionals.

- o More detail on the efforts of two-year and four-year institutions of higher education to address curriculum alignment will be included in the Final Report.
- A transformational approach to workforce development that focuses on the needs of the student or "client"
  - o Given that many of the people who will need degrees have many years of experience in the field, consideration should be given to providing credits for demonstrated competence as well as coursework.
  - o To make courses accessible to the many students who already work fulltime, classes should be available in the community and after hours.
  - o To expand access to education, college and university partnerships with community agencies to provide degree-bearing coursework and on-going professional development should be supported and encouraged.
  - o In an efficient system, courses would count for multiple purposes, such as toward certification and satisfying staff education requirements related to Title 5 or Title 22 licensing standards; training required for regulatory or contract compliance should also count toward a degree.
  - o Consideration should be given to updating and improving the Child Development Permit Matrix, California's current certification system for early learning and care educators.
  - o A student-centered workforce development system would include assistance with transfer of credits, movement from community college to university, and accessing financial aid.
- Tuition assistance and other incentives to help early learning and care staff obtain additional education, and higher compensation to retain those who obtain degrees
  - o Although there have been important efforts to subsidize the attainment of early learning and care degrees, the rules for access have been inconsistent across counties, and funds to finance tuition assistance have been reduced or eliminated.
  - o Preschool teachers are poorly paid by any standard. Nationwide, the median salary of preschool teachers is less than half the median kindergarten teacher salary (Barnett, 2003).
  - o Compensation is low even for teachers who have BA degrees, especially in non-state-contracted centers receiving vouchers, and turnover is high compared to that of better compensated kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) teachers (Whitebook et al., 2006).
  - o Many center-based teachers and family child care providers lack health insurance or pensions, and violations of minimum wage and overtime are more frequent in child care centers than in any other low-wage occupation (UCLA Institute for Research on Labor and Employment, 2009).

**The Advisory Committee approved the following policies and considerations for improving the ECE Workforce and Professional Development systems:**

**Goal**: California's Early Childhood Educator (ECE) professional development system will prepare a workforce that provides early learning and care experiences that improve outcomes for children across all domains through an efficient and effective delivery system with adequate resources to support quality improvements.

**Glossary** for terms used in this section**:**

Three areas of professional development:

1. formal education: credit-bearing courses, including degrees and credentials
2. practicum: credit and non-credit bearing professional practice experiences such as reflective practice, internships, college practicum experiences, fieldwork
3. on-going professional development: non-credit courses and seminars, including coaching and mentoring

Lead Teacher is the person responsible for supervising a group of children, planning and implementing the curriculum, learning environment, family relations, child assessments, and program improvement strategies.

Program is the early learning environment in family child care homes, programs, and center classrooms.

Curriculum Alignment Project (CAP) Core 8 means credit-bearing courses in: child growth and development; child, family and community; principles and practices; introduction to curriculum; observation and assessment; health, safety and nutrition; teaching in a diverse society; practicum.

Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Common and Comprehensive Course of Study:
An integrated program of credit-bearing courses and practicum that:

1. incorporate the ECE Competencies with locally responsive strategies,
2. provide statewide quality and consistency,
3. reflect career ladder levels for ECE professionals (building from CAP 8 to comparable BA course organization), and
4. maximize effective articulation and transfer processes between and among institutions of higher education and partner community agencies.

## 1. Competencies & Courses: Content of Education & On-going Professional Development

***All members of the higher education community, including the Regents, Presidents, Deans, and Faculty, need to ensure the completion of work by the listed timelines so that the ECE workforce can effectively provide learning opportunities for young children and meet program requirements.***

1. By **2012**, Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Competencies, which include the Early Learning Foundations, will be developed into a common and comprehensive course of study that are reflected in courses for Associate and Bachelor degrees and delivered statewide. Credit-bearing courses are required for degrees.

2. Using the statewide common and comprehensive course of study based on the ECE Competencies:
     (a) By **2013**, all California community colleges that offer ECE programs incorporate the ECE "core eight" classes and additional courses to reflect designated lower division ECE Competencies into their degree programs.
     (b) By **2014**, all CSU, UC, and private higher education institutions that offer ECE programs align ECE courses to a common and comprehensive course of study across the two and four-year degree system.
3. By **2015,**
     a. a clear and accessible system of demonstrating the ECE Competencies equivalency for courses will be developed and publicized, including clear criteria and deliverables. This includes courses taken from out-of-state and foreign institutions and non-WASC accredited institutions, as well as ECE Competencies developed through professional practice.

