



Notice of Funding Availability #747 – Early Learning Scholarship: Licensed Centers

Questions & Answers, Part 1 (Released February 7, 2017)

Below are answers to questions submitted in written form during its Information Sessions and questions submitted via email to Steve.Kim@sfgov.org. This document only captures some of the questions submitted to date. OECE will publish additional answers to questions in the coming days.

Questions that share an answer were grouped together by OECE. Questions and answers are organized around the following headings:

Minimum Qualifications:

Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS):

Early Learning Scholarship:

Preschool for All:

Target Populations:

Other:

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

1. **Question:** Can a new program pending licensing apply for ELS funding? Or are licensing requirements required for this NOFA?
Answer: New programs who are seeking to be licensed may apply for ELS funding, but will not be eligible to receive ELS funding until they are licensed and engaged in the QRIS process to meet minimum qualifications.
2. **Question:** Please clarify minimum enrollment of 15% low income children based on 85% SMI. Children classified as low income on enrollment form must be 70% SMI. What is the income ceiling for low income – 70% or 85% SMI?
Answer: The income ceiling for low-income is 70% SMI.

QRIS:

- 3a. **Question:** I just got a new site in July 2017. The center just finished ECERS assignment and no time for QRIS. How could I fill out the application? Am I qualified?
- 3b. **Question:** Centers without current QRIS rating 3 or higher: How to get the funding to move towards readiness for QRIS? Should center apply for ELS now or after reaching in QRIS Tier 3?
- 3c. **Question:** What happens to centers with no current QRIS? And why were they not given notice

before the NOFA was sent out?

3d. Question: If I'm a brand new site how can I have a QRIS before 7/1/17?

Answer: We have revised the Peak Enrollment Form to allow agencies to indicate new sites or planned expansions. You would fill out a separate Peak Enrollment Form for each new site and indicate the projected start date. Centers without a current/valid QRIS rating or who have never been rated are encouraged to apply, and may be awarded technical assistance or a quality assistance grant to move toward readiness for the QRIS.

4. Question: I hope you're well. I have a question for you. At the meeting I asked about projected sites that are not yet open, but will be in 2 or 3 years. I was told to go ahead and apply for those sites. After reviewing the application, a few questions came up for our new sites:

- A. Since the sites are currently being built and obviously not licensed yet, what can we write down under license?
- B. Should we attach the new sites to our existing licensed preschools, which are located at a different site and just increase the capacity?
- C. If yes to question #2, we're going to be offering an infant and toddler care at 2 of the new sites, how do I make sure that's reflected on the peak form?
- D. As for QRIS Score, on the form it states, if the program has not been scored yet, simply choose NS for not scored. Does this apply to the new sites as well?

Answer: We have revised the Peak Enrollment Form to allow agencies to indicate a future opening date of a new site, if applicable. You would fill out a separate Peak Enrollment Form for each planned site and indicate the projected start date. Centers without a current/valid QRIS rating or who have never been rated may be awarded technical assistance or a quality assistance grant to move toward readiness for the QRIS, but will be unable to serve ELS subsidized families until the Center has achieved a QRIS rating of Tier 3 or higher. If you have not received a QRIS rating for your new site put "NS" in the QRIS score section of the Peak Enrollment Form.

5. Question: I attended the NOFA meeting for center this week and I have a few questions. We are a licensed for profit child care center located in the Excelsior District of San Francisco. We are licensed for 36 children, of which 12 can be toddlers. Our available slots are around 3 per month. We provide care for CalWORKs voucher programs through the Children's Council. Over 95% of our enrollment is voucher. The other percentage is moderate income families.

We do not have a rating from QRIS. I understand there is funding, a one-time grant, to assist preparing for a review from QRIS. My questions are:

- A. How to apply for this funding;
- B. What are the funding amounts;
- C. In general, what can the funds be used for;
- D. What happens if after a period of time we find that striving for Tier 3 is not in our best interest?

Answer: Centers without a current/valid QRIS rating or who have never been rated may be awarded technical assistance (TA) or a quality assistance (QA) grant to move toward readiness for the QRIS, but will be unable to receive enhanced ELS scholarship funding until the Center has achieved a QRIS rating of Tier 3 or higher. The TA/QA grant amount is determined on a

case-by-case basis depending on the program's needs and funding availability. The TA/QA grant funding is to support QRIS assessment readiness exclusively. Centers who do not apply through this NOFA and/or who are without a Tier 3 or higher QRIS rating are not eligible to receive Early Learning Scholarship funding (e.g., ELS-Gap, which enhances the State Regional Market Rate to a Tier 3 rate). In the instance where a site was not rated or did not achieve a Tier 3 rating or did not apply through the NOFA, the CalWORKs voucher rate would not be enhanced and simply pay at the State Regional Market Rate or the program's private rate, whichever is the lesser of the two rates per State regulations.

