

California Department of Education

**Report to the Governor, the Legislature, and
the Legislative Analyst's Office:**

**California's Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge Grant 2015
Report**



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California Department of Education

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Report to the Governor, the Legislature, and the Legislative Analyst's Office: California's Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge Grant 2015 Report

Executive Summary

This report is required by Item 6110-200-0890, Provision 2 of the Budget Act of 2014. The California Department of Education (CDE) is required to submit a report to the fiscal committees of the Legislature and the Governor on the State and local activities undertaken with the Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant funds each year.

This report provides an update on the 2015 federal RTT-ELC grant activities in California. The objective of RTT-ELC is to improve the quality of early learning programs and close the achievement gap for children with high needs. The RTT-ELC is organized around five key areas of reform: (1) Successful State Systems; (2) High-Quality, Accountable Programs; (3) Promoting Early Learning Development Outcomes for Children; (4) Great Early Childhood Education Workforce; and (5) Measuring Outcomes and Progress.

California's RTT-ELC implements a unique approach that builds upon its local and statewide successes to create sustainable capacity at the local level and addresses the geographic and cultural diversity of California. Approximately 77 percent of the grant funding is being spent at the local level, via 17 original consortia and 14 mentee counties, to support the development and expansion of successful local Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) efforts focused on improved outcomes for children with high needs.

The QRIS efforts have extended beyond the RTT-ELC Consortia and their Mentees. During 2015, 45 counties participated in funding opportunities that will sustain the QRIS work of RTT-ELC; the other 13 counties participated in opportunities supporting quality improvement (QI) activities or QI systems. These efforts indicate that program quality improvement is a major priority at state and local levels in preparing young children for lifelong success.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Cecelia Fisher-Dahms, Education Administrator, California Department of Education (CDE), Early Education and Support Division, by phone at 916-324-9739 or by e-mail at cfisherd@cde.ca.gov.

You will find this report on the CDE RTT-ELC Legislative Reports Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/rt/rttelclegreports.asp>. If you need a copy of this report, please contact Lila Nazari, Office Technician, CDE, Early Education and Support Division, by phone at 916-323-1343 or by e-mail at lnazari@cde.ca.gov.

Introduction

Based on the robust body of research demonstrating that high-quality early learning and development programs can improve young children’s health and social, emotional, and cognitive outcomes; enhance school readiness; and help close the wide school readiness gap, the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services released the Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) application on August 23, 2011. A total of 37 RTT-ELC grant applications were submitted, and California was one of the original nine winning states. California requested \$100 million and initially was awarded \$52.6 million. In July 2013, additional federal money was released for a second round of RTT-ELC grants. At that time, California received a supplemental award of \$22.4 million, bringing the total award amount to \$75 million, the largest award of any state.

The California Department of Education (CDE) was the RTT-ELC lead agency, which was responsible for overall grant administration and project monitoring. Staff members from the CDE Early Education and Support Division (EESD), (formerly called the Child Development Division) and First 5 California (F5CA) served as the RTT-ELC State Implementation Team (Team) that provided work-group and meeting planning and facilitation, technical assistance (TA) and support, and fiscal and programmatic oversight to 17 Regional Leadership Consortia (Consortia). The Consortia included 16 counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, El Dorado, Fresno, Los Angeles, Merced, Orange, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Ventura, and Yolo. The number of children under five years of age in these counties was approximately 2.3 million, which represented almost 95 percent of the total birth-to-age-five children in California.

The objective of the RTT-ELC program was to improve the quality of early learning programs and close the achievement gap for children with high needs as defined in the federal application:

Children from birth through kindergarten entry who are from low-income families or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, including children who have disabilities or developmental delays; who are English learners; who reside on “Indian lands” as that term is defined by section 8013(6) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA); who are migrant, homeless, or in foster care; and other children as identified by the State.

To address this school readiness gap, the grant identified high priorities for both strengthening the quality of early learning and development programs and increasing access to them, especially for children with high needs. The RTT-ELC grant and this report are organized around five key areas of reform:

- I. Successful State Systems
- II. High-Quality, Accountable Programs
- III. Promoting Early Learning Development Outcomes for Children

- IV. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce
- V. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

California's RTT-ELC grant implemented a unique approach built upon California's local and statewide successes to create sustainable capacity at the local level to meet the needs of our early learners (from birth-to-age-five) with a focus on those with the highest needs. As directed and approved by the governor and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, California's plan supported a locally driven quality improvement process that built upon existing local and statewide successes and investment while creating sustainable capacity at the local level.

Approximately 77 percent of California's RTT-ELC total grant funding was spent at the local level to support a voluntary network of early learning programs. Each county-level consortium¹ is led by an established organization already operating or developing a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). The local QRIS model has three common rated tiers across the Consortia. The federal application defined a Tiered QRIS (TQRIS) as:

The system through which the State uses a set of progressively higher Program Standards to evaluate the quality of an Early Learning and Development Program and to support program improvement. A TQRIS consists of four components:

- (a) Tiered Program Standards with multiple rating categories that clearly and meaningfully differentiate program quality levels
- (b) Monitoring to evaluate program quality based on the Program Standards
- (c) Supports to help programs meet progressively higher standards (e.g., through training, technical assistance, financial support)
- (d) Program quality ratings that are publicly available and include a process for validating the system

The RTT-ELC grant is a four-year grant from 2012 to 2015. The CDE submitted a request for a no-cost time extension which would allow the Consortia to extend their spending through June 30, 2016, and several RTT-ELC project contracts to be extended through that date or September 30, 2016. On November 13, 2015, the CDE received approval for an extension of the grant through December 31, 2016.

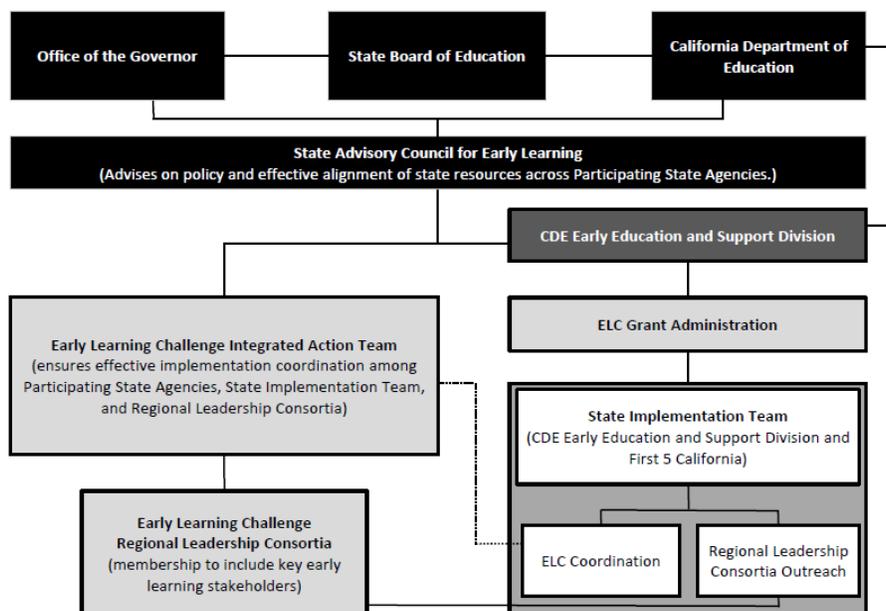
1. Lowercase "consortium" or "consortia" is used when referring to a single county QRIS consortium or several, but not the entire Regional Leadership Consortia, which is when "Consortia" is used.

RTT-ELC Reform Area I: Successful State Systems

Agency	Reform Area I Project	Objective	Status Snapshot
CDE (\$1,424,881)	RTT-ELC Project Management	Manage the RTT-ELC grant, its contracts, ensure compliance by the Consortia of grant requirements, and ensure fiscal accountability by the Consortia.	Conducted fiscal and programmatic review of Consortia. No cost time extension secured contracts on target.

During 2015, California's RTT-ELC grant governance structure continued to function as illustrated in the organizational chart below. This structure builds on California's strategy of interagency collaboration and governance and provided opportunities to further strengthen and enhance this strategy through the RTT-ELC grant. With active participation from the various state agencies and the RTT-ELC Regional Leadership Consortia (Consortia), California has created channels to improve and align state and local systems that serve children with high needs, ages zero to five years.

State of California's Early Learning Challenge Organizational Chart



The following subsections describe the major organizational levels of state governance structure and discuss 2015 major activities or functions regarding state systems.

California Administration: Office of the Governor, State Board of Education, and California Department of Education

Representatives from the governor's administration (Department of Finance [DOF] and the State Board of Education [SBE]) continued to be involved in major policy issues pertaining to California's implementation of the RTT-ELC grant. In 2015, these representatives received periodic updates and developed California's early learning program budgets. They also participated in the review of the funding formula and program plans to implement legislation enacted in California's Fiscal Year (FY) 2014–15 Budget Act process (Trailer Bill - Senate Bill 858) that established a state QRIS Block Grant program for California's State Preschool Program. This Block Grant enables local educational agencies (LEAs) to create early learning QRISs within their counties to increase the number of low-income children receiving high-quality state preschool program experiences.

The DOF and SBE were also involved in the legislative process that resulted in the enactment of the 2015–17 Infant/Toddler (I/T) QRIS Block Grant (SB 97, Chapter 11, Statutes of 2015, of the 2015–16 Annual Budget Act, Budget Item 6100-194-0001, Schedule (12), Provision 17 which is Appendix B). The purpose of this I/T QRIS Block Grant has been to support local QRIS consortia to provide training, TA, and resources to help infant and toddler child care providers meet a higher tier of quality as determined by their local QRIS.

Within the CDE, the EESD continued to lead the RTT-ELC Consortia activities in partnership with F5CA, another state agency. This partnership resulted in establishing a RTT-ELC Leadership Team consisting of the two agency's directors and two of the agency's top administrators that oversee and direct the work of the RTT-ELC State Implementation Team (Team). The Team consisted of staff from each agency working in concert with one another to carry out the numerous tasks associated with administration of the grant regarding the Consortia. This partnership continued to model state agency coordination and collaboration between the two agencies that have the major responsibility for serving this child population in early learning and care settings for the State of California.

State Advisory Council on Early Learning and Care

California's governor appointed members to the State Advisory Council on Early Learning and Care (SAC) that represent a broad range of state and local agencies and organizations involved in the education and care of young children and early learning programs. The SAC members represent fields of education, social services, health and mental health, higher education, and tribal organizations. One of the governor's appointees also administered a RTT-ELC consortium and serves as a liaison between the SAC and the Consortia. Another appointee formerly administered a consortium and continues to provide a RTT-ELC perspective to the SAC.

In 2015, the SAC held four meetings (January, April, July, and October). The SAC agendas focused on various topics pertaining to the education and care of young children. The major discussions centered on state and federal updates; emphasizing legislative, regulatory, and budget information; and program updates on the Child Care and Development Block Grant, the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Grant, RTT-ELC Grant, CSPP QRIS Block Grant, and the Head Start Collaborative Office. In addition, the SAC members heard several presentations on child care licensing issues, early childhood workforce and worthy wage issues, the federal statement of inclusion of all children in early learning programs, professional development opportunities, and the Commission on Teacher Credentialing Child Development Permit work group progress.

At the July and October meetings, the SAC discussed the federal poverty rate limitation on meeting the needs of California's neediest children and families, especially in high-cost urban areas. In July, the SAC decided to draft a letter for the governor's signature to send to President Barack Obama regarding the problem of using the federal poverty rate to determine family eligibility in California for the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Grant program. During the October meeting, a draft of this letter was presented for the SAC members review. The letter went through the edit and approval process and will be brought back to the SAC at its first meeting in 2016 for further action.

In October 2015, the SAC received a letter from the governor in which he announced the appointment of a new chair for the SAC, Mark Friedman, a former administrator of a RTT-ELC consortium. In the letter, the governor also requested the Council to undertake several activities in addition to those enumerated in the federal Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 authorizing the SAC. These activities included reviewing (1) the Child Care and Development Fund state plan, pursuant to the governor's veto message of SB 548 of 2015; (2) the recommendations of stakeholder groups, pursuant to Assembly Bill 104, Chapter 13, Statutes of 2015, that established two groups—one focused on voucher-funded programs, and the other on the CDE's contracted programs—to develop recommendations to streamline data and other reporting requirements; and (3) local collaboration and coordination, and federal, state, and local funding streams. As a result of the governor's directives, the SAC will focus its 2016 scope of work on addressing these activities.

This SAC has been an important communication conduit to convey RTT-ELC information and progress to other constituents involved in the administration of California's early learning and care programs. The major communication message stresses the importance of continuous quality program improvement that results in children with high needs receiving quality learning experiences and services to better prepare them for kindergarten and ultimately for life.

RTT-ELC State Implementation Team

The Team consisting of staff from the CDE and F5CA continued to be the key body that plans and implements the RTT-ELC grant in compliance with California's approved application. The Team has been charged with carrying out the day-to-day administration of the grant and met weekly to plan upcoming tasks and/or meetings, to make staff assignments, and to communicate/discuss progress, issues, policy clarification, and other pertinent information, as it pertained to the work of the Integrated Action Team (IAT) and the Consortia. The CDE EESD contract monitors oversaw 11 contracts or interagency agreements that enhanced the ability to strengthen the quality of local early learning and care programs.

The largest portion of the Team's time was spent supporting the 17 Consortia and their 14 "Mentee" counties. These efforts included the following ongoing tasks: facilitating four Consortia in-person meetings and several conference calls and/or Webinars; refining the Hybrid Rating Matrix created collaboratively by the Consortia in 2012; serving as Consortia state liaisons in assisting the Consortia with grant implementation at the local level; reviewing and approving each member of the Consortia's Action Plan amendments, budget amendments, expenditure reports, and Annual Performance Reports; monitoring; and providing training and TA. The list of the Consortia and their administering agencies is provided below in the subsection entitled RTT-ELC Regional Leadership Consortia.

