

# California State Preschool Program Quality Rating Improvement System Block Grant Request for Applications

Fiscal Year 2023–25

California Department of Education

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## Background

The California Department of Education (CDE) and the Early Education Division (EED) have participated in the multi-agency Quality Counts California (QCC) for the past 4 years. QCC is the result of California’s Race to the Top federal funding, which incentivized states to improve early learning and care quality to address the achievement gap for low-income children and families. The QCC, the state-level quality system that implements California’s quality rating improvement system (QRIS), was officially established and branded in 2018.

Through the Race to the Top funding, the QRIS in California was developed to ensure that programs met minimum standards for quality to serve young children. Initially, the First 5 California Commission (First 5) and the CDE were in partnership in the development and implementation of the QRIS in California. On July 1, 2021, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) joined the QCC system as a result of the transition of quality early childhood programs from the CDE to the CDSS, and the CDSS became the lead agency for the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care federal funding. The California QRIS began in 2012 and first consisted of 17 lead agencies with 15 mentee counties. Adjustments to the frequency of ratings, the requirements for programs to join, and the number of certified raters to conduct the activity have changed over time. The three state-level, QCC-funded agencies have worked collaboratively with local early education and care programs to provide necessary supports and services to implement high-quality practices to better serve the children in their care.

The QCC is now comprised of 11 regional hubs and 49 consortia, extending QCC services to all 58 California counties as well as the Tribal Child Care Association of California (TCCAC). Each agency is charged with providing technical assistance and support to family childcare homes; family, friend and neighbor providers; family childcare home education networks (FCCHENs); state-subsidized childcare and early learning programs; center-based programs; and private, community-based organizations. The QRIS is a system comprised of five tiers, which a program can achieve by being formally rated. Over the past several years, many changes have been made in the early education space. Since the transition of CDE programs to the CDSS, the CDE has refocused its efforts on the remaining programs and has invested in Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) Great Start initiatives. UPK encompasses the California State Preschool Program (CSPP), Transitional Kindergarten (TK), and Kindergarten, and aims to align practices that best support California’s youngest learners. With the implementation of UPK, the CDE is uplifting the early education space to create alignment from preschool through third grade and ensure coordination up through the TK through twelfth grade system. In addition, local communities must create and build on existing relationships with other local early education providers, including but not limited to local Head Start, community-based organizations, expanded learning programs, and subsidized childcare providers.

These changes offer a unique opportunity for all QCC state agencies to re-examine their priorities and enact changes that will create a more cohesive system. The CDE’s QCC funding, the CSPP QRIS Block Grant, provides $50 million annually to support quality improvement for CSPPs participating in QCC. As the CDE pivots to uplift UPK, the CSPP QRIS Block Grant will support this mission and will be transformed to address diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging in early education programs.

Beginning in FY 2023–24, the CSPP QRIS Block Grant the state as a whole will begin to explore and reimagine the QRIS system in California. While the CDE is required by statute (see Appendix B) to continue ratings, the ratings will look different. Moving away from high-stakes, external rating tied directly to funding, a program’s rating will be viewed as a data point for the program to utilize in the Quality Improvement Plan and make data-informed change within the program. As a result of changes mentioned above, along with the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CDE will support local QCC consortia to create tiered systems of support for their communities over the next several years. This support will provide core content areas for all programs, along with additional technical assistance and coaching supports for newer programs or those with greater need. By distributing funding and supports based on true need, rather than ratings alone, the CDE aims to establish a more equitable system of support focused on high impact. FYs 2023–25 will serve as a transitional period before a new multi-year RFA is announced for FY 2025–26.

Taking change one step at a time, the current request for applications (RFA) is the first step towards reimagining the quality system in California. The CDE is committed to providing collaborative support to QCC partners in order to reach the common goal of an equitable, inclusive, and quality preschool program for all children in California. The current RFA will encompass FYs 2023–24 and 2024–25. This two-year structure is intended to reduce administrative burden related to releasing and responding to RFAs, as well as to allow the CDE sufficient time to conduct thorough research and planning for the next multi-year RFA, planned for release in early 2025. The CDE will hold input sessions and focus groups with grantees, implement statutory changes, and work with the other QCC state agencies to reimagine this grant and the QCC Quality Continuum Framework for release in 2025. Despite the two-year RFA structure, the grantees should operate on a one-year spending plan for their annual allocations. In other words, grantees should plan to spend their full FY 2023–24 award by June 30, 2024, and their full FY 2024–25 award by June 30, 2025.

Note: CSPP QRIS Block Grant funding is subject to appropriation in the California State Budget each year.

## Purpose

The purpose of the CSPP QRIS Block Grant is to support CSSP programs participating in QRIS to increase quality.

## Use of Funds

The CSPP QRIS Block Grant funding is administered to eligible local education agencies (LEAs). The lead agency for each LEA or local consortium distributes Site Block Grants and Incentives, as well as other supports, to participating CSPP sites in their county or consortium region. FCCHENs are eligible to receive Site Block Grants and Incentives only if they have CSPP slots and are participating in QRIS. While funding cannot be used directly for other program types, grantees are encouraged to invite all early education program types to participate in professional development opportunities funded through the CSPP QRIS Block Grant.

## Request for Applications Submission

The FY 2023–24 CSPP QRIS Block Grant will be submitted to the CDE via Snap Survey found at <https://surveys3.cde.ca.gov/go/cspp-qris-bg-rfa-2023.asp>. Responses should encompass both FY 2023–24 and FY 2024–25. This document is intended to be used alongside the survey to provide additional information and instructions while applicants are filling out the RFA survey. Submission of this RFA will serve as the applicant’s Local Quality Improvement Plan. No formal QCC Plan is required to be submitted. For questions or concerns, contact the CDE QCC Team at [QCC@cde.ca.gov](mailto:QCC@cde.ca.gov). The CSPP QRIS Block Grant is a non-competitive RFA.

## Local Quality Improvement Plan

As described in California *Education Code* (*EC*) Section 8203.1, CSPP QRIS Block Grant grantees must “Develop an action plan that includes a continuous quality improvement process that is tied to improving child outcomes.” The consortium application needs to be inclusive of local quality improvement supports, including local QRIS and state-funded quality projects. The consortium must describe increased alignment over time toward a shared vision of quality. The CDE will review the applications and may ask for additional information to understand and discuss the plans and help strengthen them.

As the CDE looks forward to the future of the CSPP QRIS Block Grant and toward a UPK-focused, holistic quality improvement system, grantees will be required to provide Quality Improvement Plans that align with a new, needs-based, strengths-focused methodology. While a full overhaul is not required or expected for FYs 2023–24 and 2024–25, the CDE encourages grantees to begin planning for this more aligned approach that offers tiered support to meet the needs of programs and families in their county. Based in self-assessment findings, grantees should begin to assess their local needs and create a plan that encompasses a base level of support—minimum required professional development for all programs—a middle level of support that provides technical assistance and training, and a high level of support that provides intensive coaching and follow up for new programs and those with the highest need. These leveled supports will focus on a variety of high-impact areas and should align with other CDE initiatives, such as inclusion requirements for CSPP. The CDE will provide additional guidance in future iterations of this RFA to assist grantees in moving these plans forward.

## Section A: Local Needs

1. Describe a current or planned needs assessment for your county(ies) and include all sources of information used. Describe where the community can have the most impact specifically engaging with children living in poverty, multilingual learners, children in the foster care system, children experiencing homelessness, children with exceptional needs, and children who are Black or African American, Tribal, migrant, or live in rural or isolated communities. Responses may include additional information about high-need populations within your consortium not listed above (for example, communities affected by natural disasters). [open response]
2. Describe the goals and objectives of the local consortium and the Local Quality Improvement Plan, including anything specific to the CSPP QRIS Block Grant. [open response]
3. Describe how the consortium will build CSPP and UPK programs’ capacity for continuous quality improvement in high-impact communities, including how this funding will support smooth transitions from preschool and early education programs to TK or Kindergarten and elementary school. [open response]

## Section B: Governance and Strengthening Partnerships

As required in *EC* Section 8203.1, grantees will convene a local consortium to implement quality improvement activities across the county. The consortium shall consist of, but is not limited to:

1. Local educational agencies (LEAs)
2. First 5 county commissions
3. Local postsecondary educational institutions
4. Local childcare planning councils (LPCs)
5. Local resource and referral agencies (R&Rs)
6. Alternative Payment Program(s) (APP)
7. Other local agencies, including nonprofit organizations, that provide services to children from birth to five years of age, inclusive

In addition to the required consortium members above, the CDE recommends the following agencies be included in each applicant’s consortium:

* Local Tribes or Tribal Representative (as applicable)
* County Health and Human Services Agency
* Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA)
* County Department of Social Services
* County Department of Public Health
* Foster Child Care Bridge (as applicable)
* Key interest holders (for example, providers, parents, Head Start grantee, state-contracted early learning and care programs)
* Child Care Licensing Regional Offices
* Others as appropriate

Applicants must provide information about the roles and responsibilities of the lead agency as well as all consortium partners.