6. Question: What do we do if our QRIS goes up or down during the 3 year term?

Answer: If a center moves into Tier 4 or 5 they will be eligible for annual Quality Grant amounts per child. Centers must maintain a Tier 3 rating throughout the funding period to remain eligible for OECE funding.

7. Question: What happens to program's funding if a center moves up to a higher QRIS tier after their application is submitted or within the 3 year funding contract?

Answer: At tier 4 and 5 on the QRIS providers qualified through the NOFA process are eligible to receive the Annual Quality Grant funding as explained on pages 6-7 in the NOFA.

8a. Question: If QRIS is not completed in year 16/17 by 3.1.17 do I apply with last QRIS score?

8b. Question: Our current QRIS score is Tier 4 – almost 2 years old now. Scheduled QRIS visit: Feb 10, 2017. Do I use old score if new score not ready by 3/3/17?

8c. Question: What happens if my QRIS score has expired?

8d. Question: What happens if QRIS score is expired?

Answer: OECE will accept your most recent QRIS rating if you have an assessment scheduled for the fiscal year (July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018). If your updated QRIS score is not ready, please submit your previous score.

9. Question: What happens if WestEd cannot get CLASS and ERS ratings due by July 2017?

Answer: You are eligible to apply, but will not be eligible to receive ELS funding until you have achieved Tier 3 rating on the QRIS.

10. Question: To clarify, if your program receives a QRIS score of 4 or 5, your program is not eligible to apply for the ELS funding - is this correct?

Answer: That is not correct. A center must achieve a score of 3 or higher on their QRIS rating in order to be eligible to receive Early Learning Scholarship funding. Please apply.

11. Question: What qualifications have to be met for Tier 3 in QRIS? Where is this information online?

Answer: A copy of the QRIS matrix is available on OECE's website at: <http://sfoece.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/QRIS-Matrix.pdf>. For more information about the QRIS, please visit <http://www.bayareaqualitypartnership.com/>.

12. Question: How do we get our QRIS number? We do not know if we are a Tier 3 or Tier 4. I asked our coach and she does not know.

Answer: Please contact First 5 San Francisco if you have questions about your most recent QRIS score.

EARLY LEARNING SCHOLARSHIP:

13. Question: Are the staff wage minimums required or suggested?

Answer: OECE encourages centers to pay at least the suggested minimum hourly wages for classroom staff. These wage floors were used to calculate the rates for the Early Learning Scholarship. The suggested ELS Classroom Staff Wage Minimums are based on job responsibilities and level of education, and centers are encouraged to provide compensation higher than these suggested minimums.

14. Question: We have a CCTR contract – so we get rates for each type of child – OECE rate (less CDE) + PFA (teachers) + QRIS quality = total funding from OECE – true?

Answer: For each CCTR funded child the center would receive ELS-Gap (on top of CCTR rate from CDE) with a 5% differential for infants/toddlers (if the program serves children ages 0-5) + quality grant per child if Tier 4 or 5).

15. Question: How should children currently classified as Preschool Plus be classified in the future?

Answer: As either ELS-City (Voucher) or ELS-City (Moderate), depending on family income.

16. Question: Children previously designated as Preschool Plus are now eligible for ELS?

Answer: Yes under ELS-City (Voucher) or ELS-City (Moderate), depending on family income.

17. Question: Must children still be 3 years old to be eligible for the new form of Preschool Plus?

Answer: Children under 4 years of age are eligible to be funded in an ELS-City (Voucher) or ELS-City (Moderate) slot, depending on family income.

18. Question: Are formerly Preschool Plus slots considered Reserved slots or Moderate slots or possibly one or the other based on family income?

Answer: Children previously designated as Preschool Plus are now eligible for ELS-City (Voucher) or ELS-City (Moderate), depending on family income.

19. Question: Will current Preschool Plus families need to be recertified for ELS-City funding?

Answer: Children currently funded as Preschool Plus will automatically be eligible for ELS-City (Voucher) or ELS-City (Moderate), depending on family income.

20. Question: Is Preschool Plus funding eliminated?

Answer: Children previously funded through Preschool Plus are now eligible for ELS-City (Voucher) or ELS-City (Moderate) funding, depending on family income.

