

California Brilliant Beginnings Data Landscape

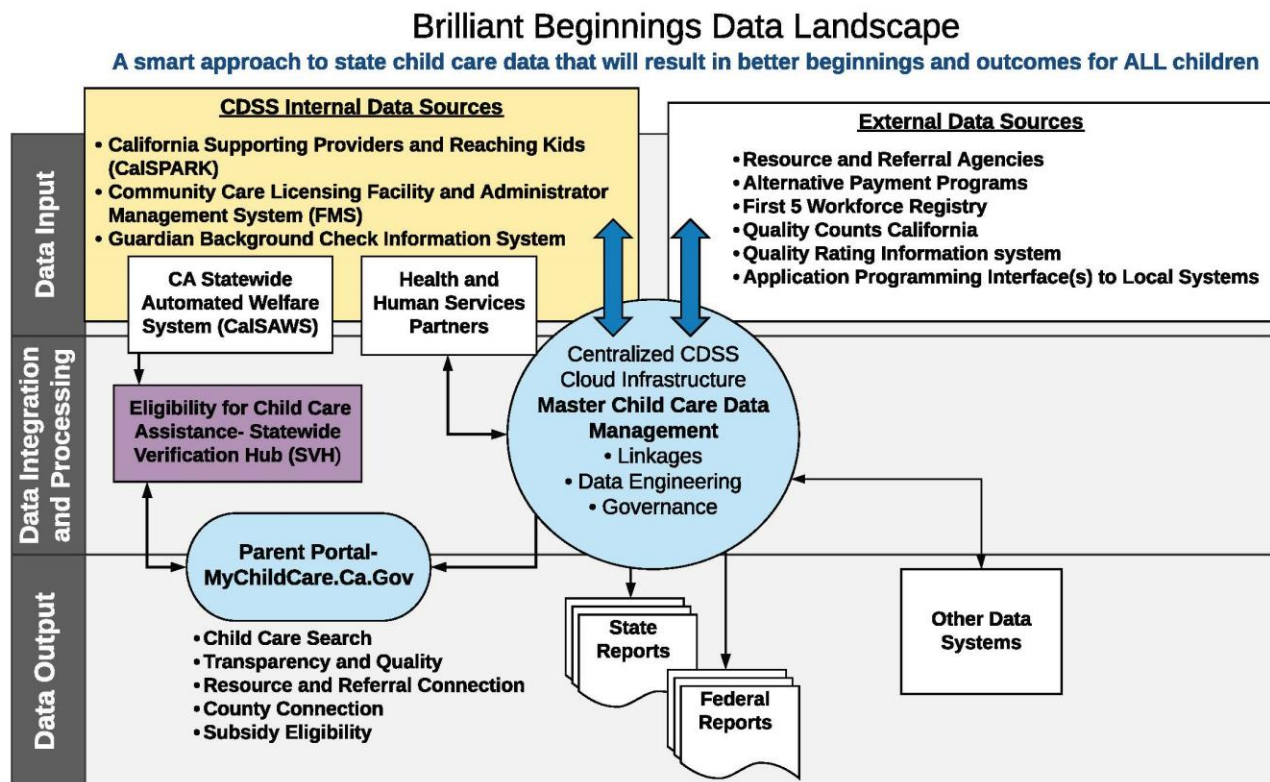
The current Child Care and Development data systems are in need of modernization to provide optimal and equitable support to child care and development programs and families, and ensure effective State administration of the programs. The envisioned data landscape of the future builds upon the strengths of Assembly Bill (AB) 2621 (Statutes of 2014) and AB 2960 (Statutes of 2018), which were both created to ensure transparency of information so that parents and families have timely access to make informed choices about child care services. This has defined a pathway for workforce support systems that offer comprehensive and accessible data, link to other quality improvement efforts, increase cross-sector alignment, and inform policy and resource targets. The Early Childhood Development Act of 2020, which transfers state child care and development programs, including family child care homes and center based care, to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), and the State's Master Plan for Early Learning and Care lay the ground work to further opportunities for data modernization that would centralize data, provide support and advancements from the existing unfederated or siloed and antiquated systems, and provide equitable access to technology and technical assistance for programs.

The following outlines CDSS' vision to modernize the overarching data infrastructure supporting state operations for child care and development programs in tandem with exploring options for a provider-first technology solution that, with state investments, may be available to ALL licensed and subsidized programs. Together, shaped by stakeholder engagement and coordination across state and county partners, the new data landscape, referred to as Brilliant Beginnings, will centralize and improved data exchange across systems, enable human-centered and data-drive decisions to improve business delivery, and provide more equitable access to technology for the provider community. This includes collaboration and co-creation with the Child Care Resource and Referral Network (the Network) and local child care resource and referral agencies (R&Rs), who are vital partners to the future data landscape.

Data Landscape Components

Brilliant Beginnings	Nimble cloud environment that links the child care and development data pipelines. A comprehensive and inclusive central Master Data Management solution to link, govern and produce data products for consumers. Key stakeholders in the landscape will be federated and help redefine the standards around critical data elements for serving kids and families.
My Child Care CA	Consumer education state portal for families and parents to access a robust set of information about the child care landscape in their area. This will relaunch July 2021 at the web address: MyChildCare.Ca.Gov. Over time, all information in the Brilliant Beginnings Child Care Data Landscape will feed forward into this web-portal.
CalSPARK – CA Supporting Providers and Reaching Kids	Key data pipeline into the Brilliant Beginnings Landscape focused on meeting provider/program needs and easing the administrative burden currently experienced when working with the state on available slots, subsidy payments, and food program eligibility.

Community Care Licensing FMS and Guardian	Modern replacement for the current licensing information system (LIS) and facility assessment system (FAS) at CDSS. This mobile first set of applications will be key data pipelines for keeping child care licensees information up-to-date and offer a smoother, single sign on experience for the regional licensing program specialists and license administrators alike (connection with CalSPARK in 2023).
Statewide Verification Hub (SVH)	Freestanding system that interfaces with CalSAWS to centralize and facilitate appropriate access to electronic verification data for means-tested programs. The SVH will intersect first with the Child Care landscape through CalWORKs Child Care Stages 1, 2, and 3; and in subsequent build out to determine means-tested child care eligibility for subsidies and vouchers for all families receiving a state subsidy.



* This data vision would provide the functionality for future opportunities for interfacing with other systems, such as Education Childhood Integrated Data System and Cradle to Career, and feed data from other systems for comprehensive data exchange and analysis.

Investments in CalSPARK, MyChildCare.ca.gov, and the data infrastructure supporting them will transform the way the State supports the child care and development workforce and fulfills its responsibility to children and their families. The CDSS will have centralized access to critical information needed for state administration. CalSPARK is a commercial off-the-shelf solution that is readily adaptable, scalable, and cost-effective for the State to own and administer compared to the historical traditional, complex IT systems. While child care programs and workforce currently have their own interface through my.childcare.ca.org, collecting and inputting that data requires significant manual workload by some 30,000 providers who do not have access to a technology

solution to automate the process. This statewide option using CalSPARK and the proposