

REQUEST FOR MATCH FUNDING

**PLUMAS COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE APPROACHES TO RAISING EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS
(CARES)
FOR THE EARLY LEARNING WORKFORCE PROGRAM**

July 1, 2005-December 31, 2008



PROJECT NARRATIVE AND DESCRIPTION

1. Briefly describe the type of incentive and professional development strategy your County is employing for the CARES initiative and how the Tracks will link together to create a system of professional development for the full continuum of child caregivers/early learning staff. Include your application and selection process.

First 5 Plumas staff in partnership with a CARES Planning/Oversight Committee consisting of two commissioners, the commission's executive director, and the coordinator of the Local Planning Council, and the current CARES coordinator designed the Plumas County Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards (CARES) for the Early Learning Workforce Program

The program reflects the new standards and modifications of the State Commission, as well as lessons learned from the first Plumas County two-year pilot project and the second two-year project. In order to maximize resources and serve the greatest number of early care and education providers in our area, the Plumas County Children and Families Commission funds will be coordinated with AB 212 funding. The PCCFC has allocated a total of \$105,000 to this project for the time period beginning July 1, 2005 to December 31, 2008 and requests a 2:1 match, or \$57,500 from the California Children and Families Commission.

The program builds continuing support and other resources for early education/care providers, and linkage between each Track is facilitated through the program's contracted coordinator. Educational needs are assessed, barriers are identified, and local solutions are developed through the Planning/Oversight Committee with both long and short-range goals that improve the providers' educational progress and the quality of local early childhood education and care system.

The program utilizes an "Intent to Apply" process and disperses all stipends by the end of each program year. To ensure a seamless process for the applicants, a single First 5 and AB 212 application has been developed. Data entry is provided through the Commission's office with each agency dispersing separate checks to each qualifying applicant.

Incentive Strategy:

This is a comprehensive program placing increased emphasis on professional development and education while still requiring retention. Stipend amounts have been selected in the Tracks II-IV to increase enrollment in transferable 3-unit courses increasing the number of qualified teachers for Preschool for All, state and Head Start preschool programs, and privately owned centers and family childcare homes. The program strategy emphasizes providing training and supports to all early childhood care providers and educators along the entire continuum of care (from family, friend and neighbor (FFN) caregivers to teachers with advanced degrees). Incentives are tied to training and educational achievements. Retention requirements include gift certificates and complimentary School Readiness materials for Track I, and cash stipends for Track II -IV.

In Tracks II-IV, the program offers a minimum \$400 base stipend, plus a \$150 stipend award for completing each 3-unit CARES eligible course to encourage involvement in transferable unit-based education. Additional amounts are offered: \$50 - School Readiness Home Visit; \$100 – Use of Language other than English; and \$ 100 – For each 3-unit course in Special Education Child Development or Infant/ Toddler Child Development.

The CARES Program currently disperses all stipends at the end of each program year following determination of eligibility through an “intent to apply and an application process” that is managed by the program coordinator. The program will continue to utilize this process, which includes required orientation sessions and Professional Growth/Development Plan advising meetings. Since Proposition 10 funding cannot be used for providers receiving AB 212 funds, the Commission and the LPC have developed a seamless application process and an efficient tracking of both funding streams. The documentation of disbursement of funds will reflect those providers eligible for each funding stream.

The daily activities of the CARES program will be the responsibility of the CARES coordinator through a contract service agreement. The program oversight, administration, evaluation, and reporting to the State Commission will be the responsibility of the First 5 Plumas staff. The input of data into the CARES database will be the responsibility of the First 5 Plumas Commission staff.

Professional Development Strategy:

The overall professional development strategy primarily focuses on Track II–IV to increase the early childhood education and care career opportunities available to participants through a \$150.00 stipend tied to completion of each 3-unit CARES eligible course. The Track I strategy for professional development is oriented towards introducing FFN providers to quality and professional standards, as well as educational opportunities that could lead to a career path in the field. Track V professional development strategy is to provide an opportunity for accomplished professionals to develop their leadership and professionalism in the field, while improving quality standards in the field locally.

Nearly half of the Plumas County licensed childcare providers who previously participated in the CARES program are family childcare providers. The Plumas County program builds on previous requirements incorporating both non-unit based options and professional development (unit-based) options for FFN, and FCC Entry Level Tracks stipend eligibility.

There were 26 licensed family childcare providers in Plumas County that participated in CARES 2002-2004. To improve the quality of care provided, non-unit based workshops are offered through many local organizations, with the majority being offered through the local Resource and Referral Agency, in collaboration with the Local Childcare Planning and Development Council (LPC). The Plumas County Resource and Referral provides a countywide training calendar that is mailed quarterly to all home care and center-based providers and staff. The CARES program coordinator provides information on Cal Net opportunities and regional county trainings as well.

As part of the program, the CARES program coordinator will work with the Local Planning Council, Feather River College, Lassen College and programs that support early childhood care and education providers to ensure that adequate professional growth hour-earning workshops and trainings are being offered throughout the county.

The CARES program coordinator, professional growth advisors, and the Feather River College’s Early Childhood Education program coordinator will advise center staff and family childcare providers opting for the ECE unit-based option. They will provide assistance in selecting child development course work that is applicable to ascending on the Child Development Permit Matrix. The program coordinator will work with Feather River College and Lassen College Early Childhood Education program coordinators and the Plumas-Lassen counties Cal-Net coordinator to provide appropriate information to applicants on an ongoing basis regarding the child development permit process and ECE course availability.

2. What is the number of early learning staff to be served? Please provide the proposed total for each Track per year (split into FCC and center based).

Number of ECE staff to be served annually: <u>50</u>			
TRACK	Family Child Care	Center Staff	TOTAL
I. FFN	8	0	8
II. Entry	8	4	12
III. Permit	6	10	16
IV. Degree	2	6	8
V. Professional	0	6	6
TOTAL	24	26	50

3. Describe in detail the types and levels of incentives/stipends/benefits for each Track.

TRACK I:

The incentive will be a certificate/gift card amount based on \$50.00 for every 5 hours of Professional Growth training not to exceed \$150 per year. FFN participants in School Readiness

Priority Zone areas will be provided with a complimentary Kit for New Parents or/ and Early Learning Kit by Public Health Agency – New Born House Calls program.

TRACK II - IV:

\$400-\$600 Base Stipend, plus \$150 for each CARES - Eligible 3 unit course

\$50 - School Readiness Home Visit

\$100 – Use of Language other than English

\$ 100 – For each 3-unit course in Special Education Child Development or Infant/ Toddler Child Development

TRACK V:

A minimum stipend amount of \$100 will be given for each CARES participant that is provided with CARES advising.

4. If you are a continuing program, by what date will continuing participants need to meet the new CARES standards?

The Plumas County CARES program will implement all new standards for Tracks I-IV during program year 2005-2006. Local implementation for Track V will be developed through a collaborative planning process during year 2005-2006 for implementation in program year 2006-2007.

5. Describe the general Entry Eligibility Requirements for all Tracks and note any exceptions from the minimum requirements stated in this RFF. If the general Entry Requirements are identical to the minimum RFF requirements, you may state so and need not describe them.

There are no planned notable differences in minimum Entry Eligibility Requirements for all tracks.

6. Provide general Annual Participation Requirements for Tracks II-V including but not limited to:

a. Time at site and hours/week worked: 15 hours per week of direct service with children or 15 hours per week supervising staff who provide direct services to children.

i. Include any exceptions for migrant programs and Family, Friend and Neighbor participants, and; None

ii. Request prior approval (approval not guaranteed) if there are other local exceptions to the nine-month requirement that you feel are necessary for your CARES program. Describe how you would address these needed exceptions in your county. No local exceptions requested.

b. Licensure requirements

Provider must be licensed, works in a licensed facility, or is legally exempt from licensure. If participant is not licensed, s/he must apply for licensure and achieve licensure by the second year of participation in the program (with the exception of those providing care in the child's home, those working at a public school-based site, or those employed in a facility exempt from licensure by the DSS/CCL Division because it is either administered by a Tribal Council or located on a U.S. military installation);

c. CARES Advisor and Professional Development Plan: The CARES Advisors will annually verify by signature that participants have met with them to develop or update a Professional Development Plan.

d. Harms/Clifford Environmental Rating Scale and Improvement Plan:

The CARES Advisors will annually verify by signature that participants have met with them to review a completed Harms/Clifford Environmental Rating Scale and an Improvement Plan.

e. Accountability process for participants:

All documentation will be verified by the CARES Coordinator to ensure that the stipends and benefits of CARES participation are tied to the achievement of the program's participation, education and retention requirements. Transcripts will be used to verify units achieved and Professional Growth Hours will be verified by documentation provided by the trainer or training organization. Licensure will be verified by state documents. Verification of attendance at required meetings will be verified by minutes, sign in sheets or a certificate of attendance provided by the meeting organizer or coordinator. Facility owner or supervisor will verify retention with a written statement.

7. Describe the FFN Track I

The FFN Track is for exempt child care providers who are interested in obtaining CARES eligible non-unit based training, and for FFN's living in School Readiness Priority Zones, participating in a School Readiness home visit. Resource and Referral staff estimates that there are around 50 Family Friends and Neighbors providers in Plumas County

a. Who will you target for participation?

The program will focus on enrolling FFN applicants in the School Readiness Priority Zones, with a special emphasis on Spanish speaking and American Indian FFN providers. All FFN providers will be invited to apply through outreach in collaboration with Family Child Care Education Network, Resource and Referral and others.

b. What training and incentives will you offer participants?

For Family Friends and Neighbors eligible non-unit based training, including a School Readiness home visit will be offered. Incentives will include a gift certificate for a vendor that sells educational supplies or books for 0-5 year olds. The gift certificate amount will vary from \$50.00 to \$150.00 based on Professional growth hours of training obtained in the program year. Each 5 hours of Professional growth will earn \$50.00 value in the gift certificate amount up to the \$150.00 cap.

c. What, if any, are the requirements for continued participation?

An FFN Track I applicant will need to continue to meet the minimum requirements each year.

d. How does it link to and build on other local programs serving FFN caregivers?

The CARES program coordinator and First 5 Plumas staff has developed a collaborative relationship with the Resource and Referral, and Family Child Care Education Network staffs. The programs' staffs will work closely to ensure that opportunities are dovetailed and not duplicative or overwhelming to FFN participants in the CARES program.

e. How will you support their participation and help them succeed as a CARES participant?

Resource and Referral staff is already providing outreach to the Spanish speaking FFN providers and will be offering Professional Growth Training Hours involving use of the KCET La Niños en La Casa program videos and curriculum. The Sierra Valley Even Start is collaborating with CARES to assist FFN participants that are co-enrolled to access and complete the KCET program materials for Professional Growth Hours. Sierra Valley Even Start also offers English literacy classes to some FFN providers. English speaking FFN providers will be provided support by Resource and Referral staff and School Readiness parent educators in the School Readiness Priority Zones also.

f. What links and supports to licensing will be available for those who are seeking licensure? FFN providers will be referred to the Resource and Referral Agency and Family Child Care Association for assistance. The Resource and Referral Agency will provide support for licensing.

g. How will the program encourage (but not require) them to move into Track II? Their involvement with the School Readiness program staff and Professional Growth activities in their communities will provide linkage with the field. A visit with the CARES Coordinator will provide additional information about the benefits of continued participation, training and education.

8. Use the headings in Summary Key Tracks Requirements, Appendix D, to describe your program, Tracks I – V. Describe any additional requirements beyond the RFF minimums that are specific to your county and provide a rationale.

See Table 8 below for Summary of Key Track Requirements I-V.

Also address the following:

a. Degree Track IV: describe how it links to the local PFA efforts.

Track IV links to the local PFA effort with the increased emphasis on degree attainment with additional \$150 stipend amounts tied to completion of each CARES eligible 3-unit course during the program year.

b. Professional Track V:

i. How monetary value/level of incentive is tied to hours or participants served:

Each Track V participant will be paid a minimum stipend of \$100 per CARES applicant that they provide advising to during the program year. The CARES Track V stipend amount cannot be supplanted by another stipend award for mentoring or advising the same CARES applicant.

And,

ii. How program incorporates CARES Advisors, mentors, or other leaders (if applicable). In what capacity will they serve? How will they be trained? Will this be part of another California program, such as the California Early Childhood Mentor Program, or something unique to your county/program?

In 2005-2006, before Track V is implemented, Feather River College ECE program coordinator with support from the CARES coordinator and First 5 Plumas staff will plan and develop a three tiered training for Track V - CARES Advisors including: 1) Professional Growth Advising and information about CDTC supports; and 2) Full training on the local CARES requirements and the State RFF Guidelines; and 3) Community resources/links to help Track I-IV participants meet CARES requirements. In 2006-2007, Track V will be implemented, including this training requirement for CARES Advisors. Track V will prepare participants to enter the California Mentor Project.

See Table 8 below for Summary of Key Track Requirements I-V.

TABLE 8. Summary of Key Track Requirements

Track I / FFN	Annual Requirements	Program Supports	Stipend/ Incentive	Maximum Time in Track
<p>Participants Starting 7/1/05. Non-licensed FFN Caregivers providing care for at least one child other than their own that is birth to five for a minimum of 15 hours per week.</p>	<p>1. Participate in five (5) Professional Growth Hours training</p> <p>2. (In School Readiness Priority Zones) Participate in home visit with Plumas Unified School District SR Family Advocate.</p>	<p>Supports for FFN participants to attend training, and supports and links to licensing for interested caregivers will be provided through Plumas County Child Care Resource and Referral and CARES Coordinator.</p> <p>Each FFN participant in the School Readiness Priority Zone areas will be linked to School Readiness program through – Plumas Unified School District SR Family Advocate who is also a certified Parents as Teachers educator. One PAT educator is bilingual Spanish/English.</p>	<p>A Certificate/gift card amount based on \$50.00 for every 5 hours of Professional Growth training not to exceed \$150 per year. FFN participants in School Readiness priority Zone areas will be provided with a complimentary Kit for New Parents or/ and Early Learning Kit by Public Health Agency – New Born House Calls program.</p>	<p>SAME</p>

Track II / Entry	Annual Requirements	Program Supports	Stipend/ Incentive	Maximum Time in Track
<p>FCC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership in Plumas County FCC Association OR Attendance at 4 ECC professional meetings (i.e. Local Planning Council, College Child Development Advisory Council meetings) to increase professionalism and networking within the field. 	<p>Program Coordinator will provide outreach through FCC Association and Plumas County Resource and Referral, and Family Childcare Education Network. Resource and Referral will offer Professional Growth Trainings and provider newsletter.</p>	<p>\$400-\$600 Base Stipend plus \$150 - each 3 unit course \$50 - School Readiness Home Visit \$100 – Use of Language other than English \$ 100 – For each 3 unit course in Special Education Child Development or Infant/Toddler Child Development</p>	<p>No Additional Requirements</p>
<p>CENTER STAFF</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same Minimum Requirements as State CARES for Center Staff 	<p>No Additional Requirements</p>	<p>SAME AS FOR FCC/ TRACK II</p>	<p>No Additional Requirements</p>

Track III / Permit	Annual Requirements	Program Supports	Stipend/ Incentive	Maximum Time in Track
<p>Participants SAME AS STATE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS Starting 7/1/05.</p>	<p>No. 1 – 5 Same as State Minimum Requirements / No Additional Requirements</p>	<p>Feather River College will work with CARES program to plan 0.5 unit course for ECCERS training annually beginning 2005-2006, 3-unit Special Education ECE class or Infant/ Toddler ECE course on alternating years.</p> <p>Community College ECE Coordinators will provide academic advising/ PGAs and Coordinator will provide Professional Growth Advising.</p> <p>Family Childcare Education Network will provide ECCERS training and verification for FCC participants.</p>	<p>\$400-\$600 Base Stipend plus \$150 - each CARES - Eligible 3 unit course \$50 - School Readiness Home Visit \$100 – Use of Language other than English \$ 100 – For each 3 unit course in Special Education Child Development or Infant/ Toddler Child Development</p>	<p>No Additional Requirements</p>

