Memo

To: Commissioners, First 5 Ventura County

From: Petra Puls, Program Manager

Date: June 20, 2013

Re: Recommendation to approve revised FY 2013-14 funding allocation for Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE) for CARES Plus

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Background

In March 2013, First 5 California released an RFA for CARES Plus Round 2, which continues to match local county investments at a ratio of 1:3, up to $300,000 per year, for three years. Based on the Commission's approved annual allocation for CARES Plus, it was anticipated that First 5 Ventura County could leverage up to $90,000 per year for three years in matching funds, $270,000 in total.

While developing the application in response to the State's RFA, staff identified $152,282 in Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT ELC) funds and activities that meet the intent of the CARES Plus program. Adding the RTT ELC funds to the local First 5 CARES Plus investment increased the amount First 5 Ventura County is able to draw down in State matching funds. As a result, First 5 Ventura County is eligible to receive up to $148,390 each year, or $445,170 in matching funds over the course of the next three years, instead of the $270,000 as previously anticipated.

The additional funds increase the number of program participants who will have access to ECE Career Advisors and will be eligible for program stipends. The RTT ELC funds also contemplate partnering with Institutes of Higher Education to accelerate Bachelor Degree completion times.

Recommendation

Recommended action is to approve a revised FY 2013-14 allocation for the Ventura County Office of Education for implementing the CARES Plus Program. The recommended action would grant authority to the Executive Director to enter into a contract with the Ventura County Office of Education, from July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014, in an amount not to exceed $475,791. No new allocation of funds would be required as the increase is supported by leveraged grant funds.