- **Coordination with Federal Program Officers**

The Team participated in monthly calls with the federal program officers from the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. These calls provided an opportunity for the Team to offer updates to federal program officers regarding training and technical assistance provided, important meeting highlights, and demonstrate that ongoing expenditures were within federal guidelines. In September 2015, officers from both federal programs attended the IAT and Consortia meeting and conducted an on-site monitoring site. Besides getting more in-depth information from the Implementation Team, the officers had in-person presentations on three of the projects: (1) Curriculum Expansion; (2) California Early Childhood Online; and (3) California Department of Social Services (CDSS) e-learning modules.

- **Facilitation of Consortia Quarterly Meetings**

Throughout 2015, quarterly Consortia² meetings were held for Consortia and Mentee representatives facilitated by the Implementation Team. As mentioned above, a two-day

2. When referring to the Consortia, it means the representatives involved in the 17 local Consortia. These representatives include the Key Decision-makers (the person within the consortium who has the authority to make the final decisions) as well as program and fiscal staff. The Consortia is the decision-making body with guidance from the Team on issues involving local implementation—specifically, the Quality Continuum Framework. Decisions are reached using a consensus approach.

meeting schedule was initiated with the first day holding the IAT meeting in the morning and the Key Decision-maker meeting in the afternoon. On the second (next) day, the full Consortia meeting took place.

In early 2015, the Consortia focused on possible modifications to the use of the Environment Rating Scales (ERS) in the QRIS Rating Matrix. The Team facilitated an Ad Hoc work group that explored options with the assistance of a national QRIS expert and developed recommendations for modified use of the ERS for Consortia approval at its May meeting.

For the two remaining Consortia meetings (September and December), the Team brought in a facilitator to support a discussion centered on the sustainability of the QRIS effort in California and the need to develop a new governance structure. This facilitator was brought into this role because she had done extensive work in the State's transition to the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), and since RTT-ELC and the CA-QRIS is based on local control, it made sense to have her guide this work. These meetings provided the groundwork for the 2016 QRIS meetings, as described below in the subsection titled: "Planning for Sustainability."

In addition to the ongoing tasks, the Team accomplished the following major activities in 2015:

- **Consortia Fiscal Accountability Policy (CFAP)**—To ensure the Consortia were appropriately expending RTT-ELC funds in a timely manner, CFAP was developed to provide direction for accountability and released in June 2014. It established a threshold for unspent funds that could possibly trigger a delay of the next quarterly disbursement of funds and/or a reallocation of funds to another consortium. It also suggested spending alternatives that were in keeping with California's application and the Consortia Action Plans.

In October 2014, the CFAP was amended to accommodate the new timelines associated with the federal no-cost time extension. The amendments changed the Consortia grant end date from December 31, 2015, to June 30, 2016, and raised the unspent threshold for 2015.

Throughout 2015, the State liaisons continued to apply the CFAP to their assigned consortia and carefully reviewed all budget amendments and expenditure reports to ensure that CFAP was being followed. With the extension of the grant period, all Consortia were required to submit budget amendments indicating how they would spread their existing funds to cover the extension time frame. These amendments were thoroughly reviewed to ensure proper expenditure plans were designed to carry the Consortia through the end of the extended grant period and expending all (or most) of their funds by that date. This review resulted in the adjustment of funds for several consortia, either reducing their grant amount or allocating additional funds.

- **On-Site Consortia Validation Visit Follow-up**—As a follow-up to the fall 2014 on-site validation visits to monitor the Consortia’s adherence to their approved action plans, in the spring of 2015, each liaison prepared a report identifying the strengths and areas of improvement for each consortium. These reports were reviewed with each consortium and appropriate follow-up occurred as needed. Overall the finding was that all of the Consortia were in compliance with their action plans.
- **Revision of Meeting Format**—Based on the Consortia’s decision at its December 2014 meeting, the Implementation Team utilized a revised meeting format for the 2015 Consortia meetings. The new format consisted of holding a two-day meeting. On the first day, the Integrated Action Team met for three hours from 9 a.m. to noon, and the Consortia Key Decision-makers met from 1 to 4 p.m. On the second (next) day, Consortia, including the Key Decision-makers, and Mentees, met from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. This new format allowed sufficient time for each type of meeting and maximized travel funds by requiring only one outlay of travel expenses. All participants at these meetings felt the new format was beneficial and allowed sufficient time to conduct necessary business.
- **Planning for Sustainability**—In California, two important opportunities occurred in 2015 that expanded the number of counties participating in a TQRIS effort. These opportunities were the release of \$50 million in the California State Preschool Program QRIS Block Grant (CSPP QRIS Block Grant) administered by the CDE EESD and the release of the First 5 Improve and Maximize Programs So All Children Thrive (IMPACT) initiative administered by F5CA. These two new programs resulted in the QRIS movement expanding into all of California’s 58 counties. As a result of this expansion, the Implementation Team began to support the transitioning from the RTT-ELC grant serving 16 counties to a newly defined CA-QRIS Consortium covering the entire state. The CA-QRIS will build upon the TQRIS groundwork laid by the Consortia through the RTT-ELC grant and will become operational in 2016.

Recognizing that QRIS participation would greatly increase in 2016, the Implementation Team facilitated discussions at the last two meetings of 2015 defining a future CA-QRIS governance structure. To pull together all of the suggestions, a special Key Decision-maker meeting was held in November 2015 to finalize the recommendations presented at the December 2015 Consortia meeting for adoption.

Early Learning Challenge Integrated Action Team

The IAT consisted of representatives from Participating State Agencies (PSAs), the Consortia, and the Team. This body has been charged with active coordination of the key activities and initiatives described in California's RTT-ELC application. In 2015, the IAT continued to focus on its goal statement and priority work areas that were developed and adopted in 2013.

In 2015, the IAT began using the meeting format decided in 2014, according to which only one work area would be presented with the group discussing that area as a committee of the whole, rather than breaking into work groups as previously done.

Two in-person meetings were held in 2015. The May agenda focused on the priority area dealing with child care licensing. The chief of the Community Care Licensing Division's Policy and Administrative Support Bureau of the CDSS, who has responsibility for licensing California's child care facilities, attended this meeting to address the licensing issues submitted by IAT members. A productive exchange of issues, information, and clarification of regulations occurred between the IAT members and representatives from this Bureau. All felt this exchange helped to clear up misunderstandings as well as bring to the attention of the state licensing representatives concerns of implementing licensing regulations in the field and determination of "in good standing" for participation in QRIS.

The second meeting, held in September, focused on developmental screening, another priority work area. Again, IAT members were invited to submit issues of concern that they wanted discussed. What emerged was the need to learn more about local systems that proved effective considering the limited resources and time to conduct such screenings. Two of the Consortia with excellent systems were invited to present at this meeting. Again, the information was well received by the IAT membership and provided sound and practical TA to the group.

The IAT membership expressed favorable comments about these meetings and felt the IAT provided a good forum for this type of exchange of information between state agencies and local implementers.

RTT-ELC Reform Area II: High-Quality, Accountable Programs

Agency	RA II Projects	Objective	Status Snapshot
17 Local TQRIS Lead Agencies (\$57,566,270)	A. Regional Leadership Consortia	Implement a locally driven approach that builds upon current quality improvement efforts and investments, brings together organizations in their regions with the same goal of improving the quality of early learning, and expands their current areas of impact by inviting other programs to join their local QRIS or by reaching out to mentor other communities.	All 17 Consortia conducted child care site ratings based on the Hybrid Rating Matrix and provided quality improvement activities, e.g., coaching, utilizing the Continuous Quality Improvement Pathways Tools and Resources.
First 5 California (\$1,326,989)	B. Inter-rater Reliability Assessment Management System	Ensure that assessors in each consortium have met a common level of reliability on the QRIS rating tools. This contract will support each consortium to have a comprehensive system for rating and monitoring by providing increased support for assessments, cross-Consortia reliability training, and Classroom Assessment and Scoring System (CLASS) and ERS assessors.	Assessor Management Workgroup functioning. Three master anchors hired.
American Institutes of Research (\$4,985,325)	C. Evaluation	Conduct a validation evaluation of the Consortia's local QRISs and assess the extent to which changes in quality ratings are related to progress in children's learning, development, and school readiness.	The evaluation began in January 2014. Mid-term Validation Report was submitted in spring 2015. Outcome study initiated in 2015.

CDSS (\$1,000,000)	D. Enhancement of the CDSS Community Care Licensing (CCL) Web site	Enhance the CDSS CCL Web site to include educational and training materials for consumers (families) and child care providers.	Creation of the 25 e- learning modules initiated.
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II. A. RTT-ELC Regional Leadership Consortia

In California, the goal of improving the quality of early learning programs for children with high needs and their families continued to be largely dependent on the performance of the 17 Consortia in 16 counties. In 2014, with the receipt of additional RTT-ELC funds, the 17 Consortia were joined by 14 Mentee counties to work toward achieving this goal in their respective counties.

Table 1 lists the county and corresponding Consortia administering agency. Table 2 indicates the Mentee counties with their corresponding administering agencies and Consortia Mentor(s).

Table 1 – Seventeen Regional Leadership Consortia

Administering Agency
First 5 Alameda
First 5 Contra Costa
First 5 El Dorado
Fresno County Office of Education
Los Angeles County Office of Child Care
Los Angeles Universal Preschool
Merced County Office of Education
Orange County Office of Education
Sacramento County Office of Education
First 5 San Diego
First 5 San Francisco
First 5 San Joaquin
First 5 Santa Barbara
First 5 Santa Clara
First 5 Santa Cruz
First 5 Ventura
First 5 Yolo

Table 2 – Fourteen Mentee Counties and Their Consortia Mentors

Mentee Administering Agency	Consortia Mentor(s)
Imperial: Imperial County Office of Education	Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, Santa Barbara, and Ventura
Kern: Early Childhood Council of Kern	Fresno
Kings: Kings County Office of Education	Fresno
Madera: Merced County Office of Education	Merced
Mariposa: Merced County Office of Education	Merced
Nevada: Placer County Office of Education	El Dorado, Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Yolo
Placer: Placer County Office of Education	El Dorado, Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Yolo
Riverside: First 5 Riverside	Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, Santa Barbara, and Ventura
San Bernardino: First 5 San Bernardino	Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, Santa Barbara, and Ventura
San Luis Obispo: Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo County	Santa Barbara
San Mateo: First 5 San Mateo and San Mateo County office of Education	Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz
Sierra: Placer County Office of Education	El Dorado, Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Yolo
Stanislaus: Stanislaus County Office of Education	San Joaquin
Tulare: Tulare County Office of Education	Fresno

Throughout 2015, quarterly Consortia meetings were held for Consortia and Mentee representatives. A two-day meeting schedule was initiated with the first day holding the IAT meeting in the morning and the Key Decision-maker meeting in the afternoon. On the second (next) day, the full Consortia meeting took place.

In early 2015, the Consortia focused on possible modifications to the use of the ERS in the QRIS Rating Matrix. An Ad Hoc work group consisting of Consortia representatives explored options and developed recommendations for modified use of the ERS for Consortia approval. The Ad Hoc work group met in March in place of a regularly scheduled Consortia meeting to study the ERS issue. In May 2015, the work group presented its report to the Consortia for adoption. The final decision was that 3– and 5– point values on the Rating Matrix for Element 6, Program Environment Rating Scales were modified. Please refer to the Quality Continuum Framework on the following page for more details explaining the changes.

For the two remaining Consortia meetings (September and December), the main topic of discussion centered on the sustainability of the QRIS effort in California and the need to develop a new governance structure. Please refer to the RTT-ELC State Implementation Team, Subsection Facilitation of Consortia Quarterly Meetings on p. 8 for detailed information on this new governance structure.

- **Quality Continuum Framework**

In 2015, California continued to implement the Quality Continuum Framework³ based on tools and resources from the original Framework that was described in its application. The Framework includes common, research-based elements, tools, and resources grouped into three core areas: (1) Child Development and School Readiness, (2) Teachers and Teaching, and (3) Program and Environment. This Framework has been implemented in the Consortia and is designed to both evaluate early learning programs based on scientific early childhood research and provide a quality improvement pathway. The Framework is operationalized with the Rating Matrix and the Continuous Quality Improvement Pathways. California's Rating Matrix combines a block system at lower levels with points at higher tiers. Ratings were separated into seven elements in the three core areas:

1. Child Observation
2. Developmental and Health Screenings
3. Minimum Qualifications for Lead Teacher/Family Child Care Home (FCCH)
4. Effective Teacher-Child Interactions: CLASS Assessments
5. Ratios and Group Size
6. ERS
7. Director Qualifications

To meet California's diverse needs, the RTT-ELC grant implements a locally driven approach that builds upon existing quality improvement efforts and investments. After receiving the RTT-ELC grant award, California signed a federal assurance agreeing to implement a minimum of two common tiers across the Consortia. To ensure access and participation by all interested early learning programs, California's application stated that the base, or first tier, of each local system would start at California's Title 22 CDSS child care licensing standards. In its first year, the Consortia decided to develop two common tiers in addition to the entry tier, for a total of three common tiers (Three Common Tiers). The QRIS of RTT-ELC Consortia includes the Three Common Tiers and two locally defined tiers for a total of five tiers. In sequence, California's structure is as follows:

- Tier 1 — Common (California's Title 22 CDSS licensing standards)
- Tier 2 — *Locally determined*
- Tier 3 — Common
- Tier 4 — Common
- Tier 5 — *Locally determined*

3. See Appendix A for a graphic depiction of the Quality Continuum Framework.

In order to ensure maximum flexibility and recognize diverse areas of quality, the Consortia approved the RTT-ELC Hybrid Rating Matrix with Three Common Tiers (Hybrid Rating Matrix⁴).

Team staff, which included State Anchors on CLASS and ERS tools, worked with the Consortia to provide TA on Rating Matrix implementation and provided substantial training on both tools. An Assessor Handbook was developed for the Consortia to use. More detail on the work this group has accomplished can be found in the section “Rating and Monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs” [Section B(3) of the RTT-ELC Grant Application].