Track IV /Degree	Annual Requirements	Program Supports	Stipend/ Incentive	Maximum Time in Track
<p>Participants SAME AS STATE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS Starting 7/1/05.</p> <p>AA or equivalent, or minimum of Teacher Level Permit</p>	<p>No. 1 – 5 Same as State Minimum Requirements / No Additional Requirements</p> <p>Linkage to PFA: First 5 Plumas is in PFA Planning - Phase II cohort, and will integrate, but not duplicate or supplant any PFA professional development efforts.</p>	<p>Articulation between community colleges and four year-institutions will be provided by college academic advisors</p> <p>Feather River College CDTC coordinator will provide academic advising and information on CDTC and other financial supports available.</p> <p>Cal-Net Coordinator will provide academic advising and information on Cal-Net and other financial supports available.</p> <p>PGA Advisors will only provide advising related to permit Matrix requirements.</p>	<p>\$400-\$600 Base Stipend plus \$150 - each CARES - Eligible 3 unit course \$50 - School Readiness Home Visit \$100 – Use of Language other than English \$ 100 – For each 3 unit course in Special Education Child Development or Infant/ Toddler Child Development</p>	<p>No Additional Requirements</p>

Track V / Professional	Annual Requirements	Program Supports	Stipend/ Incentive	Maximum Time in Track
<p>Participants SAME AS STATE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS Starting 7/1/06. Must have a minimum of a Master Teacher Permit or bachelors degree or above.</p>	<p>No. 1 – 5 Same as State Minimum Requirements / Additional * Local CARES training requirement for Track V - Starting 7/01/06 – to be provided in conjunction with Feather River College ECE Program.</p>	<p>CARES Coordinator will oversee distribution of CARES Advisor duties. Feather River College ECE program coordinator will work with CARES program coordinator to provide training for CARES Advisors including: *1) Professional Growth Advising and information about CDTC supports; *2) Full training on the local CARES requirements and the State RFF Guidelines; and *3) Community resources/links to help Track I-IV participants meet CARES requirements.</p> <p>Feather River College ECE program coordinator will work with CARES program staff and coordinator to provide annual ECCERS training for CARES Advisors and participants.</p> <p>CARES Advisor training will prepare advisors to meet California Mentor Project requirements.</p>	<p>\$5,000 Allocated per year for this Track beginning in 2006-2007 program years. \$100.00 minimum stipend per individual CARES participant that is advised during a program year.</p>	<p>Indefinitely. Participants accepted by California Mentor Program would move out of CARES and into that system.</p>
	CARES ADVISOR			
	<p>a. Attend training (All three components as stated above). b. Provide Professional Development advising and Improvement Plan support to program participants in Tracks II, III, and IV that includes professional growth plan support for the Permit, specific CARES requirements at both the local and state level including ECCERS, and degree information.</p>			

9. Describe the use of the required CARES Advisors in your program:

a. How will your CARES Program utilize CARES Advisors?

During Year 2005-2006, the program will utilize CARES Advisors through the existing professional growth advisors coordinated and augmented by the Feather River ECE College program coordinator and CARES program coordinator. In addition, the Resource and Referral Agency will provide a Mentor Training program for FCC providers during 2005-2006.

b. How will you ensure that there are enough Advisors to meet the need?

During the Track V planning and development process, the CARES Planning Committee will use previous enrollment data and evaluation results to ensure that there are enough Advisors to meet the need. In years 2006-2008, an adequate number of qualified potential advisors will be invited to apply for the CARES Advisor positions through participation in Track V. Qualified applicants will be sought through outreach and previous eligible CARES applicants.

c. Will this be paid staff or a separate Track that utilizes CARES participants?

During 2005-2006, the CARES Planning Committee and partners will plan and develop Track V with a new CARES Advisor role, involving Professional Growth Advisors. During that planning year The CARES program coordinator will be responsible for overseeing CARES Advising in 2005-2006. The Track V participants will be the CARES Advisors during 2006-2008 program years.

d. What type of training will be required? How will the training be offered/supported?

In years 2006-2008 Track V CARES Advisors will be required to attend an annual orientation related to CARES program goals and requirements, and an annual training related to academic advising, mentorship and opportunities. The CARES program coordinator will provide the CARES orientation in collaboration with First 5 Plumas staff. The Feather River College ECE program coordinator in collaboration with the Cal-Net advisor will provide training on academic advising, mentorship and tuition, books and other financial opportunities.

10. Describe the use of the required CARES Professional Development Plans in your program:

All participants are required to develop or update an individualized Professional Development Plan each program year. Depending on the participant's Track and current goals, specific plan contents would include either professional growth non-unit based training or academic requirements for a Child Development Teacher Permit or attainment of a B.A. or Master's degree.

a. What is required in the Professional Development Plans?

The Center-based staff and FCC staff in Tracks II, III, and IV, using the Permit Matrix will be required to determine and schedule required course work to accomplish requirements to apply for or advance on the Permit Matrix. Those in Track IV will also be required to determine for their plan coursework needed for general education, credential, and their major at the degree level they are seeking, as well as identify annual goals, supports and obstacles they will need to overcome during the program year.

b. How will these be used?

Describe the annual update process for Plans? All participants are required to annually meet with an advisor and develop or update their plans by December 31st of each program year.

c. Describe the annual update process for Plans.

The CARES Planning/Oversight Committee obtains feedback from the stipend recipients, program coordinator and collaborative agencies on the previous fiscal year's program and uses that information to make any necessary changes or additions to the program. The committee also meets quarterly during each program year to insure that implementation is on track and to identify and overcome challenges early on. The committee reports progress to the Commission on a quarterly basis.

11. How will your CARES Program ensure that Professional Development Hours meet defined level of quality and standards (please refer to Appendix F)?

A training or educational component used for a CARES incentive or stipend eligibility will be held to educational and professional development quality standards required by the State CARES program. Local First 5 Plumas priorities, such as infant and toddler care and special needs inclusion coursework quality standards will be determined by the Feather River College ECE program coordinator. All CARES eligible college course work will require a transcript copy for transfer to Professional Growth Hour credit for FCCs in the Track II.

Will you implement additional standards? If so, please describe.