Through submission of this RFA, the applicant consortium ensures the CDE that the above listed required partners have reviewed and approved the consortium’s Quality Improvement Plan and this application. [certification checkbox]

Describe which member agency(ies) and staff are responsible for and how the consortium will accomplish each of the following activities:

1. Governance and decision-making process for ensuring shared knowledge and agreement with the consortium’s CSPP QRIS Block Grant plan and budget.
   1. Include how early educators will be engaged in planning and decision-making processes, including but not limited to school districts, Head Start, Early Head Start, and Tribal partners (where applicable). [open response]
2. Roles and responsibilities for each **REQUIRED** consortium member agency.Include information for:
3. LEAs [open response]
4. First 5 county commissions [open response]
5. Local postsecondary educational institutions [open response]
6. LPCs [open response]
7. Local R&Rs [open response]
8. APP [open response]
9. Other local agencies, including nonprofit organizations, that provide services to children from birth to five years of age, inclusive [open response]

* Include information on any barriers to information sharing with the required entities listed above, where applicable. [open response]

1. How the consortium will strengthen and expand partnerships. For example, with the following local agencies: [open response]
   * Local Tribe or Tribal Representative (as applicable)
   * County Health and Human Services Agency
   * SELPA
   * County Department of Social Services
   * County Department of Public Health
   * Foster Child Care Bridge (as applicable)
   * Key interest holders (for example, providers, parents, Head Start grantee, state-contracted early learning and care programs)
   * Child Care Licensing Regional Offices
   * Others as appropriate
2. Describe how this RFA application and Local Quality Improvement Plan was shared with the consortium members. If applicable, please include feedback and changes from the consortium members that was incorporated into the RFA submission. [open response]

## Section C: Engagement and Recruitment

1. Detail the current CSPP QRIS participation in your region. Include:
   1. How many total CSPP sites there are in your county [provide number]
   2. How many of the total CSPP sites are participating in QCC/QRIS [provide number]
2. Describe which member agency(ies) and staff are responsible for and how the consortium will accomplish each of the following activities:
3. Process the consortium will use to engage early educators with CSPP QRIS Block Grant activities and increase participation with specific outreach and recruitment strategies as applicable. [open response]
4. How the consortium will retain participating programs and how programs will be engaged in continuous quality improvement activities. [open response]
5. How the consortium will build and maintain partnerships with school districts to ensure smooth transitions from preschool to TK or Kindergarten through twelfth grade. [open response]

## Section D: Quality Improvement Strategies, Quality Investments and Supports

With the passage of the FY 2022–23 State Budget, new requirements and emphases were enacted for the CSPP. The CSPP QRIS Block Grant funding should be used to support CSPPs in meeting these new requirements, in addition to meeting existing Title 5 Program Quality Standards. The CSPP QRIS Block Grant grantees are encouraged to support CSPPs in accessing existing professional development, training, and coaching opportunities, and forming new opportunities only as needed. Local consortia should compile and promote available resources and opportunities for CSPPs to improve quality in areas including inclusion, multilingual support, equity, and the elimination of suspension and expulsion. Additionally, implementation of anti-racist and anti-bias supports that affirm children’s race, home language, and sense of belonging in their community should be prioritized. Local consortia should work with the administrators of other state funding streams to provide these supports. For example, local consortia should work with recipients of the Inclusion Early Education Expansion Program (IEEEP) grant to ensure CSPPs receive professional development around inclusion. Similarly, professional development and training opportunities put on by the local consortia through CSPP QRIS Block Grant funding should invite local agencies to join, including the agencies implementing UPK and early education.

Describe which member agency(ies) and staff are responsible for and how the consortium will accomplish each of the following activities:

1. Create individualized quality improvement plans for participating sites.[open response]
2. Collect and use data and feedback from each CSPP to inform continuous improvement in the implementation of quality improvement supports.[open response]
   1. Include process for data collection
   2. Include how data will be shared with participants
   3. Include how data will be used to improve quality
3. Increase the quality of the CSPP and utilize state-funded quality improvement resources to create opportunities for providers to strengthen their skills by expanding access to evidence-informed delivery methods, such as coaching; specific training sessions; targeted resources; peer-learning; and partnerships that help them gain the knowledge, skills, and competencies to support young children and their families. Include how each of the following will be implemented:
   * Training and technical assistance: [open response]
   * Training topics should include but are not limited to:
     + Supports to achieve program quality standards as stated in *EC* Section 8203 (for example, developmentally, linguistically and culturally appropriate program approach; compliance with the CSPP Program Monitoring Instrument)
     + Promoting children’s culture, language, race, and identity, as well as fostering a sense of belonging
     + CLASS tool and implementation
     + Responsive and inclusive learning environments for children with disabilities
     + Challenging behaviors
     + Trauma-informed practices
     + Early childhood mental health
     + Adverse Childhood Experiences
     + Elimination of suspension and expulsion
     + Developmental and behavioral screenings and child observational assessments using standardized, validated tools.
       - Desired Results Developmental Profile, Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ), and ASQ: Social-Emotional tool (ASQ-SE)
     + Coaching supports
       - Teacher-child interactions
       - Anti-bias practices
       - Anti-racist practices
       - Supporting multilingual learners in English and their home language (including supports for families)
       - Supporting children’s development across all domains in the Preschool Learning Foundations, with a particular focus on early math, literacy and social-emotional skills
   * Coaching: Respond to applicable strategies [open response]
   * Onsite, ongoing, job-embedded coaching supports regardless of tier.
   * Coaching to support implementation of evidence-based curricula and use of assessment, such as the DRDP, to inform instruction and individualization and alignment with the Preschool Learning Foundations
   * Coaching to improve program quality through nurturing adult-child relationships and creating quality learning environments.
   * Online or virtual coaching (for example, Coaching Companion)
4. Identify the required education or experience qualifications for coaches. [open response]
5. Identify how the consortium will prioritize coaching for CSPPs (for example, focusing primarily on Tier 3). [open response]
6. Identify other programs or funding streams that your consortium plans to partner with to combine training or invite additional participants from the UPK mixed-delivery system to existing training and professional development opportunities. Describe all that apply. [open response]

Suggested funding streams to partner with for quality improvement activities:

* IEEEP and IEEEP Expansion Grantees (CDE funding)
* UPK implementers (CDE funding)
* IMPACT Legacy grantees (First 5 California funding)
* QCC Block Grant grantees (CDSS funding)
* QCC Workforce Pathways Grant grantees (CDSS funding)

## Section E: Ensure Accountability – Participation and Improvement Goals

As California recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, the CDE recognizes that the early education landscape has changed. As a result, the CDE is reframing the idea of targets for the CSPP QRIS Block Grant. Per *EC* Section 8203.1, local consortia will, “set ambitious yet achievable targets for California State Preschool Program contracting agencies’ participation in the QRIS with the goal of achieving the highest common tier, as the tier existed on June 1, 2014, or a higher level of quality.” In accordance with statute, and considering challenges posed by the pandemic, the CDE will look forward to the overall goal of full participation in QRIS for all CSPP programs. In order to strive toward the goal of full participation, the CDE recommends grantees reach out to all eligible CSPP programs located in the county of jurisdiction. The table below (see Appendix D) shows the estimated total number of CSPP sites in each county, along with the number participating in QRIS. Note: The data in Appendix D pulls the most recent available data from two different sources. Applicants are required to provide more updated numbers when providing their goals for FY 2023–24. Goals for FY 2024–25 will be requested in the Spring of 2024.

1. Use the goal table below in Appendix D to determine a reasonable and achievable goal for FY 2023–24 for QRIS participation. Goals should demonstrate how the consortium will ensure steady improvement in participation, quality, and children served in CSPP. Indicate the consortium’s goal and justification for:
   1. Number of CSPP sites to be added to the QCC in FY 2023–24 [provide a number]
      1. Include any barriers the consortium is experiencing in recruitment of new CSPP sites [open response]
   2. Total number of CSPP sites to achieve a Tier 5 in FY 2023–24 [provide a number]

While the CDE is required by statute to continue ratings, the ratings will look different. Moving away from high-stakes, external rating tied directly to funding, a program’s rating will be viewed as a data point for the program to utilize in the Quality Improvement Plan and make data-informed change within the program. As a result of changes mentioned above, along with the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CDE requests that grantees prioritize data collection and rating for programs receiving an initial assessment.

For questions 2 through 4, please use the QCC Quality Continuum Framework (located on the QCC website at <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1dGYJIe-mezaXyGpmasgNrHRm1gGPjYLY> to inform responses, and describe which member agency(ies) and staff are responsible for and how the consortium will accomplish each of the following activities:

1. How the consortium will conduct initial and ongoing assessments for the purpose of quality improvement or ratings of every CSPP in the QCC service area. More specifically, how the consortium will prioritize sites for assessment (for example, prioritizing assessments for sites new to QCC, and so on). [open response]
2. Include who will be responsible for carrying out assessments and ratings and detail the process to ensure assessors meet the qualifications to administer the CLASS tool as outlined in the FY 2023–24 Quality Continuum Framework. [open response]
3. Data system(s) that will be used to record assessment and rating information, track site-level and teacher-specific quality improvement supports and incentives, record participation of the individual CSPPs, and track progress relative to the consortium’s local quality improvement targets.[open response]

## Section F: Family Engagement Strategies

Describe which member agency(ies) and staff are responsible for and how the consortium will accomplish each of the following activities:

1. Support the CSPP educators to promote culturally and linguistically effective strategies to engage families and support children’s learning and development. [open response]
2. Supporting multilingual families and affirming the home language in the program. [open response]
3. Identify and engage children and families experiencing homelessness in their communities and the early education programs serving them. [open response]

## Section G: Outreach and Communication

Describe which member agency(ies) and staff are responsible for and how the consortium will accomplish each of the following activities:

1. Inform the public and families about its local quality improvement system and the importance of high-quality early education for children’s learning and development. [open response]
2. Partner with the local R&R(s) and others to share quality ratings, participation in quality improvement activities, and inform consumer education.[open response]

## Section H: Incentives and Site Block Grants

Per EC Section 8203.1 (see Appendix B), Site Block Grants are to be administered to sites with a Tier 4 or 5 rating. To support sites with lower tier ratings, Incentives may be administered to sites at Tier 3 or below, as well as unrated sites. See Appendix C for more information about Site Block Grants and Incentives.