21. Question: In the peak enrollment projections where will Children's Council children fall into?

Answer: Those children funded through state vouchers will be entered under 'State Vouchers

(CalWORKs/CAPP)'. Current children entered as 'Local Vouchers' (e.g. Access, City Child care, FCS) would be entered as ELS-City (Vouchers) in the projected peak enrollments.

22. Question: ELS – will gap rates supplement all private tuition rates? Does it matter what private fee we charge?

Answer: Private tuition families of 4 year olds will be eligible for PFA 9-month or 12-month and low-moderate income families may be eligible for ELS – City (Moderate). Subject to funding availability, this funding is “reserved” or assigned to a specific center who serves low-moderate income families with children under the age of 4 whose families need ECE services, but who are not eligible for other state or federal subsidies and are not able to afford the whole cost of care. Families will be verified as low-moderate income - defined as above 70% of State Median Income and less than 110% of Area Median Income (see appendix D) - by the ECE Integrated Services Grantee(s). Approved children may receive Early Learning Scholarship support for at least a minimum of one program year.

23. Question: Would ELS be prorated for programs open more than 175 days per year (part year) but fewer than 246 days (full year)?

Answer: For ELS funding a program would be considered part year with less than 246 days of operation a year. Payments are based on the center's actual enrollments during days of operation.

24. Question: What is the definition for Full Day/Part Year rate? Based on total hours/month or hours/year calculated? If a child is enrolled for 1 or 2 months how do we calculate the rate for payment?

Answer: Full Day/Part Year is defined as 6.5-10.5 hours a day, at least 175 days a year. OECE funding received by the center will be based on actual enrollments. Enrollment projections can be adjusted annually.

25. Question: Where on the Peak Enrollment Form can infant/toddler centers predict Bridge/Gap funding? Is Bridge/Gap funding only for existing PFA programs?

Answer: CSPP and CCTR funded children served in Title 5 centers will be entered under 'CDE Title 5 – CCTR or CSPP' and the ELS-Gap funding amount will be calculated based on these enrollments. ELS-Bridge is not included in the calculation for 'Total Requested Quality Grant and ELS/PFA Funding Amount' as eligibility for this funding is for families who lose their eligibility for local, state and/or federal subsidies, and approved by OECE on a case-by-case basis.

26. Question: PFA Bridge and Preschool Plus will not be reflected in the projection? Did you say these will not be considered in the sheet and will be approved through a separate process?

Answer: ELS-Bridge is not included in the calculation for 'Total Requested Quality Grant and ELS/PFA Funding Amount' as eligibility for this funding is for families who lose their eligibility for local, state and/or federal subsidies, approved by OECE, and this number is not known in advance.. However, children previously designated as Preschool Plus are now eligible for ELS-City (Voucher) or ELS-City (Moderate), depending on family income, which should be included in your projections.

- 27. Question:** Child care food program costs agencies twice what they receive in income. Do all centers receiving ELS voucher children have to participate in CACFP?
Answer: CACFP participation is not required to be eligible for OECE funding, but programs serving low-income children are encouraged to apply.
- 28. Question:** In order to obtain additional funding for private full-fee families if fees are lower than ELS maximums, does income still have to be under 110% AMI? Do we have to collect proof of income?
Answer: In order to be eligible for ELS-City (Moderate) the family's' income needs to be above 70% SMI and at or under 110% AMI. Income for ELS-City (Moderate) will be verified.
- 29a. Question:** If a child is enrolled as a toddler at the start of the school year and turns three during the school year, will the child's ELS funding change from the toddler rate to the preschool rate on the child's birthday or at the start of the next school year?
- 29b. Question:** If a center keeps a 3 year old in the toddler room until space opens in preschool with a 1 to 4 ratio can they continue to receive toddler ELS reimbursement instead of preschool ELS?
Answer: For ELS funding, OECE plans to mirror the state policy of the underlying subsidy. In this instance, a State Title 5, State Voucher, or ELS funded child would receive the preschool rate.
- 30. Question:** Will ELS be adjusted annually based on costs, COLA, minimum wage, funding available?
Answer: If resources allow OECE, will explore providing cost adjustments.
- 31. Question:** Will electronic attendance records be required for all ELS funded enrollments? Is startup funding included in NOFA application (for tablets, Wi-Fi, etc.)
Answer: Yes, electronic attendance records are required. No, startup funding is not provided through the NOFA, but may be available through other sources in the future.
- 32. Question:** To clarify, it notes that electronic sign-in and out is necessary for those who are receiving the ELS funding - is this the same as the attendance tracking through COCOA or a different system?
Answer: OECE is developing a multi-year approach to data integration across the ECE system. Providers qualified to receive ELS funding through the NOFA process will need to use a database determined by OECE to track all enrollments, currently that database is Cocoa.
- 33. Question:** ELS-Gap for a 4 year old in CSPP – family still pays their calculated parent fee (to state) but is this without an offset reimbursement for the PFA portion of the day?
Answer: For Title 5 CSPP 4-year olds only, OECE will pay the family fee for the Preschool for All portion of the day (i.e., 50% of the total family fee). OECE will not pay the family fees for any other subsidized family.