No special standards are planned at this time.

12. What program/self evaluation tool will be required of participants? The participants will utilize the Harms/Clifford Environmental Rating Scale and Improvement Plan. Head Start may substitute the PRISM, only with prior authorization from their Program Director. This alternative will be established at the beginning of a program year in collaboration with the Head Start Program Director.

a. How will they be trained to use it?

An ECCERS training component is provided by Feather River College in ECE 058 and ECE 156. The ECE instructor is working CARES staff to develop a one-day annual training in ECCERS for 0.5 units. In years 2006-2008, Professional Track participants will also be fully trained to provide their mentees with this training.

b. How will your CARES program use the results?

To determine if there is an improvement in quality of environmental aspects of participants facilities and practices and work with the Family Child Care Education Network on individual improvement plans and follow-up. The first year will be the baseline measure to be compared with subsequent and final year results. The coordinator of the Family Child Care Network and the Planning/Oversight Committee will verify results in final program year.

c. How will the program/self-evaluation with improvement plan be incorporated in participants' professional development?

Advisors will review and sign off on the Program/Self-evaluation and Improvement Plan in collaboration with the Family Child Care Network program. They will also provide advising on coursework or professional growth training that would address areas needing improvement as an aspect of the improvement plan development.

d. Will other quality control measures or self-awareness tools be used?

Only the ECCERS or PRISM will be used.

13. Describe the targeting of priority zones¹:

The targeted priority zones will receive a home visit and an additional \$50.00 stipend as well as increased technical support.

a. How will your program target priority zones? What links will be made with the county S-R programs and communities?

School Readiness through home visitation is the overarching strategy in the Plumas County School Readiness Program. Two communities have SR programs, Indian Valley and Eastern Plumas County. Greenville Elementary is a priority school with an API of 4. Portola was chosen as a special factors SR site due to an emerging Latino population in the Eastern portion of Plumas County. The program chose these 2 communities as priority zones because as SR communities, the percentage of children living in poverty is higher. Twenty percent of children ages 0-5 in the county live in poverty. In Indian Valley the poverty level is 35% and Portola is 30% including 62% of Latino children. As the poverty rate increases, so does the need for more quality early care and education. School Readiness will also offer additional opportunities for professional growth without additional cost to the program.

A Family Advocate in Greenville and a SR Bilingual Family Advocate in Portola will provide School Readiness home visitation to participants, with a special emphasis on outreach to FFN providers and new applicant FCC providers. Included in the SR Program is the dissemination of School Readiness information and child development milestones to early care and education providers. The CARES Program Coordinator will coordinate with the SR Family Advocates to obtain the required SR information when making a CARES home visit to a FFN or other track participant. Providers in these two communities will receive an additional \$50 stipend or non-cash enumeration for FFN Track I. The CARES Program Coordinator will share information with providers about opportunities for ECE training and SR topics such as brain development.

The goal for this priority component is to provide a home visit by the program coordinator to all FFN exempt providers and licensed FCC providers in both SR communities to enhance the quality of care by providing information and support relating to School Readiness and to increase the provider's knowledge of early childhood development. Since specific outreach and prioritization of FNN providers is a new CARES component, there is opportunity to expand the

¹Please note that unless a county provides evidence that extensive outreach has occurred and full participation already has been achieved, the expectation is that the state portion of the funding must emphasize and target the priority populations.

reach of the CARES and School Readiness programs in the SR communities. The CARES Program Coordinator will document each CARES home visit and attend the meetings of the Home Visitation Coalition facilitated by the First 5 Plumas SR program New Born House Calls. The coalition is a networking and quality improvement venue for the existing home visitation services/programs in the county that serve 0-5 year olds and their families.

b. How many API 1-3 schools does your county have?

None

c. How many API 4-5 schools does your county have?

Based on the 1999 School Readiness baseline data for the additional 13 School Readiness counties, Plumas County has one school, Greenville Elementary, with an API of 4.

NOTE: Portola is also a SR site due to an emerging Latino population.

d. What are the areas of low supply of licensed care in your county? What process was utilized to identify these areas? How did you establish whom to serve in those areas?

Plumas County birth rates are relatively flat; ranging from 160-170 births per year. Consequently, the numbers of licensed care facilities has remained the same, including licensed family childcare homes. There were 35 family childcare homes in 2001 and now there are 36 in 2005. Stipends will be available on a countywide basis with an emphasis on the School Readiness communities of Portola and Indian Valley.

There is an equal need to retain and increase childcare slots in all communities in Plumas County (according to the Resource and Referral Agency's statistics). Infant/toddler childcare is an on-going challenge. Due to state licensing requirements it's simply a cost related decision on the part of the provider. Providing an extra stipend to subsidize these providers is something the planning committee discussed. It was decided that a subsidy could not be sustained after 2 years and therefore it is not a long-term solution.

The goal is to provide all staff with encouragement to pursue their careers in child development, whether they are in a childcare home or center. An across the board strategy identified in Plumas County is to provide stipends equally with the first priority and the additional stipend going to the SR communities. To increase slots in all four-population centers in Plumas County, the local Resource and Referral Agency is in the second year of a recruitment project funded through the State Child Care Resource and Referral Network.

e. Describe your program's goal for this priority component and explain how it will be reached.

The identified priority is the School Readiness Priority Zone communities and the State matching funds will first go directly to providers serving Indian Valley and Eastern Plumas County. Any remaining state funds would then be available for the communities of Quincy and Chester. Since the R&R has a recruitment contract with the CDE, State-matching funds would be more efficiently utilized in both SR communities and not in low supply areas where recruitment activities are already in progress.

f. What unique outreach will be conducted?