During 2015, the QRIS continued to be in a fully operational phase. In May, the Consortia agreed to modify ERS (Element 6) of the Rating Matrix. For the 3-point value, the requirement to have an outside ERS assessment completed with an overall score of 4.0 or higher has been removed. The new requirement is an assessment on the whole tool (self-assessment, coach assessment, or outside assessment are all acceptable) and results are used to inform the site’s quality improvement plan. The 5-point value now includes National Association for the Education of Young Children accreditation in lieu of ERS rating at the 5-point level. No other substantive changes were made to the Matrix.

The Continuous Quality Improvement Pathways, the companion document to the Rating Matrix, has remained unchanged throughout 2015. Consortia reported that their coaches are using the document as a guide for continuous quality improvement and professional development at the site level.

- **Local QRIS Implementation**

In 2015, the consortia with guidance from their state liaisons, met their performance targets for site participation. As a result, the number of California sites participating in TQRIS increased to 3,278, exceeding the 2015 target by 812 (33 percent). Consortia participation targets and actual participation numbers are displayed in the following two tables.

4. See Appendix B – Hybrid Rating Matrix.

Table 3 – Participation Targets for California Programs Enrolled in the TQRIS

Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the TQRIS. California's targets versus actual.

TARGETS	Baseline	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
Total number of programs enrolled in the TQRIS	49	475	1,173	1,664	2,466
Number of programs in Tier 1	14	231	146	190	115
Number of programs in Tier 2	2	50	298	371	301
Number of programs in Tier 3	26	186	514	684	940
Number of programs in Tier 4	5	6	175	310	828
Number of programs in Tier 5	2	2	32	109	282
Number of programs enrolled but not yet rated (<i>New category added in Year Four – no targets were determined</i>)					

Table 4 – Actual Participation for California Programs Enrolled in the TQRIS

ACTUALS	Baseline	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
Total number of programs enrolled in the TQRIS	49	475	1,042	2,232	3,881
Number of programs in Tier 1	14	231	177	424	350
Number of programs in Tier 2	2	50	237	639	649
Number of programs in Tier 3	26	186	349	507	742
Number of programs in Tier 4	5	6	252	592	1,284
Number of programs in Tier 5	2	2	27	70	194
Number of programs enrolled but not yet rated (<i>New category added in Year Four – actual participation reflected</i>)					662

The Consortia continued to employ a variety of strategies to promote site participation in the TQRIS at the local level. The Consortia focused on outreach, education, and new funding aimed at improving quality in early learning sites. Examples of such efforts are described below.

Building upon the outreach efforts of the past three years, Fresno and Orange counties were able to leverage their existing sites as “champions of the TQRIS system” to invite neighboring sites to participate. For Orange County, this meant being able to add an additional 193 sites in 2015. As outreach continued and participation in the TQRIS grew in San Francisco, they found the need to augment their rating capacity for language accessibility for the city’s providers, specifically Spanish and Chinese, to reflect the local community. Ventura and Sacramento have been so successful in their recruitment of new programs for participation that they have had to create a waiting list due to reaching funding capacity.

Much of the Consortia’s success had been due to continued education to providers about the meaning and intention behind a TQRIS and its role in the early learning community. California’s Consortia had frequent and regular meetings with program

administrators and directors where they discussed the value of the TQRIS. In Merced, the education effort has paid off as the leadership team has embraced the goal of improving quality across all sectors of the early learning community, countywide, and regionally to its mentees. Educating participants by providing training and TA was key in keeping sites in the program. The Consortia found that a well-trained coaching team was able to validate the coaching model as well as promote participation in a TQRIS.

Many Consortia have credited new funding, such as the CSPP QRIS Block Grant, for boosting interest and participation in TQRIS. The CSPP QRIS Block Grant authorized \$50 million of State Proposition 98 funds for the support of local early learning QRIS in order to increase the number of low-income children in high-quality state preschool programs. The Consortia have found CSPP sites are motivated to actively participate in increasing the quality of their programs through a TQRIS due to the incentives, stipends, additional coaching, and professional development offered by the grant. Many look forward to the positive effects F5CA's IMPACT Initiative funds will also make on increasing the number of children in high-quality early learning sites.

- **Reliable Assessors**

The Consortia coordinated locally around the training and inter-rater reliability of assessors. The Consortia used a variety of ways to obtain assessors and most are using more than one strategy. The following are some variations in obtaining reliable assessors, which are similar in distribution to 2014 and the number of Consortia deploying the strategy:

- Hired individual consortia-specific assessors: Eight (47 percent)
- Coordinated regional assessors: Eight (47 percent)
- Shared reliable assessors across consortia, including those from other local quality initiatives and programs, such as Head Start: Five (29 percent)
- Contracted with independent external assessors: 14 (82 percent)
- Developed a contract with other entities such as a public universities or local child care planning councils for RTT-ELC quality rating services: Three (18 percent)

Most consortia reported using a variety of strategies (contracting, hiring, and sharing assessors) or modifying their initial strategy to assess sites with the ERS and CLASS tools. In so doing, they made considerable progress in rating sites and reaching the targeted number of rated sites in 2015. Several consortia used contractors for their ERS and CLASS assessments, but also maintained ERS and CLASS, certified individuals within their implementation team. This enabled them to provide training and TA to participating sites. Other consortia reported using external contractors to ensure they had bilingual assessors who were representative of the languages spoken in the participating classrooms.

Several consortia described inter-rater reliability policies that exceeded the requirements of the consortia-agreed every six month requirement. They understood that while it may be a time-consuming process, it is necessary to ensure there is a deep understanding of the assessment tools. Several consortia also described implementing a rigorous reliability requirement for coaches who also must deeply understand the tools to provide effective CQI support.

- **Overall Rating Processes**

Consortia-wide, programs voluntarily agreed to participate in the TQRIS and are evaluated by a team of qualified assessors based on seven elements in three core areas: (1) child development and school readiness (child observations and implementation of developmental and health screenings); (2) teachers and teaching (teacher qualifications professional development and teacher-child interactions); and (3) program and environment (ratios and group size, environmental quality, and director qualifications). Participating programs received a rating based on the assessment and a corresponding Quality Improvement (QI) Plan.

In some consortia, rating consisted of an initial and post QI rating, the initial rating was used to develop an improvement plan and portfolio in preparation for the second rating (Bay Area consortia). Sites may be coached through an external coach or by their program administrator. In this way, consortia placed an emphasis on the improvement activities before the rating. Ventura indicated this process of rating has led teachers to report they feel better prepared to work with the children in their care and TQRIS administrators report the observation of improved practices.

- **Site Monitoring**

Agreements on frequency of monitoring, rating triggers, and re-rating have been made through the work of the Rating and Monitoring work group (now the Assessor Management work group). The Consortia agreed rating will occur every other year and that 33 percent of classrooms in a site will be assessed. The Implementation Guide has thoroughly detailed all rating and monitoring-related information, including frequency of rating and re-rating, triggers for a new rating, submission of documents and other evidence for rating-related definitions (e.g. classroom and teaching team), and classroom selection for assessment. With the finalization of the monitoring protocol, consortia recruited and hired staff to provide ongoing monitoring and quality improvement coaching. Site monitoring informed consortia of the type of training, TA, and support required for each site, including coaching and mentoring. At a local level, site monitoring may have included monthly meetings with consortia staff and/or professionals such as family support and mental health consultants. Monitoring also may have included the use of a database to capture rating data.

Consortia identified different databases they used to monitor TQRIS sites and provide feedback for coaches and other TA efforts. Most consortia purchased a new database

for the purpose of TQRIS monitoring and had them up and running through 2015. Several incorporated RTT-ELC TQRIS data into an existing non-QRIS database (Los Angeles Universal Preschool and Ventura). Consortia have discovered the amount of time and staffing it takes to maintain a reliable database and found the investment yields significant outcomes for the rating and monitoring of sites. These QRIS databases, which coordinated information from other agencies such as Community Care Licensing and the resource and referral agencies, provided a system of checks and balances for assurance that only sites that meet minimum qualifications are participating in the TQRIS.

Some consortia have made great progress in using the data from the database and others continued to struggle with this. The Bay Area consortia stated that “The Web-based Early Learning System (WELS) data system is still not fully functional and this impacts our ability to enter and utilize QRIS data. Currently, we often have to manually manipulate data in spreadsheets to get the level of data analysis we feel we need at this point in our QRIS.”

- **Leveraging and Aligning with Other Efforts**

One of the most exciting successes to date expressed by the Consortia is the unprecedented opportunity RTT-ELC provides to refocus existing public and private investments on evidence-based and promising practices. In essence, RTT-ELC created an umbrella for other quality improvement and funding efforts.

Prior to becoming Consortia members, several consortia noted their program quality efforts were well established but functioning as separate projects. With the TQRIS Framework and the RTT-ELC goals and objectives, these independent projects have been aligned with the overarching program quality improvement system and are building upon each other. The key quality improvement tools, such as the ERS and the CLASS, are integral to the adopted Rating Matrix and served as a common foundation to align the work of other existing quality improvement efforts. Consortia viewed the RTT-ELC as a pilot, which provided opportunities to develop innovative service delivery models and developed focused partnerships that can later be taken to scale. One consortium wrote, “We implemented a library partnership which built upon existing strong library-provider relationships resulting in the successful engagement of 25 new Tier 1 and Tier 2 providers.”

Locally, the Consortia have begun to fully integrate multiple funding streams from the federal, state, and local level into a comprehensive local quality improvement system—their TQRIS. Most of the Consortia noted in their Annual Performance Reports that they have used the local TQRIS as a framework for all their other quality efforts and have used the definition of quality developed for RTT-ELC implementation. Some consortia explicitly expressed that participation in RTT-ELC has become a catalyst in leveraging existing programs, such as the F5CA's Child Signature Program (CSP), Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards (CARES) Plus Program, and grant funding. One consortium wrote,

“We have made a conscious effort to fully integrate QRIS, accreditation, the CARES Plus Program, and local First 5 tuition scholarships. We are conducting special meetings to focus on planning and tracking our progress with the end result being a seamless, one-stop shop for quality improvement support in our county and a framework in which to easily and quickly integrate new projects and funding.”

As a result of the implementation of RTT-ELC, existing additional quality enhancement projects have been updated so that their requirements align with the requirements of RTT-ELC to create consistency across local publicly funded projects. The Consortia have aligned these projects to ensure participants are prepared to be rated using the local TQRIS, to support quality improvement in the participating early learning and development programs, and to expand access to screenings and health care services.

All of the Consortia reported utilizing the Continuous Quality Improvement Pathways document with the California Early Learning Foundations and Frameworks as key resources, available in both English and Spanish, used by coaches to inform site plans and professional development plans. Many also reported using the CDE Child Care and Development Fund quality improvement professional development providers: the Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC) to provide training on the Infant/Toddler Foundations and Framework and the California Preschool Instructional Network (CPIN) to provide training on the Preschool Foundations and Frameworks. PITC and CPIN trainers have been active partners in many of the Consortia. Besides providing training on California's Foundations, PITC and CPIN also provided on-site TA/coaching to designated sites to support deeper understanding of the Foundations.

Fresno County Office of Education stated that, “In terms of trainings: PITC and CPIN are active partners with Fresno TQRIS. Both have provided numerous trainings and coaching to the TQRIS participants centered around Desired Results Profiles, Foundations and Guidelines.”

Likewise, First 5 Ventura has a CPIN authorized trainer that is available for provider trainings on the California Early Learning System. In addition, several TQRIS sites in Ventura are currently in the process of obtaining demonstration site status. These sites serve as model programs for the mentee counties and also potentially for a Professional Learning Community.

In First 5 Santa Clara, the existing CSP and CARES Plus programs have worked closely with the Regional CPIN Program, PITC, Collaborative for the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL), and the Local Early Childhood Planning Council (LPC) to integrate the trainings offered by these programs into their local quality improvement efforts. This has established a foundation that can be utilized to integrate these programs and other pathway elements into their RTT-ELC quality improvement plans. The Santa Clara County Head Start program has been a very active participant in the roll out of our QRIS. The Sacramento County Office of

Education “has partnered with PITC to provide direct training to our migrant site. These teachers are receiving three full-day trainings and 32 hours of coaching all delivered in Spanish.”

First 5 San Francisco provides PITC training for all infant and toddler providers at Title 5-funded sites. Both of these professional development systems, PITC and CPIN, have developed training partner certification processes that have allowed them to extend their reach and build capacity within many of the consortia, ensuring that more early learning providers fully understand the Foundations and Frameworks they are using to inform their practice.

- **Providing Quality Rating and Licensing Information to Parents Enrolled in Early Learning Programs (at the Site Level)**

Consortia have made significant progress in making ratings publicly available; those that made progress shared their strategies during Consortia Meetings and others shared ongoing concerns. The Fresno consortium was the first to post its ratings, working collaboratively with the local resource and referral agency to provide rating information to parents. For more information, please visit the Early Stars Web site at <http://www.earlystars.org/early-stars-rated-programs#>. In October 2015, the Team published a guidance document titled “Requirements for Making Ratings Available to the Public”. All consortia fulfilled the requirement to make ratings public and the liaisons verified and confirmed every consortium met the grant requirement by the end of 2015.

Each Consortia took a unique approach in implementing the task of making QRIS ratings publicly accessible. Consortia have engaged and informed parents of the rating process and the local quality improvement process, including providing objective ratings of early learning and development programs to families in an accessible, clear, and easy-to-understand format.

Consortia were required to depict ratings using at least three quality levels. One consortium described rating levels using bronze, silver, and gold terminology; another consortium used more descriptive language (emerging quality, quality, high quality, and quality plus). In making these publicly available, many consortia partnered with the local child care Resource and Referral Agency to give rating information to parents seeking subsidized care, others developed a searchable Web site to post ratings, and others developed materials and empowered early childhood providers to share information with parents when they visited. Most consortia used a combination of methods, coupling the strategy with a public awareness campaign to brand the local QRIS and educate parents about quality child care, what to look for, and why it’s important. Most consortia developed a logo, public recognition/awards, and materials tailored to parents. Consortia learned that building relationships and establishing trust, empowering providers to understand and share their ratings, and using simple and clear language about quality ratings are essential when communicating ratings to the public.