- 34. Question:** Will children (formerly Preschool Plus) now designated for ELS (either reserved, voucher, or moderate) be eligible for part week enrollments (3 or 4 days per week)? If so, how should part week enrollments be designated on the application enrollment form to achieve an accurate funding projection?
Answer: Yes. Applicants interested in a part-week enrollment should indicate those enrollments (Preschool Plus) in the Part Year, Full Day category (less than 246 enrollment days per year) for ELS-City (Voucher) or (Moderate) depending on family income.
- 35. Question:** Will providers be denied access to fully funded ELS slots if they are not earning their state contracts?
Answer: OECE expects Title 5 contractors to fully maximize their state contracts before using City funds.
- 36. Question:** How will ELS-Gap “low-income” definition change if the Title 5 pilot changes from 70% of SMI to 85% of SMI? Does this affect Target Population as well?
Answer: OECE plans to mirror the state’s income threshold in the Title 5 pilot for ELS funding eligibility.
- 37. Question:** Does Title 5 apply to the entire site or is it license specific? (Ex. I have an infant license and receive some federal funding. I have a preschool license and receive CSPP, therefore adhere to it for the preschool. Is my infant license Title 5 also?)
Answer: No, in order to serve infants through Title 5 funding you would also need to have a CCTR contract with the California Department of Education.
- 38. Question:** How can SF3C prioritize Target Populations without getting into trouble during a CSPP fiscal audit, and/or enrollment practices based on Title V guidelines?
Answer: SF3C will prioritize Title 5 enrollments per those requirements. SF3C will prioritize City-funded enrollments using OECE’s local Target Population priorities. OECE’s and the California Department of Education’s largely overlap.
- 39. Question:** Do Target Population families have to meet a minimum # of the qualifiers or just one?
Answer: Just one.
- 40. Question:** We are participating in C-Wages only will we be able to have access to SF3C under the ELS model? (We are infant & toddler site)
Answer: Yes
- 41. Question:** Do centers need to adhere to the projections? (Actual enrollment almost never same as projection)
Answer: OECE encourages providers to make the most realistic projections possible, but

understands things can change. Payments will be made based on actual enrollments.

42. Question: Do we get to determine the peak enrollment period?

Answer: Yes, the provider indicates his or her own number for their program year.

43. Question: How will families be qualified for ELS voucher funds? Where should they go?

Answer: Similar to how families are qualified now. They will be assessed for need and eligibility by the ECE integration services grantee and children will be pulled from SF3C like the current process.

44. Question: What are the ELS spending categories? Is it similar to PFA enhancement fund?

Answer: There are no spending categories for ELS. ELS is a fee-for-service model, so unlike PFA there will not be an enhancement fund. The PFA 9 month/12 month tuition credit and enhancement funding remains the same.

45. Question: I work for campus-based child care center. My priority is to serve the needs of the student population. Can I offer reserved spots to qualifying students or do I have to pull from SF3C?

Answer: This sounds like an instance for which ELS-City (Reserved) funding could be most beneficial. If selected for funding, OECE will discuss the best process for enrollment in this instance.

46. Question: SF resident who was evicted and is a Preschool Plus family, and now lives in Daly City. PFA funded them in 16-17, so will they not be eligible for ELS in 17-18?

Answer: Given OECE's goal of promoting continuity of care, OECE will consider such cases, provided that the family's provider is based in San Francisco and qualified, on a case by case basis.

47. Question: Does ELS include CalWORKs?

Answer: Yes, providers qualified through the NOFA will receive ELS- Gap funding on any state subsidies, including CalWORKs.

48. Question: Would quality grants only apply per child for children receiving ELS?

Answer: Yes.