Considerations include:
a. California's ECE permit matrix and Title 22 licensing requirements will be revised and aligned with the common and comprehensive course of study. Need to update ECE Permit Matrix as soon as the common course of study is defined to clarify expectations and inspire the ECE workforce

b. Develop an Early Childhood Specialization or Credential focused on children birth to third grade with a variety of specialization areas (birth to age 5, preschool to third grade**,** special education, English language, others) that can be incorporated into a four-year ECE major, a graduate program, or credential program. If an ECE Credential is thought to be desirable, more examination of credentials is needed to determine available research on the use of credentials to develop effective teachers. Specialization within the ECE Credential will ensure that teachers have courses that will prepare them for working with younger or older children. The ECE Credential is intended to be unique to the skills and competencies of the ECE field and may or may not include a 5th year course of study. Students will have the option to complete more than one specialization. Recommend 3 specialization options: Infant/Toddler, Preschooler-Kindergartener, and 1st – 3rd grade.

**The following items are considerations for the future development of California's Delivery System for Career Pathways**

The early care and education professional development system is comprised of accredited degree programs at the Associate, Baccalaureate, Masters, and Doctoral levels, as well as supplemental educational experiences, including remedial, enrichment, and specialization offerings. Degree programs are defined as integrated, comprehensive courses of study offered by, or reviewed/approved by, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accredited institutions of higher education (IHEs) that prepare professionals at all stages along the career path from entry to expert. The common and comprehensive course of study will be rigorous, recursive, outcomes-focused, and will reflect currency with developments in the field and the knowledge base (e.g., Early Childhood Educator competencies).

A customer-friendly, accessible delivery system for credit-bearing degree programs will be provided by both two and four-year colleges and universities. IHEs shall ensure inclusion of all segments of the ECE professional community in degree programs. IHEs shall partner with community agencies to provide degree programs that vary in structure (e.g., location, schedule, and format) with the goal of providing access to high quality, credit-bearing professional preparation throughout California.

Community-based agencies, county offices of education, resource and referral agencies, and others with expertise in a given subject area provide educational experiences. When needed, IHEs will partner with community agencies that wish to provide educational experiences, including core courses or supplemental experiences for credit, in order to extend access to constituencies in the ECE community. Local colleges and universities will contract with community agencies to do so, and the community agencies need to meet IHE standards for course content, assessment, and personnel qualifications.

Existing student support programs and approaches, such as AB 212/CARES, Mentor Teacher Program, Child Development Training Consortium, and Child Care Initiative Project will be expanded in order to assist ECE professional in furthering their education and development. Student remediation assistance and other academic supports will be identified and expanded. In both instances, available funds and other resources will follow students to the IHEs and community agencies providing ECE professional development. Where gaps in support structures and delivery systems are found, special projects will be established to address them.

There are benefits to ECE employers and students to minimize costs while maintaining the quality of professional development and sustaining degree-granting institutions. A cost analysis with recommendations will be completed to determine the financial needs of professionals seeking degrees and IHEs and community agencies that provide professional preparation. The cost analysis will inform and benefit both providers and consumers to maximize enrollment opportunities.


**The following items are considerations for the future development of California's ECE Compensation and QRS Incentives:**

Goal: California's Early Care and Education (ECE) system will plan for and increase funding to develop and sustain the professional ECE workforce by increasing salaries, benefits, professional development opportunities, incentives, and financial supports to reach increased education and training standards in order to provide early learning and care experiences that improve outcomes for children across all domains through an efficient and effective delivery system.

By increasing and utilizing a variety of federal, state, local and private funds the ECE system will support the workforce by:

a.    Creating and implementing *Compensation Standards** based on regional/county differences and demographics as benchmarks to ensure that dedicated program

funding streams for both early care and education centers and family child care providers be used to increase compensation for *Teaching/Provider Staff\*\** based on their *Educational Attainment\*\*\** and job responsibilities.

   *\* Include wages and benefits such as retirement and health care. The Compensation Standards are intended to be an action item to fund the development of data collection, analysis, and research. This information needs to be used to strengthen knowledge of compensation at the regional and/or county level, including publicly- and privately-funded ECE programs. The next stage is to plan on incrementally improving compensation to the ECE workforce, through a variety of funding streams, through CAEL QIS and ELAC by developing financial modeling and implementation strategies.*

   *\*\* Teaching/Provider Staff is intended to be inclusive of all ECE staff working directly with children or supervising of ECE Staff regardless of center or FCC setting.(For example, job titles/responsibilities tied to the Child Development Permit Matrix (or revised version); Teacher Assistant, Associate Teacher, Teacher, Master Teacher, Site Supervisor, Program Director.) Compensation Standards are not intended to be developed exclusively for Lead Teachers in a classroom.*

