

8280.1. Early Learning and Care Workforce Development Grants Program

(a) The Superintendent shall administer the Early Learning and Care Workforce Development Grants Program to expand the number of qualified early learning and care professionals and increase the educational credentials of existing early learning and care professionals across the state, pursuant to this section.

(b) (1) There is hereby appropriated one hundred ninety-five million dollars (\$195,000,000) to the department from the General Fund for the competitive workforce development grants program established pursuant to this section to be released according to the following schedule:

(A) For the 2019–20 fiscal year, one hundred twenty-nine million dollars (\$129,000,000).

(B) For the 2020–21 fiscal year, twenty-two million dollars (\$22,000,000).

(C) For the 2021–22 fiscal year, twenty-two million dollars (\$22,000,000).

(D) For the 2022–23 fiscal year, twenty-two million dollars (\$22,000,000).

(2) The Director of Finance may change the release of funds scheduled in subparagraphs (A) to (D), inclusive, of paragraph (1), if deemed necessary. The director shall notify the Chairperson of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee, or the chairperson's designee, of the director's intent to notify the Controller of the necessity to change the release of funds scheduled in subparagraphs (A) to (D), inclusive, of paragraph (1). The total amount released shall not be greater or lesser than the amount appropriated in paragraph (1). The Controller shall make the funds available to the department not sooner than five days after receipt of this notification.

(3) Notwithstanding Section 16304 of the Government Code, of the amount appropriated for this program in this subdivision, the Superintendent shall allocate the funds available for the grants through the 2023–24 fiscal year, in approximately equal amounts each fiscal year.

(c) The Superintendent shall award and administer the workforce development grants to local, regional, or local and regional quality improvement partnerships, as defined by the Superintendent, consistent with the Quality Rating and Improvement System local consortia, as defined in Section 8203.1, representing all counties of the state. A local, regional, or local and regional quality improvement partnership may form a consortia with one or more regional partners. All local, regional, or local and regional quality improvement partnerships shall submit a plan to the department that describes how they will allocate funds and increase the number, qualifications, and competencies of early learning and care professionals in their county or region. The plan shall also describe how local partnerships will engage in collaborative partnerships with their members, local governmental agencies, businesses, nonprofit organizations, or other

interested partners to improve the educational attainment of early learning and care professionals in their county or region, including those working in centers, family childcare homes, and license-exempt settings that serve a majority of children who receive subsidized early learning and care services or are eligible to receive subsidized early learning and care services, pursuant to this chapter.

(d) Workforce development grant award amounts shall be determined based on the following criteria:

- (1) Demonstrated need for early learning and care professionals in each county or region.
- (2) The cost of living in each county or region.
- (3) The number of children under 13 years of age in each county or region who are in a family whose income is up to 85 percent of the state median income.

(e) Workforce development grants may be used for costs associated with the educational expenses of current and future early learning and care professionals that move those professionals along the early learning and care career lattice and support their attainment of increased education or English language proficiency, as well as professional development in early childhood instruction, child development, including developing competencies in serving children with exceptional needs and dual language learners. Allowable uses of funds include:

- (1) Tuition, supplies, and other related educational expenses.
- (2) Transportation and childcare costs incurred as a result of attending classes.
- (3) Substitute teacher pay for early learning and care professionals that are currently working in a subsidized early learning and care setting.
- (4) Stipends and professional development expenses, aligned to the Quality Counts California professional development system in that area, as determined by the Superintendent.
- (5) Career, course, and professional development coaching, counseling, and navigation services.
- (6) Other educational expenses as determined by the Superintendent.

(f) Local, regional, or local and regional quality improvement partnerships awarded funding pursuant to this section may partner with local or online accredited higher education institutions, local agencies that provide high-quality, credit-bearing trainings, or apprenticeship programs that integrate and embed higher education coursework with on-the-job training of professionals.

(g) The Superintendent may set aside no more than 1 percent of the total funding appropriated for the Early Learning and Care Workforce Development Grants Program to provide technical assistance and support for grantees and potential grantees on developing proposals for and implementing workforce development grants.

(h) Local, regional, or local and regional quality improvement partnerships receiving grants shall commit to providing program data to the department, as specified by the Superintendent, including, but not limited to, recipient information, educational progress, and employment status, and participate in overall program evaluation.

(i) The Superintendent shall provide a report to the Governor as well as the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature by October 1, 2020, and annually thereafter through the 2023–24 fiscal year, on the expenditure of funds as well as relevant outcome data in order to evaluate the impact of the program.

(j) The competitive workforce development grants program established pursuant to this section shall be funded from funds appropriated in this section.

(k) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the Superintendent, with the concurrence of the executive director of the state board, shall recommend to the Department of Finance and the budget committees of the Legislature by January 1, 2021, any changes to the funding methodology in this section related to the recommendations and priorities provided pursuant to Section 8207.

Discussion Questions

1. Paragraph (g) allows for the SSPI to set aside 1% of funding to provide technical assistance and support for grantees and potential grantees on developing proposals for and implementing workforce development grants. What kind of Technical Assistance would be most helpful?
2. Paragraph (e) describes allowable uses of funds. How should the RFA prioritize who receives the grant-funded support from the partnerships? For example, should a specific level of the career lattice receive funding first?
3. What "other educational expenses" should the SSPI Consider as part of paragraph (e)(6)?
4. What additional input do you have?