PRESCHOOL FOR ALL:

49. Question: We are a current PFA site and look to expand with another preschool site. How do we apply? How do we complete the Peak Enrollment Form? One application or separately?

Answer: We would encourage centers to apply for all relevant projected child enrollments in FY2017-18. Each different site requires a separate Peak Enrollment Form.

50. Question: For PFA qualifications – what happens to centers that do not have a current QRIS and have no control over it due to agency not contacting centers to schedule or inform of the requirement?

Answer: Centers without a current/valid QRIS rating or who have never been rated may be awarded technical assistance or a quality assistance grant to move toward readiness for the QRIS, but will be unable to serve ELS subsidized families until the Center has achieved a QRIS rating of Tier 3 or higher.

51. Question: Will PFA still cover a second year for those families who are TK eligible but choose not to go?

Answer: PFA-9 month and PFA-12 month are a continuation of PFA funding for existing PFA-9 month and PFA-12 month FCCs for two fiscal years, 2017-18 and 2018-19, and will include all existing components of that program, including this policy for TK eligible children who choose to stay in a PFA program.

52. Question: Are children born 9/2 – 12/2 still eligible for a second year of PFA funding in lieu of attending SFUSD TK?

Answer: PFA-9 month and PFA-12 month are a continuation of PFA funding for existing PFA-9 month and PFA-12 month FCCs for two fiscal years, 2017-18 and 2018-19, and will include all existing components of that program including this policy for TK eligible children who choose to stay in a PFA program.

53. Question: How many years is required under #2 and #3 in the selection process/criteria for PFA?

Answer: There is no minimum requirement regarding the years of experience an agency has used evidenced-based curricula and serving low-income and/or Target Population families. However, more years of experience in these areas will score higher in the selection process.

54. Question: What is the process/timeline for determining what happens to PFA after 2 years?

Answer: To be determined.

55. Question: Will all sites (including PFA only sites) be required to implement electronic sign-in? Will there be technical support provided by the OECE for this?

Answer: Preschool for All-9month/12 month ONLY sites are not required to implement electronic sign in/out. All other sites will be required to implement electronic sign in/out. Sites required to implement electronic sign in/out will be offered technical assistance to assist with the implementation.

56. Question: What should we be telling our families while we wait to hear if we are going to receive funding? I have many families asking for rates and funding information. What should we tell them, especially if we aren't guaranteed funding?

Answer: All families who currently have a city-funded subsidy will continue receiving a subsidy under the new ELS program. For Preschool For All 9-month/12-month the rates remain unchanged.

57. Question: Will PFA still provide funding for part-week, part-year families?

Answer: Yes.

58. Question: Is Preschool funding subject to availability?

Answer: Yes.

59. Question: So Children's Council and SF3C may be administered by a different agency? So how will PFA Preschool Plus enrollees remain in their program?

Answer: Through a competitive process, a grantee(s) will be selected to manage funding and run the eligibility list (SF3C). Current Preschool Plus enrollments will remain the same, with no interruptions. Future enrollments will be supported by the new ELS-City program.

60. Question: Does the number of years you have already been receiving PFA funding affect future funding?

Answer: Yes, it is a criterion of the selection process

61. Question: Do full tuition families qualify for PFA's Tuition Credit?

Answer: Yes, they will still qualify. However, only existing PFA providers can continue receiving this funding.

62. Question: Can a program apply for slots beyond PFA, but if not selected for additional funding maintain PFA only?

Answer: Yes, you can apply for PFA 9 or 12 month, as well as other ELS funding types. Depending on how funding awards go, you can potentially get both, or just PFA.

63. Question: How many years are required for tier 2 and 3 in the selection process/criteria for PFA?

Answer: There are no requirements or minimums. Please indicate your number of years of experience.

64. Question: Currently enrolled PFA centers may receive the same amount, less, or no funding next year depending on the total ELS funding available. This is different from previous years (true or false)?

Answer: Subject to the application process, the intention is to continue funding existing PFA sites. There is additional funding budgeted for payments for providers next fiscal year.

65. Question: Does the income requirement (15%) apply to the PFA schools as well as ELS sites? If applicable is this a percent of all slots or PFA slots only?

Answer: No it does not. It only applies to ELS funding types.

66. Question: Is there a PFA enhancement still?

Answer: PFA will continue to have an enhancement, staying the same. PFA enhancement on top of state funded subsidy will become ELS Gap.

67. Question: Can a PFA eligible agency also apply for transition funding?

Answer: Yes.

68. Question: Will the PFA enhancement funding and reporting change?

Answer: The funding approach will not change however reporting may change somewhat, as OECE is seeking to streamline reporting.