   *\*\*\* Assumes acceptance of recommendations and policy statements that include competencies embedded in development of coursework.*

b. Providing *Additional Financial Support* to access accredited credit-bearing courses and degrees to recruit and retain the ECE workforce, such as:
   1. Expanding access to financial assistance with parity to K-12 educators
   2. Expansion of educational stipends to individuals
   3. Developing strategies to retain cultural and linguistic diversity at all levels of the career ladder
   4. Enacting tax credits

c. Significantly *Increasing Funding to Higher Education* to support the ECE workforce including:
   1. Planning and expanding access of model educational programs between community colleges, universities, and their community partners
   2. Recruiting and retaining higher education ECE professionals in the field
   3. Supporting existing lab schools and developing additional qualified community lab sites, such as through the Mentor program, to increase access and diversity of lab settings tied to higher education

d. Developing and implementing *Early Care and Education/Child Development degrees* (Associate, Bachelors, Masters) *and Credential\** for ECE workforce from birth-3rd grade statewide to ensure professionalization of the field and parity with K-12 educators.
   *\*The ECE Credential is intended to be unique to the skills and competencies of the ECE field and may or may not include a 5th year course of study. Recommend 3 specialization options for ECE Credential: Infant/Toddler, Preschool/Kindergarten, and 1st – 3rd Grade.*

e. Providing *Technical Assistance* to support defined high quality working environments, including teacher compensation standards.

f. Providing *Enhanced Incentive Funding* to ECE Programs Participating in CAEL QIS with a set-aside (such as a percentage) of incentive funds to be dedicated to staff for improved measureable best practices, such as moving from Tier 1 to Tier 2.

g. Designing and implementing *Strategies to Increase Compensation* for ECE workforce in licensed centers and FCCHs through CAEL QIS / ELAC without regard to public or private funding status*.*

## 3. Family and Community Involvement and Education

The Advisory Committee identified two key tasks related to family involvement: 1) to develop a 'white paper' that explains the research base for including family involvement in California's QRIS and a description of effective strategies with an emphasis on cultural and language competency and work with families who have children with special needs; and 2) to develop an outreach and communication plan to ensure broad input and participation in QRIS when it is ready for implementation.

A.      Family Engagement – White Paper:

A goal of establishing a Quality Rating Improvement System is to ensure optimal child outcomes from early care and education experiences, therefore incorporating parent/family engagement must be a critical component of the system. As children's first teachers, parents have a unique and enduring impact on children's development, learning, and school success. Parent involvement has been linked to school readiness, school performance, academic achievement, and social and emotional development.

Studies have found that *all* families, regardless of income or education level, or ethnic or cultural background, are involved in supporting children's learning and invested in children's school success. And this involvement is critical to ensuring positive academic outcomes. Indeed, research suggests that family participation in education is twice as predictive of students' academic success as family socioeconomic status. Furthermore, research has demonstrated that regardless of family income or cultural background, children whose parents are involved in their education are more likely to earn higher grades and test scores, have more consistent school attendance, demonstrate better social skills and self-esteem, show improved behavior, and adapt well to the school environment.

In the face of such consistent evidence of the importance of involving families in children's education, it seems incumbent upon us to establish universal access and opportunities for families to become involved in their children's early care and education settings, to work in collaboration with schools, centers, and family child care homes, and to develop partnerships with early childhood teachers so that young children receive the full benefit of early care and education, and are fully prepared for kindergarten and

future school success. The White Paper for Family Involvement is included as an attachment for review and comment.

B.     The **CAEL QIS Outreach and Communication Plan** is attached – and is described briefly in Section IV Next Steps for CAEL QRIS.

C.     Family Involvement Resources:

To support family involvement in children's early learning experiences, California already has several important resources, including:

- California has Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies in every county. These agencies counsel more than 200,000 families per year on child care choices, and 59 of the 61 CCR&R agencies also administer the Alternative Payment Program child care subsidies. CCR&R agencies are not funded or authorized to inspect or rate the quality of the settings available; their focus is on educating families on how to evaluate the quality of a center or home-based setting.
- The federal Head Start Program offers a long-standing model for family involvement, with funds to support family involvement and social services. Several state efforts, with substantially less financial support, also provide guidance on how to engage families in an early learning program. All of these efforts must take into account the time constraints of working parents and, to be successful, depend upon strategies that are appropriate to California's cultural and language groups.

**4.     Data Systems for Program Improvement and Research**

Current issues and strengths for California's Early Childhood "Data Systems" include:

- Efforts to track the effectiveness of dollars spent on early learning and care in improving child outcomes in California are hampered by the lack of a unique student identifier both for children attending programs and for staff participating in professional development. While the various agencies administering early learning programs collect a lot of data, for the most part, the data elements collected do not match, and therefore they cannot be used effectively to inform policy development, resource allocation, and research and evaluation. A matrix prepared by the CDE of current early childhood education data will be updated and included in the Final Report.
- California is in the midst of implementing the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS), a longitudinal K-12 education data system that will include unique student identifiers (SSIDs). Currently, some local educational agencies (LEAs) provide SSIDs for young children in special education programs and for preschool children in programs the LEAs operate. The Advisory Committee approved a method for providing unique child identifiers, and additional resources would be needed to pilot strategies and

protocols for building a statewide system so that all preschool children receive SSIDs.