Merced County Office of Education wrote:

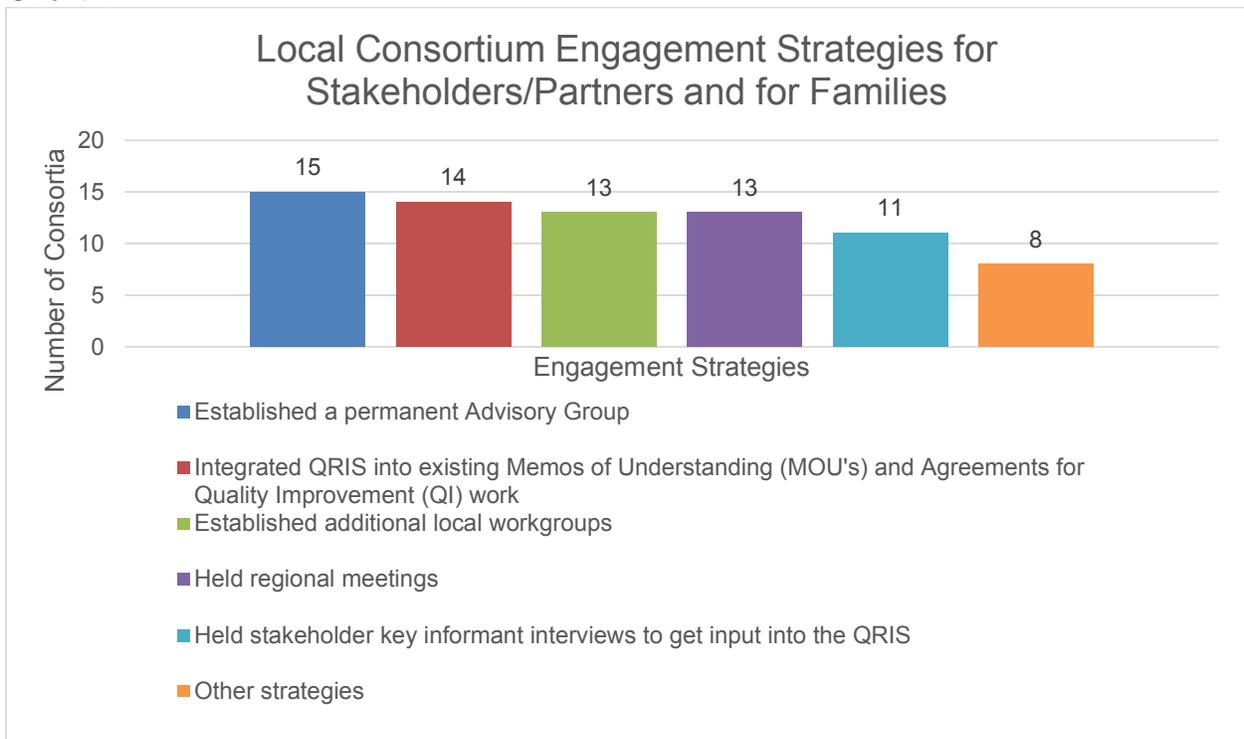
We wanted to ensure parents understood what the ratings meant as they consider child care and preschool options; and for family child care home (FCCH) providers, ensuring that ratings were communicated with the focus being on high quality not that one particular site was better than another given the hybrid point system used to determine the overall rating.

- **Partnerships**

At the local level, the Consortia were also engaged in interacting with a variety of stakeholder and partner groups. Their groups generally involved parent groups, county or city officials, county offices of education, school districts, First 5 county commissions, child care resource and referral agencies, local child care planning councils, tribal and migrant organizations, local early learning providers, and business representatives. When appropriate, members of these groups participated in local RTT-ELC advisory boards, work groups, and general meetings.

The Consortia were surveyed on the strategies used in 2015 to involve local stakeholders and partners. The number of Consortia members utilizing various strategies are demonstrated in Chart 1.

Chart 1

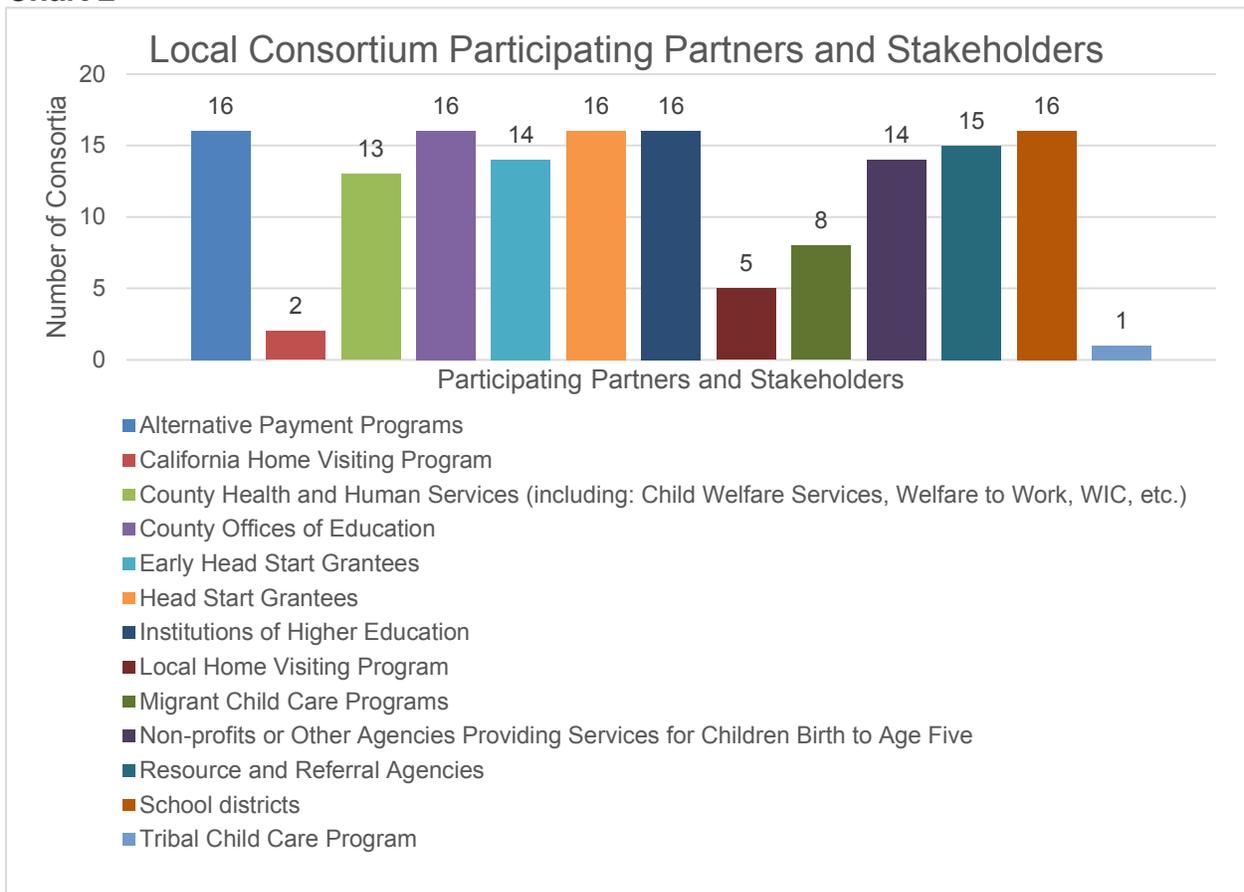


Other specific strategies that several Consortia employed were:

- The creation of the “Quality Start OC” Web site for families seeking information and child care and early education that serves as the central hub for information, linking families and providers to local services and other community agency programs (Orange County Office of Education)
- The provision of ongoing reports to Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors’ Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development and the Child Care Planning Committee (Los Angeles County Office of Child Care)
- The introduction and incorporation within agencies the California Standards for Family Strengthening and Support (First 5 San Diego)

Consortia were also surveyed to determine the types of participating partners and stakeholders they involved in their local county TQRIS effort. One hundred percent of the Consortia reported they involved county LPCs, child development program representatives, and First 5 County Commissions (see Chart 2) for other partners.

Chart 2



II. B. Inter-rater Reliability Assessment Management System

In 2015, as part of the Inter-rater Reliability Assessment Management System contract, F5CA facilitated the Rating and Monitoring work group's updating of the Consortia Implementation Guide (Guide) for the TQRIS based on Consortia feedback. The Guide can be found on the RTT-ELC Web page. This Guide accompanies the Rating Matrix and provides a protocol necessary to achieve consistency in rating to ensure equity across the Three Common Tiers. The protocol addresses items such as documentation, selection of classrooms for observation, and rating frequency. The Rating and Monitoring Work Group, which became the Assessor Management Work Group, also developed a document titled "RTT-ELC Assessor Management Structure" to guide agreements and local decisions around roles, responsibilities, and relationships among the State Master Anchor, local Anchors, and local assessors for the ERS and CLASS tools.

State Master Anchors are certified by the ERSI at 90 percent or higher reliability on each of the three ERS tools, and to 80 percent by Teachstone for each of the CLASS tools. The regional ERS Anchor is 90 percent or higher reliability and is the consortium-designated individual who is authorized to certify reliability of ERS assessors in that region.

The Assessor Management Structure directs State Master Anchors to:

- Certify, and annually recertify, reliability of regional ERS anchors on ERS family of tools in lieu of ERS Institute/authors, as needed;
- Provide Observation Training to local/regional CLASS assessors and anchors on Infant, Toddler, and Pre-K CLASS Pre-K tools, as needed;
- Organize ERS drift testing with regional ERS anchors;
- Coordinate CLASS online calibration for regional CLASS assessors; and
- Provide information and support to regional ERS and CLASS anchors to carry out inter-rater reliability testing with consortia assessors.

Ongoing inter-rater reliability in all consortia was established at 85 percent for the ERS assessors, 90 percent for ERS local/regional anchors, and 80 percent for CLASS assessors using the guidelines set by the respective tools' authors. The Consortia also established the requirement for inter-rater reliability checks (online drift testing for CLASS and a one-day ERS double-code with a certified ERS Anchor) take place at least once between annual certification for each tool.

In May 2015, the F5CA Master Anchors convened local/regional ERS Anchors for a three-day work group to promote uniform interpretation and cohesive understanding of each ERS tool. During this meeting the group conducted a side-by-side, item-by-item

analysis of each ERS tool, discussing commonalities, scoring challenges, training tips and clarification notes. The group also discussed the role of the state and regional anchors in supporting a statewide Anchor Management System. Products from this work group along with recommendations from consortia about components of an Assessor Resource Guide/Manual were compiled and submitted to the CDE by the end of 2015. This work has helped to ensure ongoing quality control through the development of ongoing reliability/calibration standards (CLASS and ERS).

The ERS reliability training needs of the ERS Consortia were prioritized and met. F5CA Master Anchors conducted a combined 31 weeks of reliability certification visits (four to five days each) in consortia and mentee counties, certifying in ECERS⁵ (33 new Anchors and two assessors), in ITERS⁶ (16 new Anchors and 2 assessors), and in FCCERS⁷ (13 new Anchors and 5 assessors). As a result, consortia reported the ability to rate and monitor sites as a key accomplishment in 2015 because of their increased ERS assessment capacity.

F5CA also supported increased observer and training capacity on the CLASS family of tools statewide:

- F5CA staff conducted four Toddler CLASS and seven Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) CLASS observer trainings and F5CA engaged Teachstone to hold three Infant CLASS Observer trainings in regional locations across California. Nearly 200 participants learned more about the CLASS age-specific tool and the importance of adult-child interactions. The majority of attendees who attempted reliability testing passed (91 percent), making them eligible to conduct CLASS observations.
- On behalf of RTT-ELC, using matching funds, F5CA supported Teachstone to conduct seven Train-the-Trainer Institutes across northern, central, and southern California locations. As a result, there are 18 new Pre-K CLASS trainers, 25 Toddler CLASS trainers, and 19 Infant CLASS trainers who are able to conduct Introduction to CLASS and CLASS Observer Certification training in their local consortia.
- F5CA arranged seven CLASS calibration sessions (three Pre-K, three Toddler, and one Infant) in 2015 and sent invitations to local consortia assessors and anchors through the RTT-ELC Consortia and Mentee Lead Agencies; more than 200 CLASS observers participated in one or more calibration sessions to reduce drift and confirm inter-rater reliability on CLASS.

II. C. Evaluation

During calendar year 2015, the American Institutes for Research completed the first of

5. ECERS is the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale.

6. ITERS is the Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale.

7. FCCERS is the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale.

two RTT-ELC funded studies.

The first study, *Independent Evaluation of California's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Quality Rating and Improvement System: Half-Term Report*, provided some preliminary evidence supporting the validity of the QRIS ratings:

- There is an evidence base for the aspects of quality (or elements) that are measured in the QRIS, with stronger evidence for some elements, such as the Effective Teacher-Child Interaction element, than others.
- The elements included in the California QRIS ratings are not redundant; each measures a distinct aspect of program quality, based on the finding that scores on individual elements are not strongly related to each other.
- There is some evidence of concurrent validity of ratings for centers, meaning that programs with higher ratings also score higher on some independent measures of quality.
- The California QRIS elements based on observational tools, such as the Effective Teacher-Child Interaction element and the Program ERS element, are also related to independent measures of quality. Other elements, such as Ratios and Group size, show little relationship with independent measures of quality.

The full report may be viewed at the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/rt/documents/airhalftermreport.pdf>.

Study findings and recommendations were presented to the Team, Consortia, and the federal monitoring team in the spring of 2015. California has been actively engaged in ongoing discussion around study findings.

The second study on quality improvement, child outcomes, and additional system implementation findings was initiated in 2015 and is anticipated to be completed in the spring of 2016. Study findings and recommendations will be made available to Consortia and the federal monitoring team upon report completion.

II. D. Enhancement of the CDSS Community Care Licensing (CCL) Web site

Progress was made on the creation of 25 e-learning modules. The topics were finalized and are provided in Table 5 below. The CDSS Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) staff demonstrated a sample module to the RTT-ELC federal contract officers during their site visit on September 18, 2015. These modules are expected to be ready for posting on the CCLD's Web site in spring of 2016.