Describe which member agency(ies) and staff are responsible for and how the consortium will accomplish each of the following activities:

1. Use the CSPP QRIS Block Grant Funds to support Site Block Grants for CSPP sites rated at Tier 4 and Tier 5. Specifically, include:
   * The amount given per site, classroom, enrollment or other factors [open response]
   * The amount for Family Child Care Homes (FCCHs) within a FCCHEN [open response]
2. Provide incentives to improve the quality of sites not yet at Tier 4. Include:
   * Identify any challenges in assisting these sites to move to Tier 4 [open response]
   * The amount given per site, classroom, enrollment or other factors [open response]
   * The amount for FCCHs within a FCCHEN [open response]
3. For Site Block Grants and incentives, describe how the Lead Agency will collect information annually from recipients to monitor the efficacy of Site Block Grants and incentives. Describe:
   * How the subrecipient spending will be monitored to ensure funds are administered correctly (administered to the correct subrecipient and spent appropriately) [open response]
   * How the Lead Agency will measure the effectiveness of Site Block Grants and incentives [open response]

Note: In order to improve the monitoring of Incentives and Site Block Grants, grantees will be required to provide the program name, tier, and amount of funds for subrecipients receiving Site Block Grants and Incentives through the CSPP QRIS Block Grant. To ease the administrative burden and promote appropriate use of funds, subrecipients will have 24 months to spend down Site Block Grants and Incentives. For example, for FY 2023–24 funding, subrecipients will have until June 30, 2025 to spend down their Site Block Grants and Incentives. For FY 2024–25 funding, subrecipients will have until June 30, 2026, to spend down their Site Block Grants and Incentives. See Appendix C below for additional information and guidelines for Incentives and Site Block Grants. The CDE will release additional guidance and reporting details when the Grant Award Notifications (GANs) are released.

Note: In alignment with the 24-month period for the spend down of Site Block Grants and Incentives, the GANs for this RFA will encompass three FYs (July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2026). The CDE’s direct grantees should still operate on a one-year plan for expending their annual allocations. The extra time on the GAN is intended for subrecipient spending, not grantee spending. Annual CSPP QRIS Block Grant funding is subject to appropriation each year in the California State Budget.

## Section I: Monitoring and Evaluation

Describe which member agency(ies) and staff are responsible for and how the consortium will accomplish each of the following activities:

1. How the consortium will collect, summarize, and utilize data from quarterly reports submitted to the CDE as well as the annual Common Data File Report, to continuously improve the consortium’s approach to governance, quality improvement, outreach and communications, and incentives.Examples of utilizing data can include, but are not limited to: [open response]

* Adjust coaching and professional development opportunities to meet the varying needs of the CSPP educators.
* Tracking effectiveness of site block grants –to determine if tiers are improving
* Child outcomes
* Outreach and increased enrollment
* Increase participation in the CSPP QRIS Block Grant

## Budget and Budget Narrative

A detailed budget and budget narrative must be submitted. The CSPP QRIS Block Grant Budget Template is available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r2/documents/csppqrisbgrfa23.asp>. In the narrative section, provide justification for each expenditure category, and include information about roles, time allocation, and salary and benefits of the lead agency staff; equipment and supplies; travel; stipends and incentives; indirect costs; and a clear description of services to be contracted.

Budget and Budget Narrative documents must be combined into a ZIP file and attached to the CSPP QRIS Block Grant RFA Survey. Budget documents should encompass the duration of the grant: July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2025.

**Check this box to confirm receipt and review of the updated Allowable and Non-Allowable Costs Section.** [checkbox certification]

### Budget Narrative

Provide the following:

* **Personnel**
* The specific responsibilities of each lead agency position directly participating in quality improvement activities as described in their application.
* The title of each position
* The role of each position to support quality improvement activities
* The agency that funds each position
* The time or full-time equivalent (FTE) of each position
* The salary for each position
* **Benefits**
  + Fringe benefit percentages for all personnel in the project, by agency
  + The basis for cost estimates or computations
* **Supplies**
  + An estimate of materials and supplies needed for the quality improvement activities for the consortium, by nature of expense or general category (for example, instructional materials, office supplies)
  + The basis for cost estimates or computations, including unit number of each supply or material
* **Travel**
  + The purpose of the travel, how it relates to quality improvement goals, and how it will contribute to project success
  + Purpose of each trip
  + An estimate of the number of trips
  + An estimate of costs for each trip
  + Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations
* **Equipment**
  + Justification and need for any equipment to be purchased
  + Purpose of the equipment to be purchased
  + The type of equipment to be purchased
  + The estimated unit cost for each item to be purchased
  + Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations

Note: The CSPP QRIS Block Grant funds can be used to purchase equipment with a unit cost up to $5,000. Equipment being purchased for a participating site must be identified in a site improvement plan. Unit cost includes all costs required to make the item serviceable, such as taxes, freight, installation costs, site preparation costs, etc.

* **Incentives**
  + Description of the types of incentives provided to sites to encourage them to participate in the QRIS or support them to reach higher levels of quality (for example, licensing supports, equipment, materials, financial incentives, and so on)
  + Explanation of the purpose of the incentives and provide the estimated unit cost for each incentive
  + Description of the types of incentives provided to teachers and administrators to support them to reach higher levels of quality (for example, coaching, stipends, training, mentoring, and so on)
  + Explanation of the purpose of the incentives and provide the estimated unit cost for each incentive.
  + A list of sites that will be participating in QRIS at the beginning of the grant year.
* **Contractual**
  + The purpose of any contract and its relation to the project.
  + The products to be acquired or the professional services to be provided
  + The agency that will be responsible for the contract
  + The estimated cost per expected procurement
  + For professional services contracts, the amounts of time to be devoted to the project, including the costs to be charged to the grant award
  + Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations

Note: Indirect may only be charged on the first $25,000 of any subcontract. For example, if the grantee has a subcontract for $100,000, the grantee may only charge indirect on the first $25,000 of that contract. See Chapter 3.06 B of the California State Contracting Manual for more information (found at <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/OLS/Resources/Page-Content/Office-of-Legal-Services-Resources-List-Folder/State-Contracting>).

* **Other**
  + Purpose of expenditure
  + Other item by major type or category (for example, communications, printing, postage, equipment rental)
  + Cost per item
  + Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations
* **Site QRIS Block Grants**
  + The factors, number of sites, and the grant amounts for CSPP sites rated at Tier 4 and Tier 5
  + Explanation of how the Site Block Grants are awarded, including data used to determine award and type of award (monetary or equipment)
* **Total Direct Costs**
  + The sum of expenditures, across all budget categories in Personnel and Operations
* **Indirect Costs**
  + Total indirect cost, including the grantee’s approved rate and which categories the indirect is being applied to
* **Total Funds Requested**
  + The sum of direct and indirect costs for the applicable reporting period.

## Grant Allocations

Based on the 2021–22 child data from CDE’s Child Development Management Information System, the CSPP QRIS Block Grant allocations provided below for 2023–24 were determined using a formula that accounts for the proportion of children in the CSPP served by each consortium including a $5,000 operational base for addressing small county needs. Amounts are organized by the current CSPP QRIS Block Grant grantees. For FY 2024–25, grant allocations will remain the same and will be re-evaluated during the next RFA cycle in FY 2025–26. The annual CSPP QRIS Block Grant allocation is subject to appropriation each year in the California State Budget.

### Annual Consortium Funding Allocations for the California State Preschool Program Quality Rating Improvement System Block Grant for Fiscal Years 2023–25

| County | Annual Allocation |
| --- | --- |
| Alameda | $2,109,383.00 |
| Amador | $42,095.00 |
| Butte | $301,060.00 |
| Calaveras | $25,708.00 |
| Contra Costa | $1,040,817.00 |
| Del Norte | $52,931.00 |
| El Dorado | $192,745.00 |
| Fresno | $2,351,334.00 |
| Humboldt | $119,260.00 |
| Imperial | $506,868.00 |
| Inyo | $54,517.00 |
| Kern | $1,394,041.00 |
| Kings | $347,917.00 |
| Lake | $134,070.00 |
| Los Angeles | $13,613,723.00 |
| Madera | $283,240.00 |
| Marin | $219,350.00 |
| Mendocino | $174,100.00 |
| Merced | $628,720.00 |
| Mono, Alpine | $26,215.00 |
| Monterey | $796,260.00 |
| Napa | $181,906.00 |
| Nevada | $86,226.00 |
| Orange | $2,939,324.00 |
| Placer | $146,410.00 |
| Plumas | $37,866.00 |
| Riverside | $2,520,525.00 |
| Sacramento | $1,995,057.00 |
| San Bernardino | $3,124,409.00 |
| San Diego | $3,631,680.00 |
| San Francisco | $1,194,518.00 |
| San Joaquin | $1,292,550.00 |
| San Luis Obispo | $158,750.00 |
| San Mateo | $794,592.00 |
| Santa Barbara | $566,490.00 |
| Santa Clara, San Benito | $1,491,539.00 |
| Santa Cruz | $331,759.00 |
| Shasta, Glenn, Lassen, Modoc, Tehama, Trinity | $534,708.00 |
| Siskiyou | $75,389.00 |
| Solano | $317,775.00 |
| Sonoma | $409,199.00 |
| Stanislaus | $912,040.00 |
| Tulare | $1,029,950.00 |
| Tuolumne | $38,659.00 |
| Ventura | $960,540.00 |
| Yolo | $336,435.00 |
| Yuba, Colusa, Sutter | $477,350.00 |

## Grant Terms and Conditions

### General Assurances

Applicants do not need to return the general assurances and certifications with the application. Instead, applicants must download and sign assurances and certifications, and keep them on file and available for monitoring reviews, complaint investigations, or audits. General assurances and certifications are available on the CDE Funding Forms web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/fm/ff.asp>.