- California is also designing the California Longitudinal Teacher Integrated Data Education System (CALTIDES). The Commission on Teacher Credentialing has already assigned Statewide Educator Identifiers for nearly all educators currently employed in K-12 schools, and the Advisory Committee has not yet discussed the potential for incorporating early learning and care personnel.
- California's CCR&R agencies track the availability of center- and home-based early learning and care by age group, county, and zip code; and they produce a comprehensive, biannual statewide assessment of supply, demand, and affordability of early learning and care.
- Local Child Care and Development Planning Councils (LPCs) annually identify the zip codes in each county with the greatest unmet need for additional State Preschool and General Child Care programs. The data are used to guide the release of any new funds for these state-contracted programs. LPCs are also required to conduct a five-year comprehensive needs assessment.

Among the key challenges related to developing data systems for program improvement, two issues are paramount:

- How to standardize data elements collected across at least a dozen different early learning and care programs?
- How to develop a unique child identifier that works for both school- and community-based programs and links early learning programs with K-12 information systems?

The California Early Childhood Education (ECE) data information system is being developed as a component of the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), and will provide timely, accessible and appropriate birth to age five data regarding children, families, teachers/providers, programs and data about funding to support continuous program improvement leading to increased access and better outcomes for children in California, birth through age eight, and ultimately to workforce and life success.

To ensure a high caliber California quality rating and improvement system, the ECE data information system will provide data to policymakers, consumers and the public for purposes of strategic planning, resource management, research and improved accountability. Major focus will be placed on leveraging other existing data sources to eliminate duplicative reporting/collection and improve data quality in order to:

- Measure school readiness
- Establish more efficient program management
- Improve administrative functions, if applicable.

The Data Systems for Program Improvement and Research Subcommittee identified eight key principles of an early learning data system: (1) confidential; (2) useable/practical; (3) accessible and interoperable; (4) transparent; (5) includes and connects child, family, teacher/provider, and program data; (6) provider-friendly; (7) easily adaptable and can grow and change over time; and (8) dynamic.

The Advisory Committee approved a method to provide a unique student identifier for children in early learning and care programs. The method for issuing the California ECE Unique Identifier will be by using the unique registration number located on the birth certificate. This would be a low-tech solution and would also enable providers to go back to the common source to identify a child. The following are some reported cons to using the birth certificate:

- Every child may not have a birth certificate.
- Every child enrolled in California schools may not have a California issued birth certificate.
- Birth certificate registration numbers are unique within the county of issuance.

Possible solutions include:

- Alternative option for children not born in the United States.
- Add the Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) state numeric code or California county code.

## 5.    Initial Work to Develop a Financial Model

**Current issues with California's ECE Finance Incentives and Funding**

California's reimbursement policies do not provide incentives for programs to aspire to higher standards, and funding is insufficient to support access for all eligible children even at the current standards.

- Current reimbursement rates for state-funded programs provide little financial incentive to improve quality.
    - License-exempt providers typically receive nearly the same per-child reimbursement as licensed family child care providers, thereby providing little incentive for home-based providers to seek licensure.
    - In 22 counties with 80 percent of California's population, the publicly subsidized payment rates for centers that only have to meet the minimal Title 22 licensure requirements are higher than the standard reimbursement rate for state-contracted programs that must meet the more stringent Title 5 standards.
- As a result of recent legislation signed into law by Governor Schwarzenegger (Assembly Bill [AB] 2759 Jones-Chapter 308, Statutes of 2008), California recently consolidated programs for preschool-age children meeting state Title 5 standards, forming the largest State Preschool Program in the nation. This program includes the Prekindergarten Family Literacy Program, enacted in 2006, which focuses on promoting family involvement in children's language development, a recognized key element in school readiness.
- More than $4 billion is currently spent on an array of state- and federally supported early learning and care services in California, but, as noted above, more than 149,000 children ages birth to five are still on the waiting list (CDE,

2009). Funds are estimated to be sufficient to serve only half of the eligible three- and four-year-olds (Karoly, 2009).

- A potential funding stream for expanding early learning and care is Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. However, California school districts currently spend only about one percent of their Title I funds on preschool-age children.
- Programs are sometimes financed by more than one funding stream, providing an opportunity for additional revenue to expand or improve services, but also creating challenges for complying with more than one set of program standards.

Multiple finance issues are involved in establishing a QRIS. The legislatively assigned tasks of developing a funding model aligned with the QRIS and recommending how resources can be utilized to complement that model are outlined here but will need to be fully developed through the ELAC. The Finance and Incentives, Including Funding Model, Subcommittee developed a conceptual model, identified a list of key questions, and collected related information. In addition, the CDE has prepared a matrix of existing state and federal resources for early learning and care that will be updated and included in the Final Report.