Through collaboration with the Plumas Unified SR Early Intervention program coordinator/teacher, training will be provided to FCC and center-based staff to increase inclusion of children with special needs or at risk of delays, and increase the availability and enhance the quality of ECE and childcare for children with special needs.

14. How will the program support the linguistic and ethnic diversity of the field and ensure representative participation by diverse staff including FCC providers?

The planning committee will develop measurable objectives for outreach and program participation of Latino and American Indian FFN providers.

a. Who will you target with specific outreach?

Outreach strategies will be focused primarily on the Latino and Native American populations in coordination with the School Readiness plan.

With a small population, rural county, the Latino families work in the service or logging industry. For the most part, families utilize extended family when day care is needed. They are not usually connected to the service community and are isolated from the mainstream population. Currently there are also no Native American licensed FCC providers in the Indian Valley School Readiness community. Plumas County does not have any multi-lingual licensed FCC providers at this time.

b. What unique, effective, on-the-ground outreach will be conducted for each target group?

Eastern Plumas County has an emerging Latino population that is served by the School Readiness Bilingual Family Advocate through home visitation and center-based activities at the Sierra Valley Even Start site. The Even Start site provides a venue for integrating curriculum related to childcare training and professional opportunities for the parents enrolled in that program. The Even Start program and the Bilingual Family Advocate will be utilized to reach Latino FFN providers.

The Family Child Care Network and the Resource and Referral programs continue to provide outreach to both Latino and Native American populations through the recruitment contract with the State Resource and Referral Network. Native American FFN providers provide an opportunity for increased participation in both the SR and CARES Programs particularly in Indian Valley, where the school age population is 10% American Indian. Through the Roundhouse Council Indian Education Center, the SR Family Advocate will facilitate outreach to the American Indian FFN providers.

c. What techniques and strategies will you implement to support participation of diverse populations including FCC?

Cultural and linguistic responsiveness will be ensured by providing support through translators or translation of program materials into Spanish. The program offers an additional \$100 stipend for use of a language other than English in the ECE or childcare site, motivating participants to be accessible to monolingual parents and children.

d. What other methods will you employ to ensure cultural and linguistic responsiveness by your program?

New Born House Calls has been successful in visiting many Latino homes and introducing the Kit for New Parents and SR Early Learning Kits as a support to Spanish dominant FFN providers. Potential indicators represent an increase of Latino FFN providers who have been identified and reached through this SR partner. New Born House Calls collaborates closely with the FFN outreach component of the Resource and Referral Agency and Sierra Valley Even Start to provide SR Spanish language early literacy and health and safety supports to FFN providers

15. Describe the additional support services, training and professional development opportunities the program will offer to participants to ensure their progress in professional development, continuation in the program, advancement on the Child Development Permit Matrix, and attainment of degrees (refer to page 10 for required support services and optional ideas).

According to the local Resource and Referral Agency, 88 percent of FCC providers have fewer than six ECE college units. Through the lessons learned from the prior four-year project and working with FCC providers, we identified the following barriers to obtaining ECE unit based training: 1) Geographical distance from the college-increment weather in the winter; 2) FCC providers want to provide quality programs, but don't necessarily view this as a long-term career choice; and 3) FCC providers working with children and families all day, find it difficult to leave their own families to attend classes at night. The program will encourage FCC providers to obtain ECE unit-based training and to apply for Child Development Permits, while keeping the professional growth non-unit based training option.

Local partnerships increase collaboration on several levels, including connecting FFN and FCC participants to college-unit eligible training held on weekends, access to professional growth and academic advising, access to supports such as tuition and books, online classes, increased training and outreach for inclusion of diverse populations, including children with special needs/disabilities, and support for the ongoing development of the Child Care Provider Association and the Plumas County School Readiness Program implementation.

Through the Resource and Referral Agency, and Family Childcare Education Network, participants will be linked to local California Department of Education/Child Development Division License Exempt Training programs such as the Child Care Initiative Project, or CCIP, UC Davis Family Child Care at Its Best, and KCET's programs and training (A Place of Our Own and Los Niños en Su Casa).

16. How does the program coordinate with the local PFA program? Describe the distinct roles of CARES and PFA in supporting the workforce. Specifically address how you will avoid duplicating services and how the local match for each program will remain separate.

At this time, First 5 Plumas has not applied for CCFC Preschool for All funds. The CARES Planning /Program Oversight Committee members that have met during the four years of the CARES program ending June 30, 2005 would be involved in any forthcoming First 5 Plumas PFA planning and implementation oversight activities.

The committee has been instrumental in developing this proposal, with a working partnership involving First 5 Plumas, Feather River College, Plumas Unified School District, Local Child Care Planning Council, the Family Child Care Providers Association, and Head Start. The greater community that informs the committee's members includes a broader constituency based in a number of groups and agencies including the Plumas Rural Services Child Care Resource and Referral, Family Childcare Network and others. As First 5 Plumas engages in the Preschool For All Initiative with planning and implementation phases, Commission staff will ensure that any PFA local match funds will not duplicate or supplant the CARES program funded activities.

The CARES program will dovetail with PFA activities as they evolve. Activities that are not funded through CARES may receive PFA funding. One possible PFA funded activity is providing an annual training on "the Harms/Clifford Environmental Rating Scale and developing an Improvement Plan."