### Indirect Cost Rate

1. If indirect costs are claimed, an indirect cost allocation plan must be on file with the contractor and available for review by the CDE staff and auditors.
2. In accordance with the *Uniform Guidance,* Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR) Section 200.414(f), the maximum indirect cost rate for any non-federal entity that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, shall be ten percent (10%) of the modified total direct costs.
3. For any non-federal entity that has a negotiated indirect cost rate, which includes all school districts and county offices of education (COE), the maximum indirect cost rate shall be the lessor of the negotiated indirect cost rate or the ten percent (10%) indirect cost rate referenced in *Uniform Guidance,* 2 CFR 200.414(f). A list of negotiated indirect cost rates are available on the CDE Indirect Cost Rate web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/ac/ic/>.
4. This rate is applied to budget categories 1000–5000 only in determining the maximum amount of indirect costs that are reimbursable under the contract.
5. The amount of cost allocable to this contract shall not exceed the benefits to this contract. The allocation method must quantify this benefit among all similar programs and then distribute the costs accordingly.
6. The indirect cost rate shall not include consideration of any costs otherwise non-reimbursable. If a depreciation or use allowance is included in the indirect cost rate, such allowance shall not be claimed on the asset.

### Payment Schedule

The payment schedule for the FY 2023–24 CSPP QRIS Block Grant will be as follows:

* Grantees will receive 45 percent of their funding up front at the beginning of the grant cycle.
* Once reported expenditures demonstrate that half of the initial payment (22.5 percent of the grantee’s total award) is spent down, grantees will receive another 45 percent payment
* The final 10 percent of funding will be paid out as reimbursement upon receipt of quarterly reporting that demonstrates expenditures beyond 90 percent of the total grant award.
  + Note: The last 20 percent may be paid out in multiple installments depending on the timing of grantee expenditures.

Note: Payment schedule is subject to adjustments as needed.

## Allowable Use of Grant Funds

The CSPP QRIS Block Grant funds are not intended for direct services, but rather to support the quality improvement system and support early learning programs to achieve higher levels of quality. No project or activity can be approved that proposes to provide direct services (for example, home visiting, increasing early learning program slots, bonuses or salaries for site personnel), supports only sites that are at one specific level of quality (for example, only preschool programs at Tier 5), or provides a service required by state or federal law, other than pursuant to *EC* Section 8203.1. For example, any project that solely provides special education services for children with disabilities cannot be approved because special education is already required by state law with special funds appropriated to pay for it. In like manner, basic kindergarten programs would not be approved.

Applicant budgets for the use of grant funds will be reviewed, and any items that are deemed non-allowable, excessive, or inappropriate will be eliminated. Generally, all expenditures must contribute to the goals and objectives of the CSPP QRIS Block Grant funding.

Funds can be used only for costs incurred for the successful implementation and administration of the QCC and include the following allowable expenditures (either performed by the lead agency or a subrecipient):

* Data collection and storage
* Quality improvement (stipends, curricula, coaching, professional development and so on)
* Rating and monitoring
* Communications and outreach
* Materials and supplies; marketing materials to promote awareness of QCC among early learning and care programs and the community at large
* Meetings and conferences (Note: any conference expenses must be approved in advance)
* Rental of a venue to provide professional learning (Note: the expenses must be approved in advance)
* Publication and printing costs
* Subscriptions to journals or magazines
* Payment for memberships in professional organizations
* Equipment (non-furniture/non-capitalized) with a unit cost of $5,000 or less (unit cost includes all costs required to make the item serviceable, such as taxes, freight, installation costs, site preparation costs, etc.)
* Training specifically related to QCC design or implementation, including professional development and technical skill development
* In-state travel specifically related to QCC (this will be reimbursed in accordance to state travel guidelines; all costs exceeding state rates will not be covered through these funds)
* Out-of-state travel specifically related to QCC (travel is limited to three consortium staff members or contractors per fiscal year and prior CDE approval must be sought. See the Attorney General’s website at <https://oag.ca.gov/ab1887> for a current list of states subject to the Assembly Bill 1887 travel prohibition on state-funded travel to states with discriminatory laws)
* Agreements with one or more COE, LEA, institution of higher education, not-for-profit educational service provider, consortia member, or community-based organization to assist in fulfilling the responsibilities of the grant.
* The CDE will reimburse lead agencies for incurred administrative costs (both direct and indirect as defined below) related to the QCC. For budgeting and reimbursement purposes, administrative costs directly related to the QCC should be reflected in the Personnel or Operating expenditure categories.
* “Direct costs” include the salaries, wages, and benefits of employees while they are working exclusively on the delivery of a specific project or service (preparing action plans, developing budgets, monitoring activities, and so on), as well as materials, supplies, equipment, utilities, rent, training, travel, and so on. These costs should be easily identifiable with a specific project or directly assigned with a high degree of accuracy.
* “Indirect costs” are shared costs that benefit or support multiple projects or services administered by a lead agency and that cannot be readily identified with a specific project or service (for example, legal, accounting, human resources, procurement, facilities, maintenance, technology, and so on). These costs should be apportioned by a systematic and rational allocation methodology; the methodology should be documented by the lead agency and available upon request. The lead agency shall identify and justify direct costs and indirect costs, including employee fringe benefits, in accordance with State Contracting Manual Volume I, Section 3.17.2, subsection A.1.

## Non-Allowable Activities and Costs

Funds provided under this grant may *not* be used for the following purposes:

* Direct service of early learning and care (for example, funding of slots) or home visiting or other program services
* Acquisition of equipment for administrative or personal use
* Acquisition of furniture (for example, bookcases, chairs, desks, file cabinets, tables) unless it is an integral part of an equipment workstation or it provides reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities
* Consumables (for example, food services, refreshments, alcoholic beverages, banquets, meals, diapers)
* Purchase of space
* Purchase of promotional favors, items, or memorabilia, such as bumper stickers, pencils, pens, t-shirts, gifts, or souvenirs provided to the QCC staff and partners
* Bad debts, including losses (whether actual or estimated) arising from uncollectible accounts and other claims, related collection costs, and related legal costs
* Costs of advertising and public relations designed solely to promote the governmental unit, lead agency, or partners; or promotional items or memorabilia, including gifts or souvenirs
* Entertainment, including amusement, diversion, and social activities, and any expenses directly associated with such costs
* Goods or services for personal use of the lead agency and partner employees regardless of whether the cost is reported as taxable income to the employees
* Legal costs incurred in defense of any civil or criminal fraud proceeding or legal expenses for prosecution of claims against the State of California
* Lobbying costs, whether direct or indirect
* Political activities
* Organized fund-raising, including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions
* Materials and supplies for participating sites not tied to site improvement plan
* Current year agreement funds to pay prior or future year obligations
* Capital assets such as equipment, land, buildings, vehicles, and so on. Unallowable costs also include all costs required to make the item serviceable (for example, taxes, freight, installation costs, site preparation costs)
* Facilities renovation, improvements, and repairs
* Idle facilities or idle capacity except to the extent they are: 1) necessary to meet fluctuations in workload, or 2) necessary when acquired and are now idle because of changes in program requirements, efforts to achieve more economical operations, reorganization, termination, or other causes that could not have been reasonably foreseen
* Gift Cards

## Reporting

The CSPP QRIS Block Grant grantees will submit programmatic and fiscal reports on a quarterly basis to the CDE. Reports will be submitted via the QCC Fiscal Reporting Portal at <https://apps.ccfc.ca.gov/qccreporting/Account/Login>. The CDE is experiencing a gap in information and data due to the self-reporting nature of the Common Data File. While CDE internally addresses this gap, the following guidance for quarterly reporting is required. Quarterly invoices must be accompanied by quarterly programmatic reporting following the template provided by the CDE. Reporting must consist of:

* Quarterly fiscal reports (invoices) to include details of expenses and activities
* Quarterly programmatic reports will include:
  + Number of participating sites
  + Number of children served
    - Demographics of children served (as applicable)
  + Professional Development/Coaching offered during the quarter
    - Topics
    - Number of participating early educators
    - Duration of professional development and Coaching
    - Mode of professional development (in-person, virtual, hybrid, and so on)
  + Incentives:
    - Amount paid out
    - Recipients
    - Tier rating of recipients
  + Site Block Grants
    - Amount paid out to Tier 4
    - Amount paid out to Tier 5
    - Recipients
    - Tier rating of recipients
* Annual Reporting
  + Use of Incentives and Site Block Grants

Quarterly reporting for FY 2023–24 is due on the following dates:

* Quarter 1 (July 1 through September 30, 2023: October 20, 2023
* Quarter 2 (October 1 through December 31, 2023: January 22, 2024
* Quarter 3 (January 1 through March 31, 2024: April 22, 2024
* Quarter 4 (April 1 through June 30, 2024: July 31, 2024

Note: Reporting requirements are subject to change at the discretion of the CDE.

Reporting dates for FY 2024–25 will be released at a later date.

## Budget

The CSPP QRIS Block Grant Budget and Budget Narrative must be submitted to establish the initial budget for the grant. Any budget revisions thereafter must be submitted via the QCC Fiscal Reporting Portal. Due to the limitations of the QCC Fiscal Reporting Portal, budget allowances will not be available. Budget Revisions will need to be submitted in any instance that a budget category is exceeded.

Budget Revisions must be submitted to and approved by the CDE on a quarterly basis. Requests of this nature are necessary to allow for consistency when submitting reimbursement invoices. Budget Revisions will be approved or denied through the QCC Fiscal Reporting Portal.

## Use of Subcontractors

The lead agency can subcontract with another entity to implement the CSPP QRIS Block Grant as an intermediary; however, the lead agency remains legally responsible for all program, administrative, evaluation, and fiscal requirements of the RFA and Grant Award Agreement, even if administered through an intermediary.