The Finance and Incentives, Including Funding Model Subcommittee (Finance Subcommittee) established four major areas for its work:

1. Cost analysis for components of the proposed Quality Improvement System (QIS).
2. Identification and assessment of various possible incentives to motivate a) provider participation in the system, b) to motivate staff to obtain additional relevant training, and most critically, c) to provide resources for quality improvements. This was understood to include all types of providers included in the QIS: licensed centers, licensed family child care providers, and certain license exempt centers that meet specified criteria for participation.
3. Identify and assess possible sources of financial and non-financial resources to implement a QIS.
4. Develop a Funding Model. The funding model would identify probable cost centers (components requiring funding) and relate those cost centers to possible funding sources where possible.

The information provided in this section reflects the Finance Subcommittee's work over the past year. The Advisory Committee received the draft report, but has not yet discussed the report or prioritized the ideas described.


## COST ANALYSIS

A.     General Cost Analysis
The broad cost categories for California's QRIS were developed by the Finance Subcommittee and reinforced by the NCCIC Cost Calculator. This tool estimates costs in several broad areas, producing an estimated annual cost for each area, and a total state-wide annual estimated cost.

1. Quality Assessment system and Administration

2. Professional Development

3. Training and Technical Assistance for providers

4. Financial Incentives

5. Public Awareness efforts

6. Facility Improvements

7. System Evaluation

8. Data Systems

A major advantage of the Cost Calculator is the ability to quickly analyze how changes in any single variable, or multiple variables, would impact costs. Multiple cost estimates can be run to test these variables. The Cost Calculator must be "populated" with a large quantity of data specific to California and our recommended QRIS design. Some of this data can be obtained from a variety of sources, some must be estimated. As data elements are refined, we expect the information to become more reliable. The Cost Calculator can be downloaded by any interested person at NCCIC Web site.

**Ideas:**

CAELQIS recommends that cost analysis using the NCCIC Cost Calculator and other tools, and refined through the pilot project, continue under the Early Learning Advisory Committee.

## INCENTIVES

A.    Financial and non-financial incentives for providers should be designed to accomplish at least four distinct purposes:
1. Reimburse providers for the added costs to participate in a QIS.  These added costs have not been fully identified or analyzed, but include costs such as the cost of additional data collection and reporting not previously done by the provider, staff time to complete the rating process (including submitting various documents and facilitating on-site reviews) resources needed to address issues identified in the ERS assessments.
2. Motivate providers to join and participate in the system.  Particularly in the early years financial incentives will probably be essential to motivate significant percentages of providers to become rated and participate in QRIS. As a threshold percentage of providers in any community become rated, competitive pressure will motivate additional providers to become rated and achieve higher tiers, and the importance of incentives to motivate participation might decline.
3. Provide the provider with funds to affect specific, provider chosen quality improvements. For example, if a center needs to adopt an educational curriculum, there will be costs for training the center's staff in that curriculum, particularly the salaries and benefit costs for staff to attend training outside

their time supervising children. Some Subcommittee participants believe that new and lower tier providers will need more specific and targeted quality improvement assistance to affect improvements and increase tier ratings, possibly grants tied to coach approved Quality Improvement Plans.

4. Motivate child development center teachers, assistant teachers, directors and potentially other staff members to seek staff development at colleges and other venues outside of in-service training given by the center or family child care owner, to improve quality, expand skills and achieve higher tier ratings.

Types of incentives that might be offered as part of a QRIS include:

Financial incentives:

a. Periodic stipends to each rated provider, with higher stipends for higher ratings. Stipends could be paid out monthly, quarterly or annually, depending on how the frequency of payment motivated quality improvement and the administrative costs of making the payments.

b. Periodic stipends to each rated provider specifically earmarked for higher wages and/or benefits for staff (or for other specific purposes, with audits to verify use).

c. "Tiered reimbursement" in the Regional Market Rate (RMR) and Standard Reimbursement Rate (SRR) payment systems for providers who serve California Department of Education (CDE) children.

d. Grant funding for specific quality activities, such as facility improvements, staff training, purchasing additional instructional materials and equipment, etc. Grants could be based on approved quality improvement plans and/or applications with objectives; and are more likely to be one-time rather than periodic.

e. Stipends to child development staff to obtain further education (possibly similar to AB 212 and CARES Plus reimbursement).

f. Ongoing stipends to child development staff who have achieved levels of education that help qualify the program for higher tier rating.

g. Refundable tax credits for rated centers, for rated family child care providers, for staff members and/or for parents who place their children in rated centers (the Louisiana model).

h. Incentives to institutions of higher education to provide more child development classes; including classes in the evening, on weekends or in the community for staff already working in programs.