Table 5 – Listing of CDSS E-Learning Modules

25 E-Learning Modules	
1	An Overview of Community Care Licensing
2A	Is this Business Right for Me? CCC
2B	Is this Business Right for Me? FCCH
3	How to Apply for a Family Child Care License
4	Licensing Fees
5	Exempt vs Non-exempt Child Care
6	Record Keeping in Family Child Care
7	Child Care Reporting Requirements
8	Community Care Licensing Inspection Authority
9	What is a Civil Penalty?
10	Background Check Requirements for Caregivers
11A	Teacher-Child Ratios in Child Care Centers
11B	Teacher-Child Ratios in Child Care Centers
12	How Many Children Can Attend a Family Child Care Home?
13A	Supervising Children in Child Care Centers
13B	Supervising Children in Family Child Care
14	Children's Personal Rights in Child Care
15	Your Rights as a Child Care Licensee
16	Health and Safety Training
17	Locks and Inaccessibility Regulations in Child Care
18	Bodies of Water Requirements in Child Care
19	Transporting Children
20	Disaster Planning and Fire Safety
21	Food Service Requirements for Child Care Centers
22	What to Look for When Choosing Child Care
24	Parent Rights in Child Care
25	How to File a Complaint with Community Care Licensing

RTT-ELC Reform Area III: Promoting Access to High-Quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs

Agency	RA III Projects	Objective	Status Snapshot
WestEd Center for Child and Family Studies (\$890,000)	A. Electronic Training Materials of Existing Content	Develop online overviews of the <i>California Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Foundations</i> and the <i>Preschool Learning Foundations</i> and their	CECO was launched the summer of 2013. Online overviews of the ERS tools in English and Spanish were made available on CECO with funding from F5CA. A

Agency	RA III Projects	Objective	Status Snapshot
		respective Frameworks, other CDE resources, and the ERS. Post on California Early Childhood Online (CECO).	CSEFEL Overview and the Three R's of Early Childhood: Relationships, Resilience, and Readiness (Three R's) modules were added. 1,030 early childhood educators completed the overview module; 757 infant/toddler modules; and 2,166 preschool modules.
WestEd Center for Early Intervention and Prevention (\$775,178)	B. Developmental Screening Tool Training and Distribution	Train Consortia members on the use of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and ASQ-Social Emotional and appropriate referral follow-up.	ASQ training materials were provided based on a survey of needs. Additional ASQ training was provided with RTT-ELC supplemental funds. In 2015, 196,644 children were screened.
WestEd Center for Child and Family Studies (\$3,238,816)	C. California Collaborative for the Social-Emotional Foundations of Early Learning (CCSEFEL)	Create a Web-based overview of the CCSEFEL Teaching Pyramid, build a network of regional CCSEFEL trainers and coaches, and support and expand implementation of the CCSEFEL Teaching Pyramid model to fidelity in interested sites in a local consortium.	Online CCSEFEL overview was created and posted on CECO. Implementation sites in 10 of the 16 RTT-ELC counties are being supported. Cadre of trainers and coaches has been developed.
California Department of Developmental Services (\$1,000,000)	D. Comprehensive System of Personnel Development for Early Start	Coordinate training for early intervention program staff and support implementation of best practices in developmental and health screening at the local level in collaboration with the Consortia.	Completed in 2015. The California Statewide Screening Collaborative (CSSC) supported the development of an Early Care and Education (ECE) Provider Screening Toolkit.

Agency	RA III Projects	Objective	Status Snapshot
California Department of Public Health (CDPH) (\$690,000)	E. Home Visiting	Provide training to CDPH's local California Home Visiting Program staff on implementing the PITC practices and on the Three R's through online modules and Webinars.	Completed in 2013. A PITC Home Visiting Institute conducted. Online modules were developed and three Webinars were conducted on the Three R's. In 2014, these modules were posted on CECO.

California addressed this reform area with the knowledge that prioritization of State resources to early learning and development programs committed to a continuous program improvement process will accelerate individual program advancement toward higher quality. This strategy will help move California further toward the goal of improved school readiness for children. Specifically, California chose to focus on two priorities: (1) development and use of statewide, high-quality early learning and development standards and (2) addressing children's health, behavioral, and developmental needs.

III. A. Early Learning and Developmental Standards: Electronic Training Materials of Existing Content

To support early childhood teachers, CDE's California Early Learning and Development System has provided an integrated set of resources based on state-of-the-art information for early learning and development and best practices in early education. In August 2013, the California Early Childhood Online (CECO), a RTT-ELC project, was launched with online overviews of California's Infant/Toddler Early Learning and Development Foundations and Preschool Learning Foundations, available in Spanish as well. These overviews can be found on the CECO Web site at the <http://www.caearlychildhoodonline.org/> (a login is needed to access the online overviews). There are four modules on the Infant/Toddler Foundations and Framework and nine on the Preschool Foundations and Frameworks, with a culminating/summary module. The modules provided on the CECO Web site enable early childhood practitioners to both increase content knowledge and to provide developmentally appropriate experiences for children in their care. CECO has provided access to comprehensive resources and courses in one centralized location to meet the ever-changing needs of the early childhood field. Training module hours vary; certificates indicate completion of a domain and the amount of credit for training hours earned. In 2015, 2,449 early childhood educators completed the Foundations and Frameworks overview module, (a 118 percent increase) along with 5,804 preschool modules (an increase of 167 percent) and 1,525 Infant/Toddler modules (a 101 percent increase).

This on-line learning site includes:

- ERS introductory modules funded by F5CA through June 2015;
- Desired Results Development Profile;
- CSEFEL Overview;
- The Three R's of Early Childhood;
- Links to Strengthening Families modules and CDE's Nutrition Services Healthy and Active Preschooler modules.

Completion of modules results in receipt of a certificate. The documented hours can be used for professional development hours required in the Rating Matrix.

III. B. Health Promotion: Developmental Screening Tool Training and Distribution

Professional development on health standards have been accessible in a variety of ways. The Pathways continue to be foundational in the creation of QI plans for sites participating in California's RTT-ELC.

RTT-ELC funds continued to support implementation of developmental screening activities in participating counties in 2015, primarily focusing on TA opportunities for the RTT-ELC Mentee counties. Four Community of Practice sessions were offered to Mentee Counties, Regional Consortia and Partner Agencies. Topics included the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social–Emotional (ASQ:SE), promoting communication with families, referral pathways and protocols, and sustainability and capacity building through collaboration.

An evaluation of the TA provided showed that the participants increased their knowledge related to the priority areas, and that the delivery framework was effective at reaching a wide range of RTT-ELC Regional Consortia stakeholders. Material and information provided in the different frameworks—Advanced Training of Trainers, Individualized TA and Community of Practice—was very well received, with participants rating strongly/somewhat to having experienced an increase in knowledge, skills, and abilities in each of the six ASQ TA priorities ranging from 74 to 86 percent.

The evaluation demonstrated that both the content and the framework used were successful strategies for reaching the desired audience and providing effective training and TA.

The work of the CSSC continued throughout 2015 with California's RTT-ELC Implementation Team members in attendance at all meetings held. The CSSC brings together state, local, public, and private entities that focus on California's capacity to promote and deliver effective and well-coordinated health, developmental, and behavioral screenings for young children, birth to age five. The goal is to enhance State capacity to promote and deliver effective and well-coordinated health, developmental, and behavioral screenings throughout California.

CSSC work during 2015 included wrapping up the customization and dissemination of the Developmental and Behavioral Screening Guide for Early Care and Education Providers. This guide was adapted from federal materials and included resources specific to California. In October, a group of CSSC members, including two members of the RTT-ELC Implementation Team, presented at the California Alternative Payment Providers Association/California Child Care Resource and Referral network statewide conference. The presentation focused on RTT-ELC activities related to screening and use of The Guide as a resource.

The CSSC also focused on cross-agency and systems work during 2015. Two panel discussions took place, with multiple individuals representing state agencies and programs discussing a wide range of topics relating to developmental screening from a systems perspective.

III. C. Social–Emotional Development: CCSEFEL

The CCSEFEL project focuses on the social-emotional development as a foundation for learning and development in young children. California is committed to promoting and supporting healthy social-emotional development in all its children. Throughout 2015, the CCSEFEL project group has completed the following activities:

- 18 Leadership Team meetings
- 21 Individual Module Trainings⁸
- 339 participants in the module trainings
- 82 classrooms received coaching for a total of 328 visits
- 13 Training for Trainers and Coaches sessions (T4TC) with 19 participants in T4TC
- 10 Webinars/Calls to Support Authorized trainers and coaches
- Annual Teaching Pyramid Symposium with over 120 attendees

The CCSEFEL Teaching Pyramid Symposium took place in Stockton on May 16, 2015. The event was open to anyone who had completed all three modules of the CCSEFEL Teaching Pyramid as presented by WestEd or trainers and coaches authorized by CCSEFEL. The CCSEFEL State Leadership Team was also invited. There were three

8. A full series is 4 or 5 modules, but this is over a school year.

sessions throughout the day, one in the morning and two after lunch. Each session contained one workshop for Directors and members of the Leadership Team, and two workshops were designed for teaching staff. Workshops included:

- Tips and Tools for Sharing the Teaching Pyramid with Substitutes, New Staff, and Volunteers.
- Shifting the Focus from Classroom Management to Child Development.
- Role of Champions and Site Directors in Keeping the Staff Energized Incorporating Movement and Mindfulness into the Teaching Pyramid.
- Practice Makes Permanent: Positive Descriptive Acknowledgement (PDA) and PDA Plus.
- Tools and Techniques for Addressing Challenging Behavior.
- Connecting the Dots: How the Teaching Pyramid Supports QRIS and Other Measures.
- Taking the Teaching Pyramid Home: Sharing with Families.
- What's in Your Teaching Pyramid Tool Box?

Feedback gathered at the Symposium stated the participants were more likely to share the Teaching Pyramid with families, staff, subs, and volunteers. In addition, many felt they gained implementation ideas from other programs. The participants identified topics they would like to be covered at a future symposium. Those topics included: how to balance CCSEFEL with other program requirements, strategies for sustaining and deepening program implementation, as well as gaining administrative “buy-in”. More information regarding CCSEFEL can be found on the California Making Access Possible (MAP) to Inclusion and Belonging Web site at <http://cainclusion.org/camap/cacsefel.html>.

III. D. Comprehensive System of Personnel Development for Early Start

The Comprehensive System of Personnel Development for Early Start project was completed in 2015. This project, which was managed by the California Department of Developmental Services, began in 2012. The goal was to improve the early intervention service system by participating with statewide efforts at the regional center, local educational agency, and family resource center level and coordinating best practices in

developmental and health screening at the local level. Early intervention staff that serve families of children with developmental disabilities received staff development training to integrate knowledge and practice related to the California Preschool Learning Foundations and the Desired Results Developmental Profile.

Through the course of this project, milestones included:

- Understanding and defining Quality Rating Continuum as it applies to young children with developmental delays and disabilities for CSPD.
- Identification of TA tools as well as a training protocol for early intervention TA providers to participate in rating early learning and development programs.
- Development and implementation of three Early Start Online training modules. Statewide participation in the online training modules indicate improved knowledge levels of participants. The modules are:
 - RTT-ELC Early Start Module 1: Early Start, Early Childhood Special Education and California's TQRIS;
 - RTT-ELC Early Start Module 2: Measurable Outcomes: The Intersections between TQRIS and Early Childhood Special Education Programs; and
 - RTT-ELC Module 3: An Introduction to Early Care and Education in California.
 - These modules can be found at the Center for Prevention and Early Intervention Web site.
- Development of the ECE Provider Screening Toolkit.

III. E. Home Visiting – Completed in 2013.

The CDPH Home Visiting project was completed in 2013. Additional information can be found in the RTT-ELC 2013 Annual Performance Report on the RTT-ELC Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/rt/rttelc.asp>.

RTT-ELC Reform Area IV: Early Childhood Education Workforce

Agency	RA IV Projects	Objective	Status Snapshot
Child Development Training Consortium (\$750,000)	A. Curricula Development for Higher Education	Expand the Early Learning core curricula at California Community Colleges by facilitating and coordinating unit-based course alignment for three child development content areas: infant/toddler, children with special needs, and program administration.	Faculty convened a series of meetings and identified coursework on infants and toddlers, children with special needs, and program administration. Alignment work is in progress.
California Early Childhood Mentor Program (\$24,000)	B. Program Administrative Scale (PAS) and the Business Administrative Scale (BAS) for California Mentors	Provide “train-the-trainer” instruction on PAS and BAS tools to Director Mentors and Family Child Care Home Mentors to support administrative TA to centers and family child care homes participating in the local QRISs.	Completed in 2013. Director Mentors were trained on the PAS; large Family Child Care Home Provider Mentors were trained on the BAS.

Building systems for California's dynamic early childhood workforce takes time. The quality improvement efforts included in this report highlight activities and accomplishments in California's implementation of RTT-ELC in 2015 and are a snapshot describing the individual efforts and accomplishments from the Consortia. Significant investments have been made to support workforce at the local level. Some are short-term (a year or less) and some changes were made incrementally and will take place over a period of years. Because of California's unique design, our 2015 update to California's workforce development will be described at both the State and local level, starting with an update to California's Workforce Competencies and Early Learning and Development System, an example of how participating state agencies worked together to address Early Education Workforce Development-Effective Workforce Development through a Quality Framework, and an example of how the early care workforce can be supported at the local level.

Workforce Competency Framework

An essential statewide element aimed at supporting a strong ECE workforce is the California Early Childhood Educator Competencies (Competencies), located on the Competencies Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/ececomps.asp>. California's robust Competencies (initiated in 2008 and completed in 2011) are aligned with the

California Preschool Learning Foundations and the *California Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Foundations* and guide professional development and related quality improvement activities. The Competencies serve four interrelated purposes: (1) provide structure for workforce development; (2) inform Higher Education course of study; (3) guide credentialing efforts; and (4) define educator skills, knowledge, and dispositions.