If a lead agency subcontracts with another agency to implement the CSPP QRIS Block Grant, any communication regarding implementation of the CSPP QRIS Block Grant must occur through the lead agency. The CDE will not discuss any program, administrative, evaluation, or fiscal issues with a subcontractor. The lead agency must adhere to the State of California’s contract bidding requirement. The lead agency is responsible for the timely collection of necessary data and reporting.

If it is discovered the lead agency did not attempt to obtain prior CDE approval or did not follow the State of California’s contract bidding requirements, the related expenses will be disallowed.

Any subcontract entered into as a result of the subsequent Grant Award Agreement shall contain all the provisions held within.

## Assignment

The Grant Award is not assignable by the Grantee, either in whole or in part, without the consent of the CDE in the form of a formal written amendment.

## Independent Grantee

The Grantee, and the agents and employees of the Grantee, in the performance of this Grant Award, shall act in an independent capacity and not as officers, employees, or agents of the state.

## News Releases and Publicity

The Grantee shall inform the Grant Manager at the CDE within 14 calendar days of any statements made to the news media regarding the operational procedures and status of work related to this Grant Award and provide the CDE the opportunity to review and comment on any print or electronic news releases related to this grant prior to the release of information to the public.

## Information Security Incidents

The Grantee agrees to notify the CDE by telephone and in writing via email of any use or disclosure of information not provided for by this Grant Award of which it becomes aware within three working days of initial detection. Written reports of information security incidents shall contain information on the incident (for example, hacking, virus, and theft), a description of information that was compromised, and classification of the information (for example, confidential, sensitive, personal). The system or device affected by an information security incident shall be removed from operation immediately. It shall remain removed from operation until correction and mitigation measures have been applied.

## Release of Data or Products

Except as specified in the Grant Award, the Grantee shall not release or disclose any aggregated data or any products created, produced, or developed pursuant to the Grant to any person, except to the Grantee’s personnel, attorneys, prospective vendors, the Grantee’s law firms, and other companies or individuals who are necessary for, and are to be directly involved in, the development, production, and distribution of the products permitted. Products include, but are not limited to, drafts or works in progress. The Grantee agrees to ensure that any agents to whom it provides the data, agrees to the same restrictions and conditions that apply to the grantee with respect to such information. The Grantee shall employ reasonable procedures to protect these products from unauthorized use and disclosure. The CDE retains the right to approve any procedures employed by the Grantee to comply with this provision. Personally identifiable data regarding children, families and providers served under the grant funding shall never be released to any third party without the approval of the CDE. In order to ensure the confidentiality of all students, families, and providers, the Grantee shall adhere to all state and federal privacy protection requirements including but not limited to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as amended (20 United States Code § 1232g and 34 Code of Federal Regulations Part 99); the California Information Practices Act (California Civil Code Section 1798 et seq.); California Education Code sections 49079.5 and 49062 et seq.; and Article 1, Section 1 of the California Constitution.

## Capital Assets

The CSPP QRIS Block Grant funds may not be used for capital assets as defined by the California State Administrative Manual (SAM) and the California School Accounting Manual – land, improvements to land, easements, buildings, building improvements, vehicles, machinery, equipment, works of art and historical treasures, infrastructure, and all other tangible or intangible assets that are used in operations and that have initial useful lives extending beyond a single reporting period and a unit cost of $5,000 or more (SAM Section 8602).

In accordance with SAM, if property does not have an expected useful life of greater than one year and the purchase cost is not $5,000 or more, for purposes of the CSPP QRIS Block Grant, the purchase is considered an expenditure and not a capital asset.

Lead agencies must review existing policies regarding capital assets. If the lead agency’s policy identifies a lower monetary threshold than SAM for capital assets, the lead agency’s policy must be enforced when expending the CSPP QRIS Block Grant funds. If the lead agency’s policy identifies a higher monetary threshold than SAM for capital assets, the State of California’s policy (per SAM) must be enforced when expending the CSPP QRIS Block Grant funds.

## Payment Withholds

Failure to submit timely and accurate fiscal information, evaluation data, and program reports as required by the CDE may result in the withholding of a disbursement of funds, until the required information, data, or reports have been submitted to CDE. Serious delays in fiscal report submission may result in a written request by the CDE for an accounting of expenditures or special review of fiscal and program activity. The CDE may reduce or terminate program participation if it is determined that a lead agency has failed to adhere to the terms and conditions of the RFA or its approved Grant Award Agreement, including any amendments to the RFA or Grant Award Agreement.

## Overpayment

If it is determined that a lead agency received an overpayment of CSPP QRIS Block Grant funds, the CDE will inform the lead agency of the overpayment and provide the following options for recovery: 1) issue an invoice to the lead agency, or 2) reduce a future reimbursement claim. If the invoice is preferred, payment shall be processed within forty-five days of receipt or future claims may be withheld or adjusted. The CDE has the right to recoup all the costs associated with collection of the overpayment, including attorney’s fees.

## Carryover Funds

There are no carryover funds for the CSPP QRIS Block Grant. All funding must be spent down within the grant period. The FY 2023–24 allocation shall be spent down by June 30, 2024. The FY 2024–25 allocation shall be spent down by June 30, 2025. During the grant year, the CDE may determine adjustments to grant award amounts based on grantee expenditures and historic expenditure patterns. The CDE reserves the right to reallocate unspent funds to grantees with a need for more funding.

## Revisions and Amendment to Funding Allocations/Budgets

Lead agencies will have access to funding and spending flexibility within their total budget by fiscal year if cash is available in the appropriate CDE accounts, performance measures are met, and reporting requirements are met. During the term of the CSPP QRIS Block Grant, funding allocations and budgets will be amended based on performance and compliance with requirements of the RFA. Amendments to funding allocations can be made by CDE at any time during the term of the CSPP QRIS Block Grant. Budget revisions and amendments must be submitted to the CDE quarterly.

Allocations may be decreased for the following reasons:

* Joint assessment (completed by the CDE and the lead agency) determines lead agency does not have the capacity to exhaust the entire funding allocation
* Major CSPP QRIS Block Grant System Changes:
* Major changes to quality improvement methods
* Any subcontractor changes
* Changes to the CSPP QRIS Block Grant administration and oversight staff (for example, executive director, chief financial officer, program director, and so on)

Major system changes in state funds are permissible only upon written approval by the CDE. The lead agency must submit a written request at least 60 days prior to the implementation of the proposed change (staffing changes must be disclosed within 30 days of a change). If applicable, an Action Plan and corresponding budget amendment must be submitted describing the major system change and the change to the original budget for one or more fiscal years.

## Dispute Resolution

The lead agency shall attempt to resolve disputes of fiscal components (reimbursement, budget amendments, and so on) with CDE staff. If the dispute is not resolved at the first staff level, the Executive Director or designee of the lead agency may appeal the decision. If the lead agency wishes to appeal, a written description of the issues and the basis for the dispute must be sent to the EED Director within 30 calendar days of receiving an initial response from the first-level determination of the dispute. The letter must have an original signature of the Executive Director or designee. The appeal should be emailed to [QCC@cde.ca.gov](mailto:QCC@cde.ca.gov).

Within 30 calendar days of receiving the lead agency’s written dispute, the EED Director will review the facts of the dispute, and if deemed necessary, will meet with the lead agency’s Executive Director or designee for purposes of resolving the dispute. The EED Director shall notify the lead agency in writing of the results of the appeal, along with the reasons for the decision, within 60 calendar days of the receipt of the lead agency’s notification of the dispute. The EED Director's decision is the final administrative action afforded the appeal.

## Retention of Program Records

Records substantiating state funds disbursed by the CDE to the lead agency are subject to monitoring, examination, and audit by the CDE or its designee, or the State Auditor, for a period of five years, or local policy retention period (whichever is greater) after final payment of program expenditures. Adequate and accurate program and expenditure records that document the allowable costs must be retained for this period. The CDE shall have access to the lead agency’s offices or the CSPP QRIS Block Grant sites, upon reasonable notice and during normal business hours, for the purpose of interviewing employees and inspecting and copying books, records, accounts, and other material that may be relevant to a matter under investigation, and for the purpose of determining compliance with the allowable uses of the CSPP QRIS Block Grant funds.

## Termination of Agreement

The CDE retains the option to terminate a GAN without cause at its discretion, provided that written notice has been delivered to the lead agency at least thirty days prior to such termination date. If the CDE terminates the agreement at its discretion, the lead agency will be entitled to reimbursement upon submission of an invoice and proper proof of claim, in that proportion which its services and products were satisfactorily rendered or provided and its expenses necessarily incurred pursuant to the Agreement, up to the date when notice of termination is received by the lead agency (“the notice date”). The lead agency will not be entitled to reimbursement for any expenses incurred for services and deliverables pursuant to the Agreement after the notice date, unless the lead agency receives written advance approval from the CDE.

## Funding Contingencies for Grant Award Notifications

* + - 1. Any entity that enters into a CSPP QRIS Block Grant Agreement with the CDE understands and agrees that the Agreement is valid and enforceable only if sufficient funds are available in the appropriate accounts administered by the CDE to carry out the purposes of the Agreement. This Agreement shall be invalid and of no further force and effect if sufficient funds are not available in the appropriate account due to:
* Any additional restrictions, limitations, or conditions enacted by the Legislature
* Any statute enacted by the Legislature that may affect the provisions, terms, or funding for the Agreement in any manner
  + - 1. In the event there are insufficient funds in the CSPP QRIS Block Grant account due to any of the aforementioned reasons, the State of California and the CDE shall have no liability to pay any funds to the lead agency or to furnish any other considerations under the Agreement; the lead agency, subsequently, shall not be obligated to perform any provisions of the Agreement.
      2. If full funding does not become available, the CDE will amend the Agreement to reflect the funding reduction or reduced activities.
      3. If possible, alternate funding arrangements may be made to address CDE cash flow issues.