17. Describe how your program will facilitate local partnerships to reduce barriers and create a more effective ECE infrastructure in your county:

a. Describe the coordination and involvement of the Local Child Care Planning Council:

The LPC coordinator is a member of the stipend planning committee and attends Commission meetings. The CARES program coordinates with AB212 funding to avoid duplication and maximize the available funds. The AB212 funding is administered through the Plumas County Office of Education and will continue to be coordinated with the CARES program application and disbursement process. The LPC coordinator works closely with the local Resource and Referral agency staff to ensure adequate Professional Growth training opportunities are offered for FCC and FFN providers. The Commission's executive director, the Child Development instructor at Feather River College, and Family Child Care owners, and privately owned and nonprofit child care and early education center directors are also members of the Plumas County Child Care Planning and Development Council.

b. As strong partnerships are needed to create an effective and integrated program that meets the needs of the workforce, please identify other local partner agencies and ECE resources, and their roles:

Over the past four years, the CARES Program has facilitated strong partnerships between the local Child Care Planning and Development Council, Feather River College, Mountain Child Development, Inc., Cal-Net, Child Abuse Prevention Council, Head Start, local Resource and Referral staff and the Family Child Care Providers Association.

The group of stakeholders that participated in the planning and implementation of the CCRI Program over the past four years continues to collaborate on projects that reduce barriers and create a more integrated and effective ECE infrastructure. Meetings that provide for discussion and collaboration that informs improvement of strategies to increase the program's effectiveness are held by the following: CARES Program Advisory meetings, Family Child Care Association, Feather River College Child Development Advisory Committee, and Local Planning Council meetings.

Recent collaborative projects include a Child Abuse Prevention Council-hosted training on brain development with Dr. Bruce Perry that was funded by First 5 California, a regional “Outreach to Diverse Populations” training hosted by the First 5 Plumas Commission, and inclusion of child care providers in pilot kindergarten readiness and transition planning and implementation in Indian Valley, a School Readiness priority zone.

The networking and pooling of available resources has created a more cohesive and seamless ECE infrastructure in Plumas County that will also be leveraged in development of a county master plan for Preschool for All. Key Partners and their roles include a regional Head Start consultant, who is also a Commissioner, who is on the Planning/ Program Oversight Committee providing technical assistance to the program. The Feather River College’s Early Childhood Education Program lead instructor participates on the Planning /Program Oversight Committee and is also the local lead for the California Child Development Training Consortium and academic advisor to those applicants who are applying for or advancing on the Child Development Permit Matrix, or pursuing advanced degrees in the field.

The Plumas Rural Services Family Childcare Network staff will provide coaching to Family Child Care providers on environmental improvement related to the outcomes of the Harms/Clifford Environmental Rating Scale. The Plumas Resource and Referral Agency staff provides childcare statistics, provider recruitment, support and technical assistance to the Provider Association, and non-unit based professional growth training to family childcare providers at no cost to the program. The Resource and Referral Agency was recently awarded a mini-grant from First 5 Plumas to develop a Family Childcare Provider Mentor program that will provide additional partner support for this program proposal.

c. Identify any Subcontractor and their role:

The Contracted Program Coordinator will:

- Provide linkage and outreach at Family Child Care Provider Association meetings;
- Provide ongoing documented technical assistance to applicants and center-based staff in each of the four communities
- Provide participant orientations in each community and as needed on an individual basis;
- Coordinate with the School Readiness Program Coordinator to facilitate SR collaboration and SR trainings to Family Child Care Providers;
- Provide progress report and evaluation materials to the First 5 Plumas Program Coordinator on a quarterly basis;
- Attend professional meetings and trainings as required;
- Develop and implement approved media/marketing strategies;
- Coordinate Permit Matrix applicants with professional growth advisors;
- Participate in and assist in state and local evaluation activities;
- Participate in and assist in Planning Committee meetings as requested;
- Participate in annual presentation to the Plumas County Commission;
- Assist the Commission staff with required State annual reports;
- Coordinate program with the local Child Care Planning Council’s AB 212 funding
- Coordinate with Feather River College ECE Program coordinator in academic advising, California Mentor Project, CDTC, and program related activities;
- Update applications and informational documents annually, and duplicate; and

- Evaluate eligibility and report annual eligible applicants and amounts to be dispersed.

18. Beyond the statewide evaluation, what evaluation questions will your local evaluation address? Who is conducting the local evaluation? The Packard Database will be located at the First 5 Plumas Commission office. First 5 Plumas, the Local Planning Council, and the contracted program coordinator will utilize the database. The Packard Database will be used to track progress and tenure of those participating providers and to evaluate participant services and supports, and the overall program effectiveness. As appropriate, data may be provided to Feather River College, the Resource and Referral Agency and other collaborating organizations for evaluation and planning purposes at the discretion of First 5 Plumas program staff. A contracted evaluator, in collaboration with First 5 Plumas commission staff and the Local Planning Council staff, will conduct the evaluation. The Packard Database will provide baseline data to determine outcomes based on indicators specified in the Commission's Strategic Plan. Outcomes will be compared to existing baseline data regarding the following indicators:

- The increase in inclusion of FFN providers
- The number of ethnically diverse FFN, and licensed and accredited child care facilities and providers
- The unmet educational and training supports of participants in all tracks
- Professional progress of participants in all tracks
- The education and experience level of potential PFA staff
- Employment transience of participants vs. non-participants

The Commission's Strategic Plan includes an evaluation framework that includes the CARES Program. New outcomes to be tracked at the project level will include indicators related to inclusion and the increase of FFN and FCC providers, and academic degree achievement in Track IV. A contracted evaluator will specify in coordination with Commission staff specify outcomes to measure the effectiveness of the CARES program components. The analysis of data collected through PACE and the specific local evaluation measures will track the success of the initiative as a whole.

Include:

a. What data will you collect/report to demonstrate that the first priorities for use of state match funds are priority zones? How will you track the progress made in serving priority areas? The program application will indicate the geographic areas where participants provide service that will determine the amount of distributed in priority zones.