Non-financial incentives:

a. Marketing/competitive value of a higher tier rating in promoting a center or home.

b. Venues for providers to publicize ratings for parents.

c. QIS branding, such as a logo for rated programs to use (possibly including number of stars).

d. Training and coaching to assist providers to join the system and achieve a rating.

e. Coaching, training and assistance developing a Quality Improvement Plan for providers to achieve higher ratings.

f. Career/professional growth advisors to assist staff members to build a career plan and navigate the higher education system.

g. Training for owners and directors in quality, management, facilities, etc.

h. Lists or referrals to professionals and experts for training or technical assistance.

i. An approach that received significant support was a "hybrid" incentive system – a combination of periodic incentive payments to the provider/owner plus periodic direct payments to lead teachers who had obtained the additional education, beyond that required by licensing, to obtain a higher tier rating would result in the highest levels of participation plus the highest tier ratings. Incentives to providers would fund program-wide improvements, training to achieve Quality Improvement Plan goals, purchase of additional instructional materials, salary increases to staff other than lead teachers, addition of fringe benefits, etc. An alternative view was that a refundable tax credit system might be most likely to gain voter support if a QIS funding proposal appeared on a public ballot.

**Ideas:**

Further study be conducted of 1) the most effective type of incentives for various outcomes, 2) the optimal and most cost effective dollar level of financial incentives, and 3) the most effective frequency of payments, including focus groups and pilot testing.

The QIS pilot test should test a combination of incentives, including a payment to the provider and a payment to each classroom teacher who has education to meet a tier level that requires more education than licensing regulations.

**POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES**

QRIS potential funding sources include typical methods of funding used by government, existing funding streams and the most appropriate matches to probable QIS cost centers, partnerships with local entities that can provide both financial and non-financial resources to support a QIS, and utilization of Family Child Care Home Education Networks, R& R Networks, and others as cost effective vehicles for quality improvement among licensed family child care providers and small centers.

Funding Sources:

■ State or Local Funds:

- ❑ General Fund:
  - ■ Prop 98 (e.g., State Preschool and CalWORKS Stages 2&3)
  - ■ Non-Prop 98 (e.g., Licensing)
  - ■ Colleges and Universities
- ❑ First 5 State and County Commission (Proposition 10 funds)
- ❑ Local funds, such as Prop H in SF and Measure Q in LAUSD (includes $150M for ECE facilities)
- ■ Federal Funds:
  - ❑ Head Start, Migrant Head Start, and Early Head Start
  - ❑ Child Care and Development Fund, including quality improvement funds
  - ❑ TANF and Social Services Block Grant
  - ❑ Even Start and Migrant Even Start
  - ❑ Child and Adult Care Food Program
  - ❑ IDEA and Title 1 (NCLB)
  - ❑ Home Visitation Programs

Partnerships:

- ■ First 5 State and County Commissions
- ■ Foundations
- ■ Businesses
- ■ Associations and Networks
- ■ CDE funded projects such as: LPCs, R&Rs, CPIN, PITC, Training for license-exempt providers

Ideas:

- ■ Existing funding streams be adapted and incorporated, as possible, into QRIS pilot and implementation phases
- ■ Partner and collaborate on pilot projects for: funding, services, relationships and local expertise

## DEVELOPING A FUNDING MODEL and PROGRESSIVE BUILD-OUT

Two parts of the equation:

❑ Cost categories

❑ Funding sources

Combine work on cost estimations with continued analysis of current and future funding sources to move forward with ELAC

Ideas:

- Future work toward developing a funding model be designed to prepare CA for federal resources, such as an Early Learning Challenge Grant, Promise Neighborhoods, and Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program

- Develop partnerships with businesses and foundations

- Consider progressive build-out of QRIS through pilot projects followed by ramped implementation

- Use combination of local implementation to maximize resources and expertise with fidelity to statewide QRIS model

- Consider trade-offs to set priorities; ultimately build to statewide QRIS implementation

- Further planning for QRIS should consider the option of a progressive build-out as resources become available; as well as the full-funding option for statewide implementation

## IV. Next Steps

The next steps related to the development of the CAEL QIS are to complete the recommendations for the design of the quality rating structure and the program support mechanisms for the QRIS. The goal is to progressively implement, and continuously improve, a strategic framework that builds on the strengths of California's existing early learning and care infrastructure, is informed by evidence-based practices, and makes the best use of existing, as well as new, resources.

Having worked primarily on the structure of the rating system, the programs and providers that will be included, and recommendations for the support systems needed to help programs improve quality and move up the tiers of the rating structure, the Advisory Committee will provide these recommendations to the Governor and Legislature while turning to ELAC for the third and fourth tasks that the Legislature assigned — the development of a funding model for the QRIS, and recommendations for how local, state, and federal public and private resources can best complement the statewide funding model to improve the early learning and care system. For example, the ELAC can take into account federal resources, such as Head Start and the potential for using Title 1 funds to help expand and improve early learning and care programs.

At the same time, the Advisory Committee recognizes the need to move quickly to maximize the receipt of any new federal resources for early learning and care programs and to take advantage of other opportunities to leverage limited state resources. It is also important to note that the Advisory Committee is transitioning to the on-going responsibilities of the California State Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC). The first success for ELAC was the development of an application in August 2010 for federal funds available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to support improvements in early learning and care. Projects include: statewide strategic plan, CAEL QIS pilot projects, ECE data system assessment and analysis phase with recommendations, and Early Childhood Educator Competencies, including development of a common and comprehensive course of study and career ladder.