## Ownership of Products and Copyright

Upon their creation, all products, deliverables, or like items that are produced, created, developed, or the like, shall become the sole and complete property of the CDE during the term of the grant. The CDE retains all rights to use, reproduce, distribute, or display any products created, provided, developed, or produced under the Agreement and any derivative products based on products subject to this Agreement, as well as all other rights, privileges, and remedies granted or reserved to a copyright owner under statutory and common-law copyright law.

Any subcontractor agreements shall include language granting the CDE the copyright for any products created, provided, developed, or produced under the Grant Award Agreement and ownership of any products not fixed in any tangible medium of expression. In addition, the lead agency shall require the other party to assign those rights to the CDE in a format prescribed by the CDE. For any products for which the copyright is not granted to the CDE, the CDE shall retain a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license throughout the world to reproduce, to prepare derivative products, to distribute copies, to perform, to display, or otherwise use, duplicated, or dispose of such products in any manner for governmental purposes and to have or permit others to do so.

All products distributed under the terms of the Agreement and any reproductions of products shall include a notice of copyright in a place that can be visually perceived at the direction of the CDE. This notice shall be placed prominently on products and set apart from other matters on the page or medium where it appears. The notice shall state “Copyright” or “©,” the year in which the work was created, and “California Department of Education.”

## Non-Discrimination

During the performance of the Grant Award Agreement, the lead agency and its subcontractors shall not unlawfully discriminate, harass, or allow harassment against any employee or applicant for employment because of sex, race, color, ancestry, religious creed, national origin, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, age, marital status, and denial of family care leave. The lead agency and subcontractors shall ensure that the evaluation and treatment of their employees and applicants for employment are free from such discrimination and harassment. The lead agency and subcontractors shall comply with the provisions of the Fair Employment and Housing Act (Gov. Code §12990 et seq.) and the applicable regulations promulgated thereunder (California Code of Regulations, Title 2, section 7285 et seq.). The applicable regulations of the Fair Employment and Housing Commission implementing Government Code section 12990 et seq., set forth in Chapter 5 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations, are incorporated by reference into this Agreement.

## Indemnification and Hold Harmless

Neither the CDE nor any officer or employee thereof is responsible for any damage or liability occurring by reason of anything done or omitted to be done by the lead agency under, or in connection with any work, authority, or jurisdiction delegated to the lead agency under the Grant Award Agreement. It is understood and agreed, pursuant to Government Code section 895.4, the lead agency shall fully defend, indemnify, and save harmless the CDE and all of its officers and employees from all claims, suits, or actions of every name, kind, and description brought forth occurring by reason of anything done or omitted to be done by the lead agency under or in connection with any work, authority, or jurisdiction delegated to the Contractor under the Agreement.

## Appendix A: Key Terms

| Term | Definition |
| --- | --- |
| California State Preschool Program | Contracted programs per *EC* 8205 include, for purposes of this grant, Family Child Care Home Education Networks providing CSPP services. This includes full-day, full-year and part-day, school year programs in both LEAs and community-based organizations. |
| CDE | California Department of Education |
| CDSS | California Department of Social Services |
| Children who are high impact | “Children who are high impact” refers to children who most benefit from special assistance and support. This includes children from low-income families, those who have disabilities or developmental delays, dual language learners, those who are migrant, homeless, in protective services or foster care, or who reside on “Indian lands” as defined by Section 8013(6) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1996. |
| CLASS® | The CLASS refers to the Classroom Assessment Scoring System®, an observation and scoring tool designed by the University of Virginia to measure the quality of classroom processes and teacher-child interactions. |
| Coaching | Coaching is a relationship-based process led by an expert with specialized and adult learning knowledge and skills, who often serves in a different professional role than the recipient(s). Coaching is designed to build capacity for specific professional dispositions, skills, and behaviors and is focused on goal-setting and achievement for an individual or group. \* |
| COE | County Office of Education |
| Consortium | Consortium refers to a local entity comprising multiple partner agencies, and that convenes a planning body that designs and implements a QRIS.  A Regional or Multi-county Consortium is a group of counties within a geographic region of the state that collaborate, design, and implement a common local QCC model across that group of counties. Whether a  local consortium or multi-county consortium, there will be a lead agency, or possibly two lead agencies. |
| *EC* | California *Education Code* |
| EED | Early Education Division |
| ELC Program | Early Learning and Care Program, for purposes of this RFA only, means any (a) state-licensed or state regulated program or provider, regardless of setting or funding source, that provides early learning and care for children from birth to kindergarten entry, including, but not limited to, programs operated by child care centers and in family child care or family, friend, and neighbor homes; (b) preschool programs funded by the federal government, state or local educational agencies (including Individuals with Disabilities Education Act-funded programs); (c) Early Head Start and Head Start programs; and (d) any non-relative child care providers not otherwise regulated by the state and regularly caring for two or more unrelated children for a fee in a provider setting. |
| Environment Rating Scales (ERS) | Observational assessment tools used to evaluate the quality of early learning and care programs. Each ERS tool is divided into criteria that assess the program’s physical environment, health and safety procedures, materials, interpersonal relationships, and opportunities for learning and development. |
| Family Child Care Homes (FCCH) | These are residential homes licensed by the California Department of Social Services to provide care to infants, toddlers, preschool, and school-age children. |
| Family Child Care Home Education Networks  (FCCHEN) | The networks established pursuant to the *EC* Section 8223 that provide CSPP services. |
| Family, Friend, and  Neighbor Care (FFN) | Individuals providing legally license-exempt child care in a home-based setting. This includes providers who care only for one child, those who provide care only for their relatives, and providers who care only for the children of one other family (other than the provider’s own children, if he or she has any children). |
| LEA | A Local Educational Agency, which includes county offices of education, school districts, and community colleges |
| Lead Agency | The recipient of funds, or direct grantee, to the CDE. The lead agency heads the consortium and is responsible for all reporting and record-keeping requirements. |
| Technical Assistance | Technical Assistance (TA) is the provision of targeted and customized supports by a professional(s) with subject matter and adult learning knowledge and skills to develop or strengthen processes, knowledge application, or implementation of services by recipients. \* |
| QCC Implementation  Guide | Provides guidance in operating and maintaining a local QRIS that incorporates the Quality Continuum Framework. The QCC Implementation Guide is located on the QCC website at <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1dGYJIe-mezaXyGpmasgNrHRm1gGPjYLY>. |
| QCC Fiscal Reporting Portal | This web-based Portal houses all reporting templates and other reporting features, eliminating the need for and allowance of submittal through paper or electronic mail. |
| QRIS | Quality Rating and Improvement System |
| Quality Continuum Framework | The common framework for quality agreed to by the QCC Consortium, with some local modifications allowed. |
| Quality | A quality early learning and care setting is one that provides a safe and healthy learning environment in which early learning and care professionals are supported in acquiring or increasing their knowledge and skills to promote positive relationships, interactions, and activities that enhance all children’s growth and development to prepare them for success in school and life. |

\*National Association for the Education of Young Children definition

### Good Standing

For purposes of this RFA, “good standing” refers to an applicant who has been a CDE grantee and has met all the following requirements:

* Administered quality funding for at least two years, and submitted all fiscal reporting records, which demonstrated the following:
* Spent within 10 percent of the previous year’s total budgeted amount
* Communicated and made rating information accessible to the public
* Submitted all required expenditure reports to the CDE. Reports must be found to be accurate and complete
* Submitted the Common Data File to the Quality Counts California in the previous September, which have been determined to be accurate and complete
* Participated in one local QRIS across multiple funding streams
* Maintained a clear contract with the CDE, per the *EC* Section 8314 (a)(1)
* Operated without any outstanding CDE invoices
* Does not have outstanding or unresolved Federal Program Monitoring, Contract Monitoring Review, or Center-based Monitoring Review findings in any previous FY, or any findings indicated on the grant award notification, and has been determined by the CDE to be making adequate progress toward the resolution of any findings. This also applies to any of the grantee’s contractors, subcontractors, or affiliates.
* Does not have outstanding or unresolved CDE audit findings in any previous FY or has been determined by the CDE to be making adequate progress toward the resolution of any findings. This applies to any of the grantee’s contractors, subcontractors, or affiliates.

## Appendix B: California Department of Education Block Grant Authority

California Education Code Section 8203.1.

(a) The Superintendent shall administer a QRIS block grant, pursuant to an appropriation made for that purpose in the annual Budget Act, to be allocated to local Consortia for support of local early learning quality rating and improvement systems that increase the number of low-income children in high quality preschool programs that prepare those children for success in school and life.

(b) (1) For purposes of this section, “early learning quality rating and improvement system” or “QRIS” is defined as a locally determined system for continuous quality improvement based on a tiered rating structure with progressively higher quality standards for each tier that provides supports and incentives for programs, teachers, and administrators to reach higher levels of quality, monitors and evaluates the impacts on child outcomes, and disseminates information to parents and the public about program quality.

(2) For purposes of this section, “local consortium” is defined as a local or regional entity, administered by a lead agency, that convenes a planning body that designs and implements a QRIS. A local consortium shall include representatives from organizations including, but not limited to, the following:

* Local educational agencies
* First 5 county commissions
* Local postsecondary education institutions
* Local child care planning councils
* Local resource and referral agencies
* Alternative Payment Programs (APPs)
* Other local agencies, including nonprofit organizations that provide services to children from birth to five years of age, inclusive

(3) For purposes of this section, “quality continuum framework” means the tiered rating matrix created and adopted by a local consortium for purposes of implementing a QRIS. The tiered rating matrix shall include three common tiers shared by all participating local Consortia. Changes to the common tiers shall be approved and adopted by all participating local Consortia.

(c) The QRIS block grant shall build on local Consortia and other local QRIS work in existence on or before the operative date of this section.