The following Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) funded projects were developed based on the Competencies to address various workforce needs:

- The Competencies Integration Project (CIP) created a rubric for mapping the Competencies to course work and professional development (PD) training activities.
- Because of the breadth of these competencies, the CIP also created a Web-based Mapping Tool to assist faculty and PD providers in mapping their learning objectives to specific competencies.

From when the California Competencies Mapping Tool became operational in 2014 to December of 2015, there has been an increase of 97 mapped courses that brings the total number of mapped courses to 588. In 2015, there were a total of 65 trainings that have been mapped with the Competencies via the Web-based Mapping Tool. The aforementioned data, as well as data gathered by the attendees of Webinars, provided by child development higher education faculty from California Community Colleges and State Universities, and State-funded professional development providers demonstrates significant growth in the usage of the mapping tool. Information can be found on the Child Development Training Consortium Web site at <https://www.childdevelopment.org/cs/cip/print/htdocs/mt/home.htm>.

The Early Childhood Educator Competencies Self-Assessment Toolkit (ECE CompSAT) was a SAC project created to be a professional development self-reflection resource for the early childhood education workforce. The ECE CompSAT came online in February 2014, and has assisted RTT-ELC site leaders and coaches with the development of professional growth plans by identifying the competencies needed for effective, high-quality early education practice. Several consortia have included utilization of the ECE CompSAT into their action plans as a way to focus on the priority of local workforce needs. Information can be found on the ComSAT Web site at <http://ececampsat.org/index.html>.

IV. A. Curricula Development for Higher Education

California's ECE workforce development also included supporting the CCDF-funded California Community Colleges Curriculum Alignment Project (CAP) and the RTT-ELC funded CAP Expansion. The CAP engaged faculty from across the state to develop a 24 unit lower-division program of study supporting early care and education teacher preparation. These eight courses represent evidence-based courses that are intended to become a foundational core for all early care and education professionals and have been approved for a bachelor's transfer degree.

In 2015, 103 Community Colleges in California have agreed to participate in CAP. Of these colleges, 87 are officially aligned, and three others are in the revision process to align their course. The CDE does not track the data presented; however, further information can be found on the Child Development Training Consortium Web site at https://www.childdevelopment.org/cs/cdtc/print/htdocs/services_cap.htm.

RTT-ELC funding allowed CAP to expand the project to include seven additional courses in the three specialization areas of Infant/Toddler, Administration, and Children with Special Needs. The seven courses include the following:

1. Infant/Toddler Development
2. Infant/Toddler Care and Education
3. Introduction to Young Children with Special Needs
4. Curriculum and Strategies for children with special Needs
5. Administration I: Programs in ECE
6. Administration II: Leadership and Supervision
7. Adult Supervision and Mentoring

The RTT-ELC expansion of early learning core curricula at California Community Colleges has progressed with faculty agreement on course outline for the seven courses.

IV. B. Program Administrative Scale (PAS) and the Business Administrative Scale (BAS) for California Mentors – Completed in 2013.

The PAS and BAS project was completed in 2013. Additional information can be found in the RTT-ELC 2013 Annual Performance Report on the RTT-ELC Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/rt/rttelc.asp>.

Other Early Care and Education Workforce Efforts

- **A State Workforce Effort Example**

As mentioned in early sections, California's RTT-ELC has supported the IAT meetings for Consortia representatives and participating state agencies. As relationships between IAT participants grew, so did their work together. One of the highlights of these interagency relationships was the February 2015 Child Health, Education and Care Summit-Building Powerful Partnerships. It was a F5CA Summit in partnership with the following organizations: (1) CDE; (2) California Health and Human Services Agency; (3) California Department of Public Health; (4) CDSS; (5) California Department of Developmental Services, (6) California Department of Veterans Affairs; and (7) California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

One of the sessions focused on Early Education Workforce Development—effective workforce development through a quality framework—this interactive workshop included guest speakers and panel formats designed to inform participants and engage them in

an exploration of strategies to support improved teacher effectiveness. Topics included national, State, and local perspectives on cutting-edge research, ways to strengthen early learning teacher and provider preparation, and support meaningful, ongoing learning experiences. Participants learned about coaching opportunities and integrating practice-based coaching within coursework, work sites, and classrooms. Time was provided for dialogue with speakers and panel members. The intended audience for this workshop included program administrators and staff dedicated to teacher effectiveness and continuous program quality improvement, including CARES Plus program staff, Child Signature Program Early Learning Experts and Early Learning Systems Specialists, RTT-ELC Grant QRIS staff, coaches and mentors, higher education staff, and others working on continuous quality improvement and workforce development within early learning programs.

Other Local Workforce Activities

The Consortia's RTT-ELC workforce support efforts are built upon their existing state structures [e.g., AB 212 (Aroner) Chapter 547 Statutes of 2000, CARES, and CSP] and are seeking integration and sustainability. In addition, all are using existing local funding for workforce support of the TQRIS 2014 showed increased “integration” of coaching strategies to enhance site-based QI Plans.

In addition to statewide resources, Consortia members implemented TA activities. All of the Consortia reported using coaching and site-level continuous quality improvement plans. All Consortia members continued to use coaching as a primary strategy. Most consortia combine coaching with advising (88 percent), mentoring (71 percent), and consultation strategies (82 percent). Over half of the Consortia reported using individual teacher professional growth plans (65 percent).

RTT-ELC Reform Area V: Measuring Outcomes and Progress

Agency	RA V Project	Objective	Status Snapshot
U.C. Berkeley Evaluation, Assessment, and Research (BEAR) Center (\$1,000,000)	Connecting Kindergarten Entry Data	Ensure that kindergarten entry assessment information, namely the Desired Results Developmental Profile–School Readiness (DRDP-SR) results, can be connected to the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System.	SSID link was established. Hosting the DRDP-SR results in the “cloud” using DRDPtech. Outreach to superintendents was conducted to support DRDP-SR adoption.

Connecting Kindergarten Entry Data

With the federal application’s focus on understanding the status of children’s learning and development at kindergarten entry, California was able to capitalize on existing

investments strengthening the alignment between preschool and kindergarten that included the use of the State's valid and reliable observational assessment of individual children's development in key domains of school readiness, namely the DRDP. This connected assessment information provides preschool, transitional kindergarten, and kindergarten teachers, as well as their administrators, with a common platform to measure and plan for each child's development, school readiness, and ongoing instructional support.

Kindergarten Entry Assessment

The CDE has developed the DRDP-SR as a Kindergarten Entry Assessment. The DRDP-SR currently includes the domains of language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge (including early mathematics and early scientific development), approaches toward learning (including self-regulation), social and emotional development, and English language development. Validity and reliability testing has been completed and a calibration study of the DRDP-SR was finalized in 2013.

The CDE and its assessment partners, WestEd and BEAR Center, have further developed the DRDP-SR in collaboration with the Illinois State Board of Education. This includes the expansion of the instrument to include the domains of physical well-being and motor development (including adaptive skills), History-Social Science, Visual and Performing Arts, and Language and Literacy Development in Spanish. The instrument has also been expanded with later levels of development so the assessment is appropriate for use through the entire kindergarten year. To identify the expanded Kindergarten Entry Assessment the instrument has been named the Desired Results Developmental Profile–Kindergarten (2015) [DRDP-K (2015)]. It was field tested in the 2014–15 academic year. The DRDP-K (2015) with all domains went into use the fall of 2015. Additional data, collected during fall 2015 implementation, were needed in order to complete the calibration. The calibration analysis will be finalized in spring 2016.

Preliminary validity and reliability studies for DRDP-K took place in 2014, and final calibration activities commenced. Additionally, the CDE collaborated with its assessment partners (UC Berkeley and WestEd) on the design of additional validity and reliability research studies which began in 2015. Studies for the DRDP-K that commenced in 2015 included rater certification, inter-rater reliability, criterion zone setting (cut score), and equating studies linking the current version of the DRDP-K assessment to DRDP assessments for preschool, thereby helping to build connections between early education and K-12 communities. These research activities are still under way in 2016.

In 2015, the DRDP-SR and the DRDP-K were used by 285 teachers, with 5,048 students in 41 local educational agencies. Though still modest compared to California's kindergarten population, this represents almost a tripling of transitional kindergarten and kindergarten students assessed using these instruments.

RTT-ELC Budget and Expenditures

Budget

California received a total of \$75 million for the RTT-ELC Grant. Funds were allocated based on the Reform Areas, with the largest percentage of the funds (77 percent) going to the Regional Leadership Consortia.

Chart 1

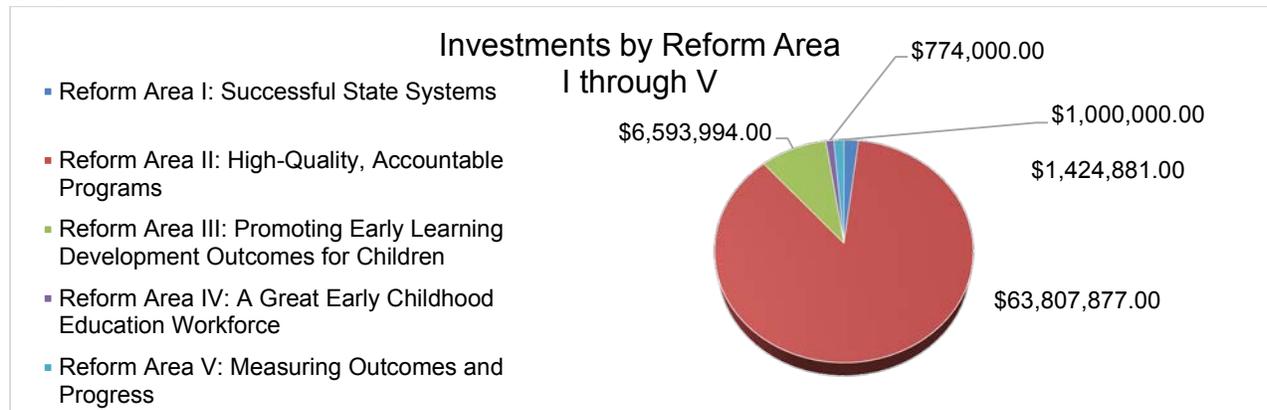
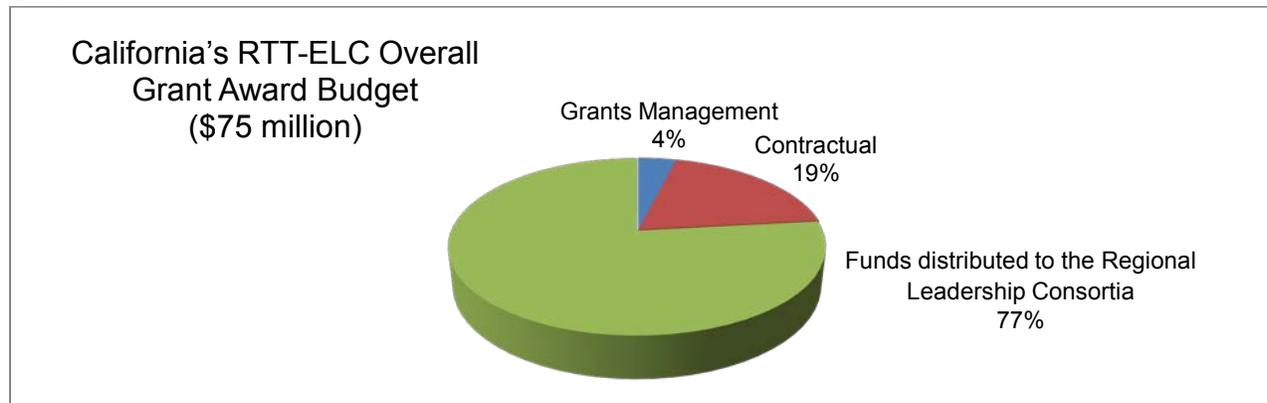


Chart 2



Expenditures

In 2015, a total of \$14,489,949.28 was expended for RTT-ELC grant activities, \$11,541,567.50 of which was disbursed to the Consortia. See Chart 3 below for Consortia members' percent of these funds. Note: Consortia spending was extended to June 30, 2016.

Chart 3 shows that almost 30 percent went to the evaluation, while the other state projects represented 1 to 19 percent. State grant management was 10 percent; this also includes access to federal TA.

Chart 3

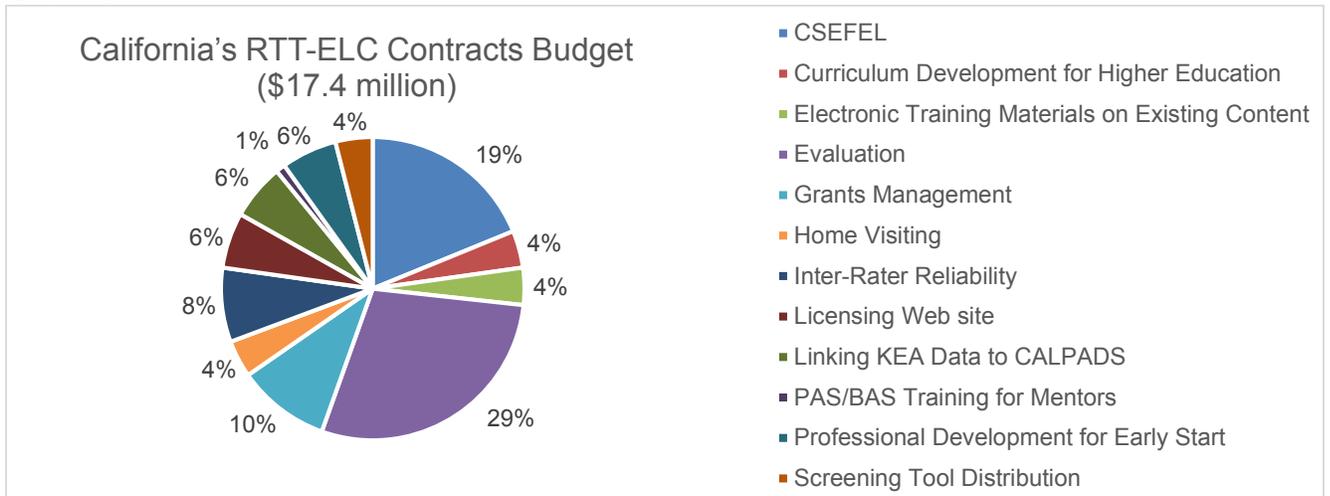


Chart 4

In 2015, \$18,110,523 was expended by the Consortia as displayed in Chart 4. Over half of the funds were used to support grant management and consortium operations.