69. Question: Does the program selection criteria apply to PFA funding as well?

Answer: Yes, please see Page 14 of the NOFA.

70. Question: What will be the PFA credit for tuition families? How do we know?

Answer: The program will continue as is, with no changes from current practice.

71. Question: What will be the PFA tuition credit for tuition paying families? How do we know?

Answer: There will be no change from the current practice.

72. Question: Does ELS selection criteria apply to PFA tuition credit funding as well?

Answer: Yes, please refer to page 14 of the NOFA for detailed information.

TARGET POPULATIONS:

73. Question: If you do not serve any of the “targeted” populations do you still qualify for any of the funding?

Answer: Yes, the Early Learning Scholarship also aims to serve low and moderate income families outside the target populations, to the extent resources allow.

OTHER:

74. Question: Do we apply for only PFA or only ELS funding? In other words, one or the other?

Answer: No – centers may serve children that fall under either funding. For example a center may serve some state funded children eligible for ELS-Gap, and some fully OECE-funded in ELS-City (Reserved) children, and also serve 4 year olds from families paying full tuition who would be eligible for PFA 9-month or 12-month funding depending on the days of operation.

75. Question: We earn our contracts by child days of enrollment not a specific number of children. Should we base our enrollment on licensed capacity?

Answer: Please base enrollment on the actual number of children you project to serve under each category within your licensed capacity.

- 76. Question:** For multiple site agencies that are adding new center(s) not licensed by March 3 this year – will they need to wait until after this first 3 year funding cycle to be included?
Answer: OECE encourages centers to apply for all relevant projected child enrollments. Please complete a separate Peak Enrollment Form for sites in development, but not yet licensed, at the time of application.
- 77a. Question:** If this is for 3 years then how do we deal with fluctuations in enrollments and differing family enrollments?
- 77b. Question:** I know it is three years but if our census goes up or down will we be adjusted accordingly?
- 77c. Question:** If we don't meet our peak enrollment does the funding get adjusted for the year? How often can we adjust our projections?
Answer: OECE funding received by the center will be based on actual enrollments not enrollment projections. Enrollment projections can be adjusted annually.
- 78. Question:** Will we have to submit an application every year or is the funding set for 3 years (2017-2020)?
Answer: You will not have to submit another application but OECE funding received by the center will be based on actual enrollments not enrollment projections. Enrollment projections can be adjusted annually.
- 79a. Question:** We are expanding to a new site that will be ready for operation by 2018 to serve 50 children. Do we need to add this site? What about new sites opening after the NOFA process is complete? There are several agencies in the city in this situation. Will they be eligible to apply for funding? How does the funding work if you were to open/expand a new site within the 3 years after funding has been awarded.
- 79b. Question:** We are expanding to another site to serve 50 children. Do we need to add this site (will be ready by mid-2018)?
Answer: OECE encourages centers to apply for all relevant projected child enrollments. Please complete a separate Peak Enrollment Form for sites in development, but not yet licensed, at the time of application.
- 80. Question:** What if children fall into two categories? For instance, what if a child is CSPP and also PFA 12-month? Where do we put them on the roster?
Answer: CSPP children served in Title 5 centers should only be entered under 'CDE Title 5 – CSPP'. Funding previously known as PFA Enhancement is incorporated in the ELS-Gap amount.
- 81. Question:** If we misunderstand how the funding types are changing and apply under the wrong category (and you notice this in our existing peak enrollments) you would help us correct our application?
Answer: Edits/updates can be made prior to the final submission date and time of March 3, 2017 at 5:00 pm. LAST UPDATE WILL BE CONSIDERED FINAL SUBMISSION. Once the deadline has passed edits/updates will not be allowed. An initial screening of your application will occur

to ensure minimum qualifications have been met. If minimum qualifications are met, your application will then be reviewed and considered for funding. The City reserves the right to request supporting documentation of information submitted in the application. Please review the Selection Process and Criteria section in the NOFA for more information. Respondents who have been selected for funding will begin contract negotiations with OECE Staff. During this period, the peak enrollment form will be discussed and agreed upon for the development of the funding agreement.

82. Question: Can we get in C-Wages if not already in?

Answer: OECE is not accepting any new C-Wages applicants at this time as this program will end on June 30, 2017. ELS funding from July 1, 2017 will incorporate funding that was previously C-Wages.

83. Question: Does the timing of your submission matter (if before due date but within submission 'window')?

Answer: No - all submissions will be reviewed and considered equally after the due date of March 3, 2017.