(d) For the 2014–15 fiscal year, if a county or region has an established local consortium that has adopted a quality continuum framework, the local consortium’s lead administering agency shall be provided the first opportunity to apply for a QRIS block grant.

(e) Local Consortia shall do the following to be eligible for a QRIS block grant:

(1) Implement a QRIS that incorporates evidence-based elements and tools in the quality continuum framework that are tailored to the local conditions and enhanced with local resources.

(2) Set ambitious yet achievable targets for California State Preschool Program contracting agencies’ participation in the QRIS with the goal of achieving the highest common tier, as the tier existed on June 1, 2014, or a higher level of quality.

(3) Develop an action plan that includes a continuous quality improvement process that is tied to improving child outcomes.

(4) Describe how QRIS block grant funds will be used to increase the number of sites achieving the highest common local tier and to directly support classrooms that have achieved the highest common tier, as that tier existed on June 1, 2014, or a higher level of quality.

(f) The Superintendent, in consultation with the executive director of the State Board, shall allocate QRIS block grant funds to local Consortia that satisfy the requirements of subdivision (e) based on the number of California State Preschool Program slots within the county or region.

(g) (1) Local Consortia receiving QRIS block grant funds shall allocate those funds to contracting agencies of the California State Preschool Program, as established by Article 7 (commencing with Section 8235), or local educational agencies, for activities that support and improve quality, and assess quality and access. In allocating the QRIS block grant funds, priority shall be given to directly supporting the classrooms of the California State Preschool Program sites that have achieved the highest common local tier of quality.

(2) No more than 20 percent of a local consortium’s QRIS block grant funds may be used for assessment and access projects.

(h) A family child care home education network established pursuant to Section 8223 that provides California State Preschool Program services shall be eligible for an allocation from a local consortium of QRIS block grant funds for activities that support, improve, and assess quality.

## Appendix C: Site Block Grants and Incentives

Site Block Grants and Incentives are disseminated from the county-level CSPP QRIS Block Grant grantees to the CSPP programs who are participating in the QCC. Site Block Grants are reserved for Tiers 4 and 5 to improve and maintain high quality. Incentives are given to Tier 3 programs to raise the quality of the program.

Due to a wide array of spending practices for Incentives and Site Block Grants in the past, the CDE is providing the following guidance for the administration and use of Site Block Grants and Incentives.

### Spending Timeline

Subrecipients who receive Site Block Grants and Incentives from the CSPP QRIS Block Grant grantees are required to spend these funds within 12 months of the grant end date. For example, if a grantee is awarded funding for FY 2023–24, the grantee must administer Incentives and Site Block Grants before the grant end date on the GAN (June 30, 2024). The subrecipient of the Incentive or Site Block Grant has an additional 12 months to spend their Incentive or Site Block Grant (June 30, 2025). The purpose of the CSPP QRIS Block Grant is to improve quality for CSPP programs participating in QCC. Funding may not be stored or accumulated for use in future FYs.

### Allowable and Non-allowable Activities:

In addition to the Allowable Costs listed above, Site Block Grants and Incentives may be spent on:

* Classroom equipment
* Classroom furniture
* Classroom materials and manipulatives
* Minor facilities improvements
* Classroom improvements to accommodate students with disabilities
* Community Outreach
* Professional Development (workshops, trainings, coaching, and so on)
* Education software (for example, Learning Genie, ASQ Online, and so on)

In addition to the Non-Allowable Costs listed above, Site Block Grants and Incentives may not be spent on:

* Major facilities improvements (for example, playgrounds)
* Savings for future, anticipated expenses
* Teacher bonuses (this includes any direct payments to teachers not tied to participation in quality improvement activities)
  + Bonuses for teacher retention are not allowable

For activities and expenses that are not listed, please reach out to the CDE QCC Team for approval of expenses.

### Example Uses of Site Block Grants and Incentives

The following are examples of how Site Block Grants and Incentives may be used by subrecipients:

* Classroom learning materials (manipulatives, utensils, dramatic play props, art supplies)
* Professional conferences and travel
* Professional development (training, coaching, and so on)
* Stipends for staff participation in professional development and quality related activities
* Appropriate and functional classroom furniture and equipment (rugs, chairs and tables of appropriate height for the children’s age, nap mats, dramatic play furniture, classroom organization materials)
* Accommodations for children with disabilities, including materials, equipment and supplies that support the learning of all children (stools, diaper table with stairs, flexible and adaptive seating, sensory materials, and so on)
* Age-appropriate equipment and supplies for outdoor learning environments (tricycles, balls, picnic tables, sensory tables, proper storage for outdoor supplies, shade awnings and coverings, outdoor mud kitchen, outdoor easels, gardening materials, and so on)
* Family outreach and engagement (bulletin board for families, family events, light refreshments for family events and teacher conferences, and so on)

### Monitoring and Reporting

Subrecipients of Incentives and Site Block Grants will be required to report the following:

* Program Name
* Tier Rating
* Amount of Incentive or Site Block Grant received

## Appendix D: Goal Tables

The following tables contain data collected via the QCC Common Data File and are intended to be used by applicants to establish goals for FY 2023–24. Due to data and reporting limitations with the Common Data File, the numbers provided below are estimates. Grantees should use these numbers as reference while evaluating their own county-level data sources to establish goals for FY 2023–24. The data in this section was provided by the EED’s Applied Data Research and Evaluation Office.

### California State Preschool Program Site Participation in Quality Counts California

The following table contains estimates of the CSPP site participation in the QCC in each county. The table below pulls the QCC Common Data File information from FY 2020–21 for Site Participation, but pulls point-in-time data from January 2023 for the Total CSPP Sites. Due to the discrepancies in the timeframes of the data, it is noted that the percentages provided below may be inaccurate. These are the most up to date data the CDE has access to at the time of the release of this RFA. As noted above, these numbers should be used as reference, and applicants should consider their own data sources for the most accurate and updated information when creating goals for this RFA.

| County Name | Sites Participating in Quality Counts California | Total California State Preschool Program Sites | Percent of Sites Participating in Quality Counts California |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Alameda | 131 | 134 | 97.76% |
| Alpine | 1 | 1 | 100.00% |
| Amador | 3 | 6 | 50.00% |
| Butte | 21 | 23 | 91.30% |
| Calaveras | 5 | 5 | 100.00% |
| Colusa | 6 | 6 | 100.00% |
| Contra Costa | 47 | 67 | 70.15% |
| Del Norte | 7 | 5 | 140.00% |
| El Dorado | 26 | 23 | 113.04% |
| Fresno | 125 | 171 | 73.10% |
| Glenn | 7 | 5 | 140.00% |
| Humboldt | 10 | 14 | 71.43% |
| Imperial | 27 | 29 | 93.10% |
| Inyo | 7 | 7 | 100.00% |
| Kern | 56 | 90 | 62.22% |
| Kings | 17 | 18 | 94.44% |
| Lake | 12 | 13 | 92.31% |
| Lassen | 2 | 6 | 33.33% |
| Los Angeles | 557 | 808 | 68.94% |
| Madera | 25 | 26 | 96.15% |
| Marin | 21 | 17 | 123.53% |
| Mariposa | 0 | 0 | N/A |
| Mendocino | 17 | 20 | 85.00% |
| Merced | 38 | 37 | 102.70% |
| Modoc | 4 | 5 | 80.00% |
| Mono | 3 | 5 | 60.00% |
| Monterey | 48 | 72 | 66.67% |
| Napa | 11 | 11 | 100.00% |
| Nevada | 8 | 8 | 100.00% |
| Orange | 179 | 190 | 94.21% |
| Placer | 11 | 16 | 68.75% |
| Plumas | 5 | 5 | 100.00% |
| Riverside | 144 | 159 | 90.57% |
| Sacramento | 144 | 146 | 98.63% |
| San Benito | 0 | 5 | 0.00% |
| San Bernardino | 125 | 185 | 67.57% |
| San Diego | 170 | 205 | 82.93% |
| San Francisco | 69 | 103 | 66.99% |
| San Joaquin | 103 | 121 | 85.12% |
| San Luis Obispo | 18 | 22 | 81.82% |
| San Mateo | 65 | 63 | 103.17% |
| Santa Barbara | 44 | 51 | 86.27% |
| Santa Clara | 116 | 119 | 97.48% |
| Santa Cruz | 20 | 24 | 83.33% |
| Shasta | 28 | 27 | 103.70% |
| Sierra | 1 | 0 | N/A |
| Siskiyou | 11 | 11 | 100.00% |
| Solano | 25 | 22 | 113.64% |
| Sonoma | 34 | 36 | 94.44% |
| Stanislaus | 36 | 57 | 63.16% |
| Sutter | 11 | 10 | 110.00% |
| Tehama | 9 | 15 | 60.00% |
| Trinity | 8 | 2 | 400.00% |
| Tulare | 65 | 140 | 46.43% |
| Tuolumne | 7 | 6 | 116.67% |
| Ventura | 85 | 91 | 93.41% |
| Yolo | 21 | 34 | 61.76% |
| Yuba | 12 | 12 | 100.00% |
| Grand Total | 2,808 | 3,509 | 80.02% |

### County Tier Ratings

The following table contains estimates of the CSPP site tier ratings in each county. The table below pulls QCC Common Data File information from FY 2020–21. These are the most up to date data the CDE has access to at the time of the release of this RFA. As noted above, these numbers should be used as reference, and applicants should consider their own data sources for the most accurate and updated information when creating goals for this RFA.