The program applicants working in priority zones during previous rounds will be compared with Round Four program years, as well the professional development progress made in those areas.

b. How will you track/report progress in serving FCC providers?

The number of FFN and FCC providers participating in the program in priority zones and other communities will be monitored to determine whether outreach, inclusion and professional development progress objectives are achieved.

c. How will you track/report progress in serving an ethnically and linguistically diverse workforce?

The number of ethnically and multilingual participants will be tracked through application fields and documentation of outreach to “pre-applicants” focusing on the Latino and American Indian population. The professional development progress of ethnically and linguistically diverse participants will also be monitored using application fields from future and previous years.

d. How you will measure the success of the outreach to ethnically and linguistically diverse FFN child caregivers?

The number of ethnically and multilingual diverse FFN participants will be tracked through application fields and documentation of outreach to “pre-applicants” focusing on the Latino and American Indian population. The professional development progress of ethnically and linguistically diverse participants will also be monitored using application fields from future and previous years.

19. Describe your Higher Education Access Plan:

a. What are the obstacles in your county that impede participants’ progress?

The rural nature of the county makes accessing transferable units a challenge for those living outside of the main community where the Feather River College offers most of its coursework in Early Childhood Education. The University of Nevada, Reno and California State University, Chico are 70 or more miles from three of Plumas County’s main communities. The access to DSL or high-speed Internet connections makes accessing online courses also challenging to many people. However, the high-speed hookups are becoming more widespread in the county. Additionally, many family childcare providers may not expect any benefit in college education in general.

b. Who are your local partners in addressing these obstacles?

Feather River College has two courses that FCC providers and center staff can enroll in where they do not need to attend on campus. The ECE program offers facilitated group options in Portola, Chester and Loyalton. The Feather River ECE program coordinator is willing to work with CARES staff to develop online options for Family Child Care providers and others who cannot attend on campus courses.

c. What steps has your program taken in the past to address these issues?

The program coordinator has worked closely with the Cal-Net coordinator and Feather River College ECE program coordinator to link participants with as many supports as possible, such as tuition and book reimbursements.

d. What are your Higher Education Access goals for each fiscal year in your Round Four plan and what steps will you take to reach them?

2005-2006-Goal: 1) Work with Feather River College to develop and offer Special Education Course and Infant/Toddler training 3-unit courses on alternating years. 2) Work with Feather River College to offer annual 0.5 unit ECCERS training. 3) Work with Feather River College to develop annual two-tiered training components for all CARES Advisors.

2006-2007-Goal: 1) Work with Feather River College to plan two 3-unit online courses per year.
2) Work with Feather River College to offer annual two-tiered training components for all CARES Advisors.

2007-2008-Goal: Feather River College may offer two 3-unit online courses

2008-Goal: Evaluation of effectiveness and impact of Higher Education Access goals, and CARES supports and services in increasing academic degrees achieved and units obtained related to ECE professional development, and achievement of multiple subject credential, AA or BA.

The CARES Planning Committee, Cares Coordinator and First 5 Plumas Staff will work together to plan and implement the goals as stated above. Quarterly meetings will be scheduled in 2005-2006 to discuss methodology; detail plans for trainings and course access and overcome anticipated challenges.

20. Provide a budget narrative explaining the project budget if any category is heavily weighted or shows no investment. (Forms 3a and 3b) Also explain level of funds available to carry forward into this round. (Form 2).

Explanation of Categories with No Funding

The CARES program coordinator will work with the professional growth advisors, the Feather River College's ECE program coordinator and the local Resource and Referral Agency to provide outreach, support services and technical assistance to the center staff and child care providers.

The program's collaborative partners such as the Resource and Referral Agency and the Child Abuse Prevention Council provide training opportunities. There are also trainings available through School Readiness and the Commission's Children's Oral Health Project at no additional cost to the program.

Personnel, administrative and fiscal costs, operating expenses, equipment and material supplies will be provided by First 5 Plumas at no additional cost to the program.

Child Care and Education Development Stipends

A total of \$90,000 has been budgeted FY 2005-08 for direct stipends and incentives. There are a total of 50 providers that potentially will receive a stipend. Funds are spread between the 5 Tracks as follows: 1) Track I- \$1,000 FFN may receive incentives worth \$50.00 with a \$150.00 based on Professional Growth Hours of training in one program year, 2) Track II-\$12,000 that includes \$400-\$600 Base Stipend plus \$150 for each three unit course, \$50 for a SR home visit, \$100 for use of language other than English, and \$100 for each 3 unit course in Special Education Child Development or Infant Toddler Child Development, 3) Tracks III and IV have the same stipend/incentive schedule as Track II, and 4) Track V-\$5,000 allocated per year beginning in 06-07 with \$100 minimum stipend per individual CARES participant that is advised during a program year.

Program Coordinator

A total of \$46,500 has been budgeted for the contracted program coordinator. This figure is based on similar county or nonprofit programs. The program coordinator will be responsible for the daily oversight of the programs, which will include providing ongoing technical assistance to the applicants, coordination with School Readiness and other programs, submitting scheduled program/expenditure reports to the Commission's program coordinator, and coordination with the Local Planning Council's AB 212 funding.

The Commission's program coordinator, at no additional cost to the program, will provide oversight of the CARE program coordinator's contract and the program implementation.

Evaluation

A total of \$21,000 is allocated to evaluating the CARES program. The evaluation will be conducted by a contracted evaluator in collaboration with the Local Planning Council's AB 212 funding and directed by First 5 Plumas staff. The analysis of data collected through PACE and the specific local evaluation measures will track the success of the initiative as a whole.