The Advisory Committee received the following ideas on oversight, participation, and pilot projects from the Design Subcommittee, but has not yet discussed and decided on a plan of action for the ideas described.

Initial Ideas for QRIS Oversight:

- Establish a review process for every 2-3 years, with noted exceptions. Annual reviews are costly and do not provide sufficient time to institute improvements.

- Exceptions include certain situations such as Title 22 licensing issues, key staff turnover, etc.

- Check results of 1or 2 or 3 year review periods, if possible, through pilot projects

- Establish appeals process for technical issues, such as administrative or recording errors. The qualitative aspects of the QRIS reviews (e.g., ERS) would not be subject to appeal.

- Use a combination of local and state oversight to maximize expertise and resources. The QRIS reviews would be done at the county level (or regional consortium). The State would provide oversight and assurance of statewide consistency (e.g., inter-rater reliability).

- Need to safeguard against conflicts of interest in QRIS reviews, ERS reviews, and provision of TA. Possibly provide for different administration, but not necessarily separate agencies since there are few agencies with sufficient expertise in some regions.

- Review Head Start methodology for oversight, monitoring, and TA

- Conduct further study to determine links between tiers and child outcomes; length of time programs remain in tiers and efficacy of TA methods. Use data gathered for evaluation of QRIS as well as for rating and TA methods.

Initial Ideas for QRIS Participation:

All early learning and care programs for California's youngest children are encouraged to implement as much of the CAEL QIS quality improvement recommendations as possible, though there are limited financial resources. Programs, associations, and communities can work to improve program quality in some, or all, of the Quality Rating

Structure elements and support systems while building on local improvement efforts, commitment, and resources. The following phase-in plan is an idea for statewide testing and implementation and, hopefully, will not limit local leadership.

- CAEL QIS could be phased in over 20 years:
  - ❑ pilot tested and evaluated for about 7 years;
  - ❑ voluntary participation for all program for about 7 years;
  - ❑ phase-in CAEL QIS requirement for publicly-funded and then licensed programs over about 7 years.
- The vision is that participation in the QRIS is initially voluntary with appropriate funding and incentives provided, and ultimately required for all ECE programs so it is available for all California children.

**Factors to Study for QRIS Participation, starting with Pilot Projects:**

- Investigate phase-in for public and private ECE programs
- Check effectiveness of communication with ECE programs/providers and families
- Study length of time programs stay on tiers and/or move up on tiers
- Explore method for recruitment
- Establish data parameters for evaluations
- Test TA methods and effectiveness of incentives
- Assess costs and benefits over time. Strong evaluation is key to success of pilots and CAEL QIS

Initial Ideas for QRIS Pilot Projects:

- Range: Invite counties/regions to participate. Encourage balanced distribution of factors such as: public and private; urban and rural; infant-toddler and preschool; established and new to QRIS.
- Pilots could involve parts or all of the QRIS. Need to fit evaluation model.
- All participation is voluntary during pilot testing.
- Evidence of commitment to CAEL QIS could include:
  - Fidelity to QRIS scale and systems of support such as TA, Family Involvement, Workforce Development, and Data
  - Agreement to participate in evaluation
  - Leverage local resources, including expertise and funding
  - Demonstrated partnerships across range of programs/providers and support systems
- QRIS costs are both one-time and on-going.

- Data systems are critical to success.

- Without statewide implementation, local incentives continue to be necessary.

- Partnerships among multiple local agencies are essential to meeting the needs of children in early care settings

Once the QRIS pilot projects are underway, serious planning for broad outreach and communication will be needed. An overview of the draft CAEL QIS Outreach and Communication Plan is provided below. The information provided in this section reflects the Engagement Subcommittee's work over the past year. The Advisory Committee received the draft plan, but has not yet discussed the report or prioritized the ideas described.

## CAEL QIS Outreach and Communication Plan

General ideas:
1. State, county and local agencies and organizations currently working with families can assist in disseminating information to families, stakeholders and the community; and collecting input from various entities.
2. Develop templates of common and specific messages to be distributed to families, the early childhood education community/child care providers, and the general public/stakeholders. The offering of templates would include web-sites, information flyers, posters, brochures, video presentations, public service announcements, advertisements for local media and scripts for phone tree messages, twitters, email blasts, text messages, social networks, etc.
3. Establish a regulation requiring contractors funded by the California Child Development Division to provide information on the QRIS to all parents applying to participate in the programs.
4. Secure outside expert assistance to develop branding, templates for distribution, and a public outreach plan.
5. Develop cost estimates for a public relations plan and explore 'partnering with marketing classes through colleges and universities to assist with marketing via practicum projects.
6. Seek out corporate and agency sponsors.
7. As a low cost option, train spokespersons and/or obtain trainers from Local Planning Councils, Resource and Referral agencies, the California Preschool Instructional Networks, and others.
8. Start with the families within the existing programs that are participating
9. Put QRIS info into the First 5 "Kit for New Parents" in the communities where the pilot is happening; then into participating counties during roll-out
10. Commit enough money for technical assistance, mentoring, and coaching
11. Establish a BRAND for CAEL QIS that informs and promotes quality early learning. Some states use keys or stars. What bold brand can CA create?