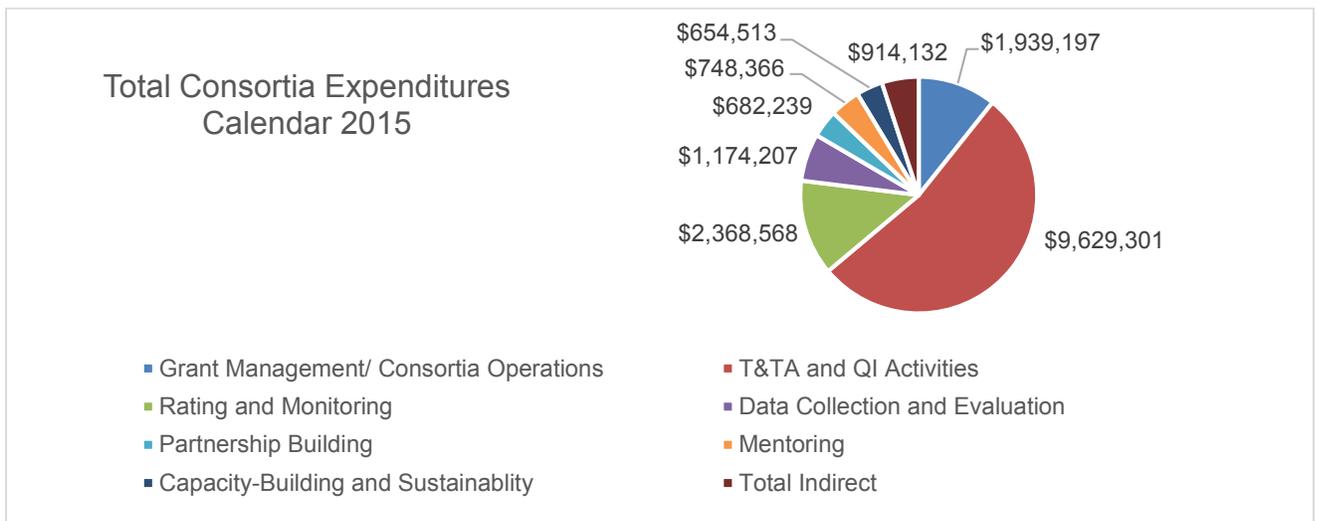


Chart 5

The following chart displays the amount expended per consortium in alphabetical order.

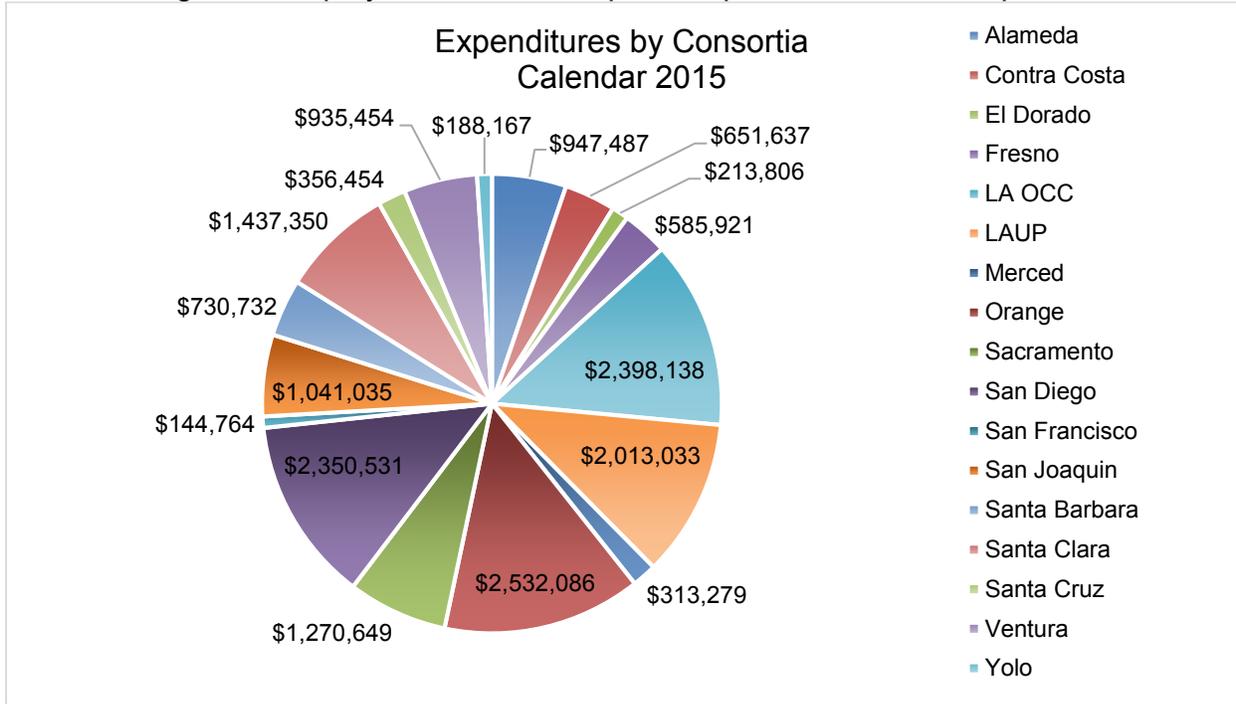
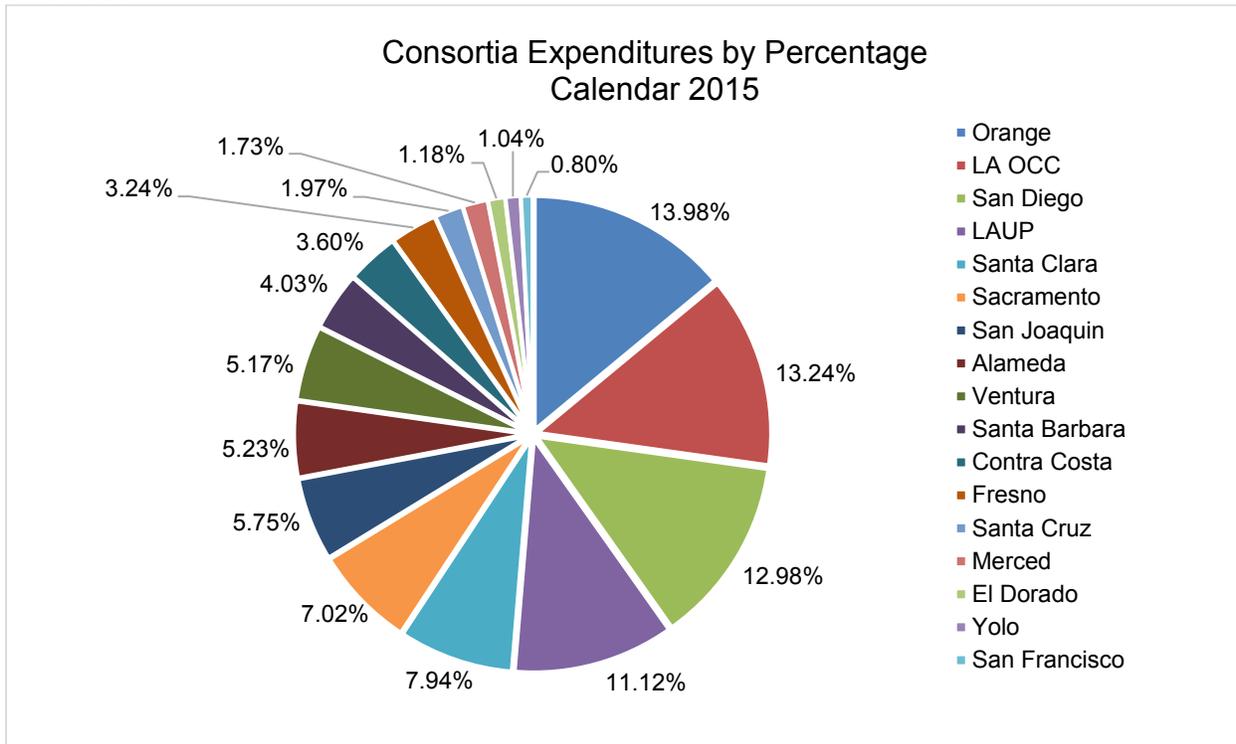


Chart 6

This chart is similar to Chart 5, but shows the expenditure of funds from largest to smallest.



Transition and Sustainability

Transition

As stated earlier in the RTT-ELC State Implementation Team, Planning for Sustainability section (page 10), two important opportunities occurred in California in 2015: the implementation of the CSPP QRIS Block Grant, which is administered by the CDE, EESD; and the adoption of the First 5 Improve and Maximize Programs So All Children Thrive (IMPACT) initiative administered by First 5 California. As a result of these new programs, the QRIS movement continued its expansion into all 58 of California's counties. California began transitioning from the RTT-ELC grant serving 16 counties with 14 mentees to a newly defined CA-QRIS Consortium covering the entire state. The CA-QRIS will sustain the TQRIS groundwork laid by the RTT-ELC Consortia through the RTT-ELC grant.

Through 2015, the RTT-ELC Consortia explored a new governance structure for the CA-QRIS Consortium. Issues explored included organizing by regions, defining regional boundaries, selecting the number of regional representatives with authority to vote, establishing a structure that allows for active participation from such a large group, and providing opportunities for advisers and stakeholders to have a voice were all explored. The Consortia took initial steps toward adopting a governance structure that would go into effect at the March 2016 meeting.

At the December 2015 Consortia meeting, the members adopted a governance structure establishing the foundation for the CA-QRIS Consortium as follows:

- CA-QRIS Consortium governance will be composed of 30 representatives: 3 voting representatives from each of the 10 regions.
 - Regions are identified as the F5CA IMPACT regions.
 - Each region will determine who and how their representatives are selected or elected.
 - The regional representatives will meet with some regularity, but at a minimum annually, to review the CA-QRIS system and structure.
- The CDE/EESD and F5CA will continue to provide staff support, such as setting the agenda and handling the meeting logistics, based upon input from a Planning Committee that will be established.
- An annual review of the governance structure will be conducted.
- Future decisions will include:

- Determination of a small number of the above representatives to serve on a Planning Committee to support the CDE/EESD and F5CA with Consortium meeting planning.
- The establishment of an Advisory Group to advise the Consortium.

Sustainability

In January 2012, California was awarded \$52.6 million for the Federal RTT-ELC grant.

Then in April 2013, California was awarded \$24.6 million in supplemental RTT-ELC funding, which allowed the Consortia to include additional participating early learning sites to their local QRIS as well as mentor 14 additional counties in implementing QRIS.

Through the efforts of the RTT-ELC Consortia, partnerships were built and reinforced across the fields of early learning, child health, and family strengthening. They developed capacity across the state for training, TA, and assessing and improving the quality of early learning programs. Families were provided clear quality standards in order to make informed decisions. In 2014, the Legislature, recognizing the significance of the RTT-ELC to establish a common understanding of early learning program quality, authorized \$50 million annually in state education funds for a State preschool QRIS Block Grant.

These efforts served as the foundation and catalyst for the new state funding for QRIS: CSPP QRIS Block Grant, Infant/Toddler QRIS Block Grant, and First 5 IMPACT.

- **California State Preschool Program QRIS Block Grant Overview**
 - \$50 million annually in Proposition 98 funds have been allocated for local QRIS block grants to support CSPP sites participating in a QRIS.
 - CSPPs who are at Tier 4 or 5 receive a Local Block Grant to maintain high quality (e.g., keeping ratios low, paying for qualified staff, supporting strong teacher–child interactions, and maintaining a quality program).
 - QRIS consortia grantee also can use up to 20 percent of funding to conduct assessments of programs and provide or support access projects.
 - As of 2015, 45 counties are participating in the CSPP QRIS Block Grant

Similarly, in 2015, the Legislature responded to the appeals to improve the quality of care for infants and toddlers by budgeting \$24.1 million in one-time funds for two years.