84. Question: Can a program apply for slots beyond PFA but if not selected for that additional funding maintain PFA-only?

Answer: Programs can apply for both ELS and PFA funding and may be funded for both or either depending on funding availability.

85. Question: Where do licensed centers that have toddler option (18 months – 3 years old classroom) list their children – infants or toddlers?

Answer: If you are applying for ELS City funding, infants are ages 0 to 24 months. If you are applying for ELS-Gap, the ELS rate and age definitions mirror the underlying state subsidy.

86. Question: What if we have touring parents who are not on SF3C but could qualify for below 70%? Will they have to sign up for SF3C for 3 months before ability to attend?

Answer: All ELS-funded enrollments, except ELS City (Moderate) must be enrolled from SF3C.

87a. Question: OECE will require electronic sign-in/out. CDE's CDD says not allowed. Duplicate for parents? Can staff do entry from CDE paper sheet?

87b. Question: We have to have families sign in and out on Cocoa? We use another electronic database system. Do we have to change?

87c. Question: Can we use any electronic sign in program or only Cocoa? Will OECE be streamlining this so we don't have to get permission from Licensing?

Answer: OECE is requiring Centers to use the Cocoa database to track attendance and enrollment information, including Cocoa's electronic sign in/out feature. The intent of moving toward electronic sign in/out is to save parents and providers time. However, OECE wants to work with providers to reduce the administrative burden of its reporting requirements as much as possible, so is open to exploring alternative ways for the required information to be reported

to OECE on a case by case basis. With the passage of recent state legislation, providers no longer need permission from the California Department of Education (CDE) or Community Care Licensing to use electronic sign-in. Any provider can use electronic sign-in to satisfy state licensing and CDE requirements.

88. Question: Must we use Cocoa's electric sign-out system? We currently use a third party app for sign in/out and family communication, and we don't want to switch as it would affect our relationship with parents.

Answer: OECE wants to work with providers to streamline and make reporting requirements work for you and us. We are open to exploring how to work with providers using other systems.

89. Question: We do paper sign in/out and then update in COCOA. The program assurance criteria require electronic sign in/out; does that mean we must change our system and update to electronic sign in/out?

Answer: Yes, OECE will work with selected agencies to implement electronic sign in/out over time.

90. Question: When do we need to change to electronic sign-in/out? This year/next year?

Answer: OECE's plan is to have funded providers use electronic sign-in/out at a feasible time for them, starting in the next fiscal year, which starts July 1, 2017.

91. Question: Our agency serves children funded by the regional center. Where do we list these children on current and projected enrollment? These families may also be low-moderate income. If they are reflected in the ELS-City (Moderate) it is not reflecting that they are low income and a target population – children 0-3 with special needs. Please clarify.

Answer: Enter current and projected enrollment for children with special needs funded by the Regional Center in the appropriate age and program duration box in the row in the latest version of the Projected Peak Enrollment form called "Other funding sources not listed above."

92. Question: We have an in-kind agreement with the city to provide full tuition assistance to 10% of our student population. How do we note that these students are being fully funded by us on the Peak Enrollment Form? What are the reporting requirements?

Answer: For current enrollments on the Peak Enrollment Form, indicate those children in the Tuition-paying families category, and make a note in the field for your "Site Name" that per your agreement with the City, 10% of your enrollments receive tuition assistance from your organization. In this instance, OECE encourages you to apply for ELS funding to serve any additional, non-scholarship spaces.

93. Question: What adjustments, if any, are there for special needs children?

Answer: At this time, no adjustments are provided, beyond those provided with state funding.