The draft CAEL QIS Communication Plan is organized by Target Groups:
- Families
- Programs/providers

- Stakeholders and public

For each Target Group, the Subcommittee provides:
- Implementation Strategies
- Sample Messages
- Ideas for Templates
- Systems and Groups to provide outreach and information about CAEL QIS

## References[*]

The extensive references cited in the CAEL QIS Interim Report will be updated and included in the CAEL QIS Final Report.

# CAEL QIS Advisory Committee Process and Timeline

Senate Bill 1629 required 13 committee members to be appointed to the California Early Learning Quality Improvement System Advisory Committee. Members were selected according to the process specified in the legislation. For a list of the members, see the Acknowledgments.

At the June 10, 2009, meeting, the Advisory Committee approved the following operating principles:

- Commit to candid discussions and consideration of diverse ideas in an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- Explore research, policy, and implementation options for California; make decisions; and revisit when necessary.
- Know who will be there by committing to attend scheduled meetings.
- Reserve voting for Advisory Committee members or official designees.
- Make decisions based on data and evidence-based practice.
- Strive for consensus and use majority vote, with dissenting views represented in documents when needed.
- Use and update the operating principles as needed.

**Advisory Committee Timeline**

Senate Bill 1629 required at least four CAEL QIS meetings to be held each year for two years and all meetings to be open to the public and meet the Bagley-Keene requirements as stated in *Government Code* Sections 11120-11132. To date, eight meetings have been held over the first 21 months of the two-year period, with three more scheduled in 2010. Meetings typically include reports from pertinent subcommittees on options for components of a quality rating and improvement system, research updates, input from attendees at regional sites, and public comment. Action items requiring a Committee vote are indicated on the meeting agenda.

**An important component of the CAEL QIS development process is holding Public Hearings to coordinate input on the design and implementation of California's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). These comments, in addition to the extensive work by CAEL QIS Subcommittees, expert consultants, and CDE/CDD staff, will inform and support the work of the CAEL QIS Advisory Committee Members. The draft of the CAEL QIS Final Report will be available for review in late October, prior to review by the Advisory Committee at their scheduled meetings in November and December. By December 31, 2010, the Advisory Committee is statutorily required to finalize its recommendations for the creation of the early learning quality improvement system.**

The CAEL QIS 2009-10 Calendar of Meetings is available on the CAEL QIS Website.
**Webpage**

To facilitate coordination of the Advisory Committee's work and interaction with stakeholders, the CDE has established a CAEL QIS webpage, which includes committee and subcommittee meeting dates, agendas, materials, and highlights. The CAEL QIS Web page is updated regularly.

**Role of Subcommittees**

The Advisory Committee created five subcommittees and directed them as follows: "The Subcommittees will clarify issues, outline possible alternatives, and present likely results. The California Early Learning Quality Improvement System Advisory Committee will receive the information and issues analyzed through the Subcommittees for the Committee's consideration, discussion, and the development of recommendations, not as an expectation for approval" (June 10, 2009, CAEL QIS Advisory Committee meeting). In short, the subcommittees' roles are to provide information and analysis while the full Advisory Committee's charge is to decide upon the final recommendations.

Advisory Committee members serve as Chair and Vice-Chair of each Subcommittee, and CDE staff help facilitate meetings. Subcommittee meetings are open to all Advisory Committee members as well as the general public.

The Advisory Committee charged each subcommittee with the task of helping to inform the development of one of the major aspects of the CAEL QIS model. The focus of the subcommittee's work is described as follows:

- *Design Ideas for Licensing, Quality Rating, and Improvement Systems Subcommittee*: To develop options for California's rating structure and process, with support systems to improve quality over time.

- *Workforce and Professional Development and Incentives Subcommittee*: To develop professional standards and a delivery system that supports high-quality initial preparation and ongoing professional development linked to quality learning standards

and financial incentives for enhanced training.

- *Family Involvement and Stakeholder Engagement and Advocacy Subcommittee*: To develop a communication plan to ensure broad input on the design of the quality rating system, and to develop an engagement and outreach plan for families, programs/providers, and the public for California's rating structure and process.

- *Data Systems for Program Improvement and Research Subcommittee:* To consider data systems for program improvement and evaluation/research, including the attributes of a data system that would effectively use data to coordinate and improve quality among public and private, local, state, and federal early learning programs and providers.

- *Finance and Incentives, Including Funding Model, Subcommittee*: To analyze, develop alternatives, and report back on two broad areas: financial alternatives for a variety of issues, including a funding model, and for incentives that encourage quality and would be most effective and cost efficient in relation to positive outcomes for children and families.