- **Infant/Toddler QRIS Block Grant Overview**

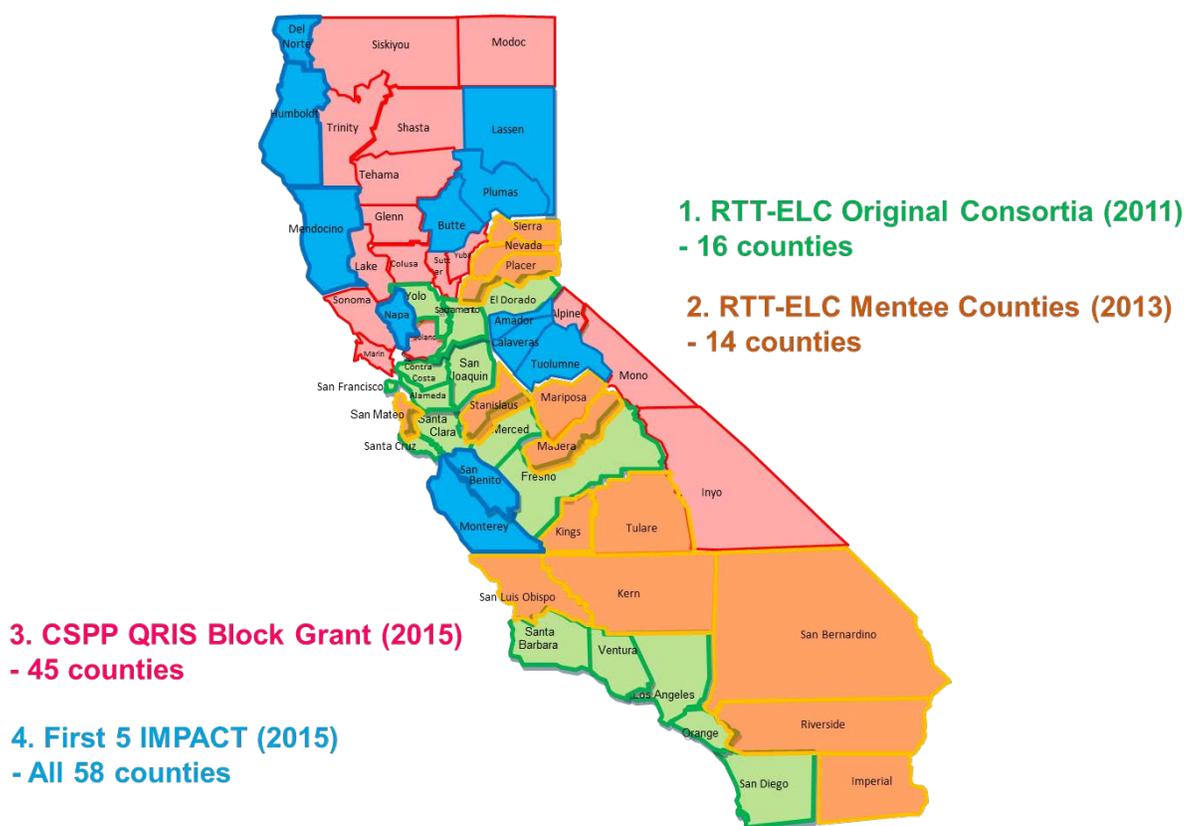
- \$24 million in state general funds have been allocated for QRIS block grants to support infant/toddler (I/T) sites participating in a QRIS.
- One-time funds are available beginning in FY 2015–16 and must be expended by the end of FY 2016–17.
- Funding provides training, TA, and resources to help I/T child care providers meet a higher tier of quality.
- No more than 20 percent of funds may go directly to child care providers.
- Each QRIS county will receive a minimum grant of \$25,000.
- 31 counties are participating in the I/T QRIS Block Grant, with lead agencies represented by 22 county offices of education, nine First 5 county commissions, and one local planning council.

In April 2015, the California Children and Families Commission authorized \$190 million over five years for its IMPACT Initiative.

- **First 5 IMPACT Overview**

- \$190 million total funding over 5 years, which includes participation from all 58 counties.
- Centered on continuous quality improvement (CQI), including a network of local QRIS.
- Supports CQI across all early learning setting-types, including alternative and family, friend, and neighbor.
- Builds on the RTT-ELC QRIS Framework and F5CA's past and current program investments.
- Aligns with and maximizes federal and state investments, leveraging local, state, and federal non-First 5 dollars.
- Creates a shared focus on a common desired result: thriving children and families.

California QRIS



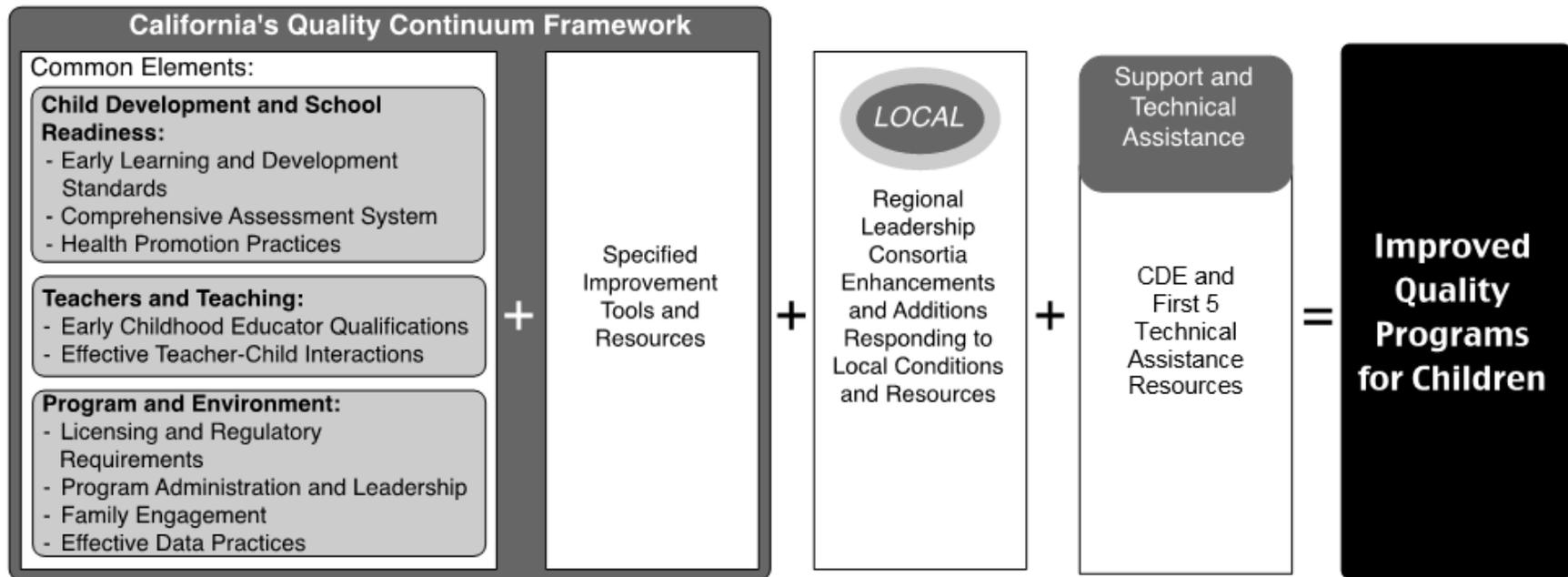
Conclusion

This report provided an update on the 2015 Federal RTT–ELC grant activities in California, which are organized around five key areas of reform: (1) Successful State Systems; (2) High-Quality, Accountable Programs; (3) Promoting Early Learning Development Outcomes for Children; (4) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce; and (5) Measuring Outcomes and Progress. Improving the quality of early learning programs and closing the achievement gap for children with high needs has been the objective of RTT-ELC.

The RTT-ELC Consortia and their mentees have utilized approximately 77 percent of the RTT-ELC grant funding supporting the development and expansion of successful local QRISs, which focused on improved outcomes for children with high needs. With additional funding opportunities, these QRIS efforts have created a sustainable system that can improve the quality of early learning programs to prepare young children for lifelong success.

This report is posted on the CDE RTT-ELC Legislative Reports Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/rt/rttelclegreports.asp>. If you need a copy of this report, please contact Lila Nazari, Office Technician, CDE Early Education and Support Division, by phone at 916-323-1343 or by e-mail at lnazari@cde.ca.gov.

Appendix A – Graphic Representation of California's Quality Continuum Framework



**Appendix B – CALIFORNIA RACE TO THE TOP – EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE (RTT–ELC)
QUALITY CONTINUUM FRAMEWORK – RATING MATRIX WITH ELEMENTS AND POINTS FOR CONSORTIA COMMON TIERS 1, 3, AND 4**

ELEMENT	BLOCK (Common Tier 1) Licensed In-Good-Standing	2 POINTS	3 POINTS	4 POINTS	5 POINTS
CORE I: CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOOL READINESS					
1. Child Observation	<input type="checkbox"/> Not required	<input type="checkbox"/> Program uses evidence-based child assessment/observation tool annually that covers all five domains of development	<input type="checkbox"/> Program uses valid and reliable child assessment/observation tool aligned with <i>CA Foundations & Frameworks⁹</i> twice a year	<input type="checkbox"/> DRDP (minimum twice a year) and results used to inform curriculum planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Program uses DRDP twice a year and uploads into DRDP Tech and results used to inform curriculum planning
2. Developmental and Health Screenings	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Title 22 Regulations	<input type="checkbox"/> Health Screening Form (Community Care <i>Licensing form LIC 701 "Physician's Report - Child Care Centers" or equivalent</i>) used at entry, then: 1. Annually OR 2. Ensures vision and hearing screenings are conducted annually	<input type="checkbox"/> Program works with families to ensure screening of all children using a valid and reliable developmental screening tool at entry and as indicated by results thereafter AND <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Criteria from point level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Program works with families to ensure screening of all children using the ASQ at entry and as indicated by results thereafter AND <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Criteria from point level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Program works with families to ensure screening of all children using the ASQ & ASQ-SE , if indicated, at entry, then as indicated by results thereafter AND <input type="checkbox"/> Program staff uses children's screening results to make referrals and implement intervention strategies and adaptations as appropriate AND <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Criteria from point level 2
CORE II: TEACHERS AND TEACHING					
3. Minimum Qualifications for Lead Teacher/ Family Child Care Home (FCCH)	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Title 22 Regulations [Center: 12 units of Early Childhood Education (ECE)/Child Development (CD) FCCH: 15 hours of training on preventive health practices]	<input type="checkbox"/> Center: 24 units of ECE/CD ¹⁰ OR Associate Teacher Permit <input type="checkbox"/> FCCH: 12 units of ECE/CD OR Associate Teacher Permit	<input type="checkbox"/> 24 units of ECE/CD + 16 units of General Education OR Teacher Permit AND <input type="checkbox"/> 21 hours professional development (PD) annually	<input type="checkbox"/> Associate's degree (AA/AS) in ECE/CD (or closely related field) OR AA/AS in any field plus 24 units of ECE/CD OR Site Supervisor Permit AND <input type="checkbox"/> 21 hours PD annually	<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree in ECE/CD (or closely related field) OR BA/BS in any field plus/with 24 units of ECE/CD (or master's degree in ECE/CD) OR Program Director Permit AND <input type="checkbox"/> 21 hours PD annually
4. Effective Teacher–Child Interactions: CLASS Assessments (*Use tool for appropriate age group as available)	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Required	<input type="checkbox"/> Familiarity with CLASS for appropriate age group as available by one representative from the site	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent CLASS assessment by reliable observer to inform the program's professional development/improvement plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent CLASS assessment by reliable observer with minimum CLASS scores: Pre-K ▪ Emotional Support – 5 ▪ Instructional Support – 3 ▪ Classroom Organization – 5 Toddler ▪ Emotional & Behavioral Support – 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent assessment with CLASS with minimum CLASS scores: Pre-K ▪ Emotional Support – 5.5 ▪ Instructional Support – 3.5 ▪ Classroom Organization – 5.5 Toddler ▪ Emotional & Behavioral Support – 5.5 ▪ Engaged Support for Learning – 4 Infant

9. Approved assessments are: Creative Curriculum GOLD, Early Learning Scale by National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER), and Brigance Inventory of Early Development III.

10. For all ECE/CD units, the core eight are desired but not required.

Note: Point values are not indicative of Tiers 1–5 but reflect a range of points that can be earned toward assigning a tier rating (see Total Point Range).

ELEMENT	BLOCK (Common Tier 1) Licensed In-Good-Standing	2 POINTS	3 POINTS	4 POINTS	5 POINTS
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engaged Support for Learning – 3.5 Infant ▪ Responsive Caregiving (RC) – 5.0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Responsive Caregiving (RC) – 5.5
COR III: PROGRAM AND ENVIRONMENT - Administration and Leadership					
5. Ratios and Group Size (Centers Only beyond licensing regulations)	<input type="checkbox"/> Center: Title 22 Regulations Infant Ratio of 1:4 Toddler Option Ratio of 1:6 Preschool Ratio of 1:12 <input type="checkbox"/> FCCH: Title 22 Regulations <i>(excluded from point values in ratio and group size)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Center - Ratio: Group Size Infant/Toddler – 4:16 Toddler – 3:18 Preschool – 3:36	<input type="checkbox"/> Center - Ratio: Group Size Infant/Toddler – 3:12 Toddler – 2:12 Preschool – 2:24	<input type="checkbox"/> Center - Ratio: Group Size Infant/Toddler – 3:12 or 2:8 Toddler – 2:10 Preschool – 3:24 or 2:20	<input type="checkbox"/> Center - Ratio: Group Size Infant/Toddler – 3:9 or better Toddler – 3:12 or better Preschool – 1:8 ratio and group size of no more than 20
6. Program Environment Rating Scale(s) (Use tool for appropriate setting: ECERS-R, ITERS-R, FCCERS-R)	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Required	<input type="checkbox"/> Familiarity with ERS and every classroom uses ERS as a part of a Quality Improvement Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment on the whole tool. Results used to inform the program's Quality Improvement Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent ERS assessment. All subscales completed and averaged to meet overall score level of 5.0	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent ERS assessment. All subscales completed and averaged to meet overall score level of 5.5 OR Current National Accreditation approved by the California Department of Education
7. Director Qualifications (Centers Only)	<input type="checkbox"/> 12 units ECE/CD+ 3 units management/ administration	<input type="checkbox"/> 24 units ECE/CD + 16 units General Education +/with 3 units management/ administration OR Master Teacher Permit	<input type="checkbox"/> Associate's degree with 24 units ECE/CD +/with 6 units management/ administration and 2 units supervision OR Site Supervisor Permit AND <input type="checkbox"/> 21 hours PD annually	<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree with 24 units ECE/CD +/with 8 units management/ administration OR Program Director Permit AND <input type="checkbox"/> 21 hours PD annually	<input type="checkbox"/> Master's degree with 30 units ECE/CD including specialized courses +/with 8 units management/ administration, OR Administrative Credential AND <input type="checkbox"/> 21 hours PD annually
TOTAL POINT RANGES					
Program Type	Common-Tier 1	Local-Tier 2¹¹	Common-Tier 3	Common-Tier 4	Local-Tier 5¹²
Centers 7 Elements for 35 points	Blocked (No Point Value) – Must Meet All Elements	Point Range 8 to 19	Point Range 20 to 25	Point Range 26 to 31	Point Range 32 and above
FCCHs 5 Elements for 25 points	Blocked (No Point Value) – Must Meet All Elements	Point Range 6 to 13	Point Range 14 to 17	Point Range 18 to 21	Point Range 22 and above

11. Local-Tier 2: Local decision if Blocked or Points and if there are additional elements.

12. Local-Tier 5: Local decision if there are additional elements included California Department of Education, February 2014 updated on May 28, 2015; effective July 1, 2015