- 94. Question:** Are the applications anonymous to the Review Panel? Will the panel know the names of the centers they are reviewing?
Answer: No the applications are not anonymous to the Review Panel. Yes the panel will know the names of the centers they are reviewing.
- 95. Question:** Have they/you/OECE chosen the panel? Can you tell us something about the qualifications?
Answer: Panelists will have experience and expertise in Early Care and Education.
- 96. Question:** What are the processes for funding reporting and reconciliation of enrollment vs. funding?
Answer: Centers will be required to use the Cocoa database for reporting enrollments. Reconciliation will be done quarterly based on actual enrollments.
- 97. Question:** How is Part Day/Part Week defined? What page of the NOFA provides this information?
Answer: See pages 5 to 6 of the NOFA for the definitions of Part Day/Part Week.
- 98. Question:** Do we include non-SF resident tuition paying families in our Peak Enrollment Form for current enrollments?
Answer: Yes
- 99. Question:** The NOFA states, “enter into funding agreement for a specific maximum dollar amount.” What happens if my enrollment exceeds original calculation? Is it based on funding availability? Basically what is the consequence if any for under-projecting my enrollment?
Answer: Funding agreements are for budgeting purposes for both providers and the City. It is anticipated that ELS Gap funding may fluctuate based on voucher enrollment. Try your best to realistically project your enrollments.
- 100. Question:** I've just begun filling out the NOFA, but I want to save and return later to finish. I must submit to my email address to do so?
Answer: Yes, you will need to submit your email address in order to save and return later. The Google Form will require you to enter an email address before you are given access to the form.
- 101. Question:** Is there a preview application? (Paper copy)
Answer: Paper copies of the NOFA are available at the Office of Early Care and Education and the Human Services Agency, Contracts office located at 1650 Mission Street, 3rd floor.
- 102. Question:** If you submit an application early and it is deemed incomplete, do you have an opportunity to redo?
Answer: OECE will only review applications after the March 3 deadline. Applicants are welcome to submit their applications early, but they will not be reviewed until March 3.

- 103. Question:** What if we contract for one level of funding and end up with serving more eligible children?
Answer: The first quarter advance based on projected funding amounts will be reconciled by actual enrollments.
- 104. Question:** Can we apply for CalWORKs/Cal-Learn vouchers? And what are the qualifications to apply?
Answer: Providers may apply through the NOFA to be qualified to be paid an enhanced rate, if CalWORKs and Cal-Learn parents choose your program. Enrollment under these vouchers is based on parent choice.
- 105. Question:** The child care food program costs agencies twice what they receive in income. Do all centers receiving ELS voucher children have to participate in CCFP? If not, that would be unfair to CDE programs.
Answer: Applicants are not required to participate in the food program, but encouraged to do so. If centers are not participating in the food program funding will be offset based on that.
- 106. Question:** How is “low income” determined (@ or below 70% state median income)? Is it the center’s responsibility to determine a family’s income, if so how do we do this?
Answer: Families will work with the Integrated Services Grantee(s) to verify income for local funding.
- 107. Question:** All enrollment data is in Cocoa; how will this be impacted after the transition into OECE?
Answer: This will continue for the ELS – accrual enrollments will continue to be reported in Cocoa and that’s how providers will get paid.
- 108. Question:** The application process requires 2-3 hours; how can we best prepare to complete it? What kind of information would be helpful to have?
Answer: We suggest you write your narratives in a word doc first and read the instructions first before completing the online form.
- 109. Question:** For the NOFA application do we submit one per site or one for the whole program?
Answer: Please prepare and submit one NOFA application for your agency; and one Peak Enrollment Form for each site to be funded.
- 110. Question:** Can we get in C-WAGES if we were not already in?
Answer: No, C-WAGES is being phased out and rolled into the new Early Learning Scholarship starting July 1, 2017.
- 111. Question:** Does the timing of your application submission matter if it’s submitted before due date?
Answer: It matters if you turn it in on time, no advantage is given if submitted earlier than the deadline.

112. Question: Does this affect the Children’s Council elementary aftercare funding or payment?
Answer: No, PST is paid through vouchers (CALWORKS, CAPP) and is for school aged children, and it is not related to ELS funding (0-5 age).

113. Question: Is the transition funding application on the NOFA or separate?

Answer: *If your calculations for projected funding show a loss and you’d like to apply for Transition Funding, the application will be in the Google Form NOFA application. This will signal to OECE that next year’s earnings will be less than this year’s funding. The Transition Funding is limited and is a one-time funding that can be spread out over 2 years.*

114. Question: How do you decide who gets funding if more organizations apply than can be funded?

Answer: *There will be an external formal review panel which will review the criteria and will weigh the criteria to a 100 point scale.*

115. Question: Can the application be saved and worked on over an extended period of time?

Answer: *Yes. Google Docs will email you the portion of the application you have submitted and allow you to return to edit and/or continue with the remaining sections of the application at a later date.*

116. Question: We don't have income data for any families not receiving tuition assistance (so above the 70% SMI) Does that mean we should leave the “low to moderate income” families who are not funded section of the NOFA blank.

Answer: *For current enrollment yes and for projected enrollments use your best judgement to create a projection.*

117. Question: What page in the NOFA gives the definition for part day/part week (3-4 days)?

Answer: *Pages 5-6 provides the definition*