| County Name | Score: 1 | Score: 2 | Score: 3 | Score: 4 | Score: 5 | Total |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Alameda | 0 | 2 | 23 | 70 | 27 | 122 |
| Alpine | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Amador | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| Butte | 0 | 0 | 2 | 10 | 4 | 16 |
| Calaveras | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 5 |
| Colusa | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 6 |
| Contra Costa | 0 | 0 | 3 | 27 | 12 | 42 |
| Del Norte | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| El Dorado | 0 | 0 | 3 | 18 | 4 | 25 |
| Fresno | 0 | 0 | 0 | 49 | 34 | 83 |
| Glenn | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| Humboldt | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 2 | 9 |
| Imperial | 0 | 0 | 9 | 8 | 0 | 17 |
| Inyo | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| Kern | 0 | 0 | 6 | 26 | 20 | 52 |
| Kings | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 9 | 16 |
| Lake | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 3 | 9 |
| Lassen | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Los Angeles | 0 | 13 | 125 | 343 | 52 | 533 |
| Madera | 0 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 7 | 23 |
| Marin | 0 | 0 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 13 |
| Mariposa | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mendocino | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Merced | 0 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 21 | 37 |
| Modoc | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| Mono | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Monterey | 0 | 0 | 4 | 27 | 17 | 48 |
| Napa | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 7 |
| Nevada | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| Orange | 0 | 0 | 1 | 84 | 84 | 169 |
| Placer | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Plumas | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| Riverside | 0 | 0 | 2 | 99 | 30 | 131 |
| Sacramento | 0 | 0 | 7 | 102 | 26 | 135 |
| San Benito | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| San Bernardino | 0 | 0 | 4 | 91 | 15 | 110 |
| San Diego | 0 | 0 | 2 | 63 | 87 | 152 |
| San Francisco | 0 | 0 | 1 | 52 | 14 | 67 |
| San Joaquin | 0 | 0 | 11 | 40 | 12 | 63 |
| San Luis Obispo | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 7 | 17 |
| San Mateo | 0 | 0 | 5 | 35 | 18 | 58 |
| Santa Barbara | 0 | 0 | 0 | 24 | 19 | 43 |
| Santa Clara | 0 | 0 | 12 | 59 | 25 | 96 |
| Santa Cruz | 0 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 2 | 20 |
| Shasta | 0 | 0 | 5 | 11 | 7 | 23 |
| Sierra | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Siskiyou | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 6 |
| Solano | 0 | 0 | 3 | 11 | 1 | 15 |
| Sonoma | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 21 | 31 |
| Stanislaus | 0 | 0 | 0 | 20 | 14 | 34 |
| Sutter | 0 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 11 |
| Tehama | 0 | 0 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 8 |
| Trinity | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Tulare | 0 | 0 | 1 | 23 | 36 | 60 |
| Tuolumne | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 7 |
| Ventura | 0 | 0 | 2 | 52 | 24 | 78 |
| Yolo | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 6 | 18 |
| Yuba | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 1 | 9 |
| Grand Total | **0** | **15** | **241** | **1,524** | **681** | **2,461** |

## Appendix E: California State Preschool Program Quality Rating Improvement System Block Grant Request for Applications Checklist – Fiscal Year 2023–24

Complete applications will include the following:

* Completed RFA survey
  + Responses to each question on the RFA survey
* Attachments (to be combined into a ZIP file and attached to the RFA survey before submission)
  + Budget
  + Budget Narrative

## Appendix F: Scoring Rubric

The California State Preschool Program (CSPP) Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) Block Grant Fiscal Year (FY) 2023–24 Request for Applications (RFA) is a non-competitive RFA. The RFA contains mandatory components that must be completed in order for an applicant to be awarded funding. The following rubric is based on completion.

**Instructions:** Read and score each section of the applicant’s submission based on the completion criteria below.

**Applicant County:** [Insert Applicant County]

**Applicant Lead Agency:** [Insert Applicant Lead Agency]

### Section A: Local Needs

| Description | Complete/Incomplete | Notes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Applicant identifies needs for their consortium and describes high-impact and high-need communities in their consortium (for example, children living in poverty, multilingual learners, children in foster care, children experiencing homelessness, children with exceptional needs, and children who are Black, Tribal, or migrant, and those who live in rural or isolated communities). | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant describes goals and objectives of the local consortium and the Quality Improvement Plan, with specifics about the use of CSPP QRIS Block Grant Funding. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant describes how the consortium will build capacity in CSPP and Universal PreKindergarten (UPK) programs. Applicant must address impacts on high-impact communities and supports for transitioning to Transitional Kindergarten (TK), Kindergarten or early elementary school. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |

### Section B: Governance, Convening and Strengthening Partnerships

| Description | Complete/Incomplete | Notes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Applicant includes allof the following partners in their application:   1. Local educational agencies 2. First 5 county commissions 3. Local postsecondary educational institutions 4. Local childcare planning councils (LPCs) 5. Local resource and referral agencies (R&Rs) 6. Alternative Payment Programs (APPs) 7. Other local agencies, including nonprofit organizations, that provide services to children from birth to five years of age, inclusive | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant describes how the consortium’s Quality Improvement Plan has been shared amongst consortium partners and indicates any feedback received from consortium members. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant describes governance and decision-making structures in their consortium. Applicant must describe how early educators will be involved in local decision-making processes. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant details the roles and responsibilities of each consortium member agency. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant describes plans to strengthen and expand partnerships with the following recommended agencies:   * Local Tribal Representative (as applicable) * County Health and Human Services Agency * Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) * County Department of Social Services * County Department of Public Health * Foster Child Care Bridge (as applicable) * Alternative Payment Program(s) (APP) (At least one required) * Key interest holders (for example, providers, parents, Head Start grantee, state-contracted early learning and care programs) * Child Care Licensing Regional Offices * Others as appropriate | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |

### Section C: Engagement and Recruitment

| Description | Complete/Incomplete | Notes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Applicant describes the current QCC participation in the county, including the number of CSPP sites and how many are participating in QCC. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant describes how the consortium will engage early educators in QCC, including specific outreach and recruitment strategies. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant addresses how the consortium will retain participating programs and how programs will be engaged in continuous quality improvement activities. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant describes how the consortium will build and maintain partnerships with school districts to ensure smooth transitions from early education to TK, Kindergarten, or early elementary school. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |

### Section D: Quality Improvement Strategies, Quality Investments, and Supports

| Description | Complete/Incomplete | Notes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Applicant address how they plan to create individualized quality improvement plans for participating sites. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant describes how they will collect and use data and feedback from each CSPP to inform continuous improvement in the implementation of quality improvement supports. Including:   * The process for data collection * If and how the data will be shared back * How data will be used to improve quality | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant describes, in detail, their quality improvement supports, specifically including:   * Training and technical assistance * Coaching | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant describes the education or experience qualifications for coaches. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant describes how they will prioritize coaching for CSPPs. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant identifies other programs or funding streams the consortium plans to partner with to combine trainings or invite additional participants from the UPK mixed-delivery system to existing training and professional development opportunities. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |

### Section E: Ensure Accountability – Participation and Improvement Goals

| Description | Complete/Incomplete | Notes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Applicant identifies participation and recruitment goals for CSPPs participating in QCC, including addressing barriers to recruitment and participation as necessary. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant identifies goals for the number of programs to be rated at Tier 5 in FY 2023–24. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant describes how the consortium will conduct initial and ongoing assessments for the purpose of quality improvement or ratings of every CSPP in the QCC service area. More specifically, how the consortium will prioritize sites for assessment. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant describes who will be responsible for carrying out assessments and ratings for the CLASS tool, including the process to ensure observers meet the qualifications to administer the CLASS tool as outlined in the FY 2023–24 Quality Continuum Framework. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant addresses data system(s) that will be used to record assessment and rating information, track site-level and teacher-specific quality improvement supports and incentives, record participation of individual CSPPs, and track progress relative to the consortium’s local quality improvement targets. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |

### Section F: Family Engagement Strategies

| Description | Complete/Incomplete | Notes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Applicant describes efforts to promote family engagement through culturally- and linguistically-effective strategies to support children’s learning and development. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant describes strategies to support multilingual families and affirm the home language in the program. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant describes efforts to identify and engage children and families experiencing homelessness in their communities and the early education programs serving them. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |

### Section G: Outreach and Communication

| Description | Complete/Incomplete | Notes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Applicant describes efforts to inform the public and families about its local quality improvement system and the importance of high-quality early education for children’s learning and development. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant describes how the consortium will partner with local R&Rs and others to share quality ratings, participation in QCC quality improvement activities, and inform consumer education. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |

### Section H: Incentives and Site Block Grants

| Description | Complete/Incomplete | Notes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Applicant describes the process of awarding incentives to improve the quality of sites not yet at a Tier 4. Applicants must include the amount per site, justification for amounts, and the amount given for sites that are part of a Family Child Care Home Education Network (FCCHEN) (if applicable). | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant identifies barrier to getting sites to Tier 4, if applicable. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant describes how the consortium will use CSPP QRIS Block Grant funding for Site Block grants for sites rated at Tier 4 and Tier 5. Applicants must include the amounts per site, justification for amounts, and the amount given for sites that are part of a FCCHEN (if applicable). | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |

### Section I: Monitoring and Evaluation

| Description | Complete/Incomplete | Notes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Applicant describes how the consortium will collect, summarize and utilize data from quarterly reports submitted to the CDE as well as the Common Data File Report to support continuous quality improvement. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |

### Budget and Budget Narrative

| Description | Complete/Incomplete | Notes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Applicant provides a Budget in the provided template. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant provides a Budget Narrative that aligns with the Budget provided. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Budget and Budget Narrative include allowable expenses as outlined in the RFA. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |

### Other Measures

| Description | Complete/Incomplete | Notes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Applicant acknowledges changes to allowable and non-allowable expenditures. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |
| Applicant acknowledges changes to Site Block Grant and Incentive expenditure requirements. | [complete/incomplete] | [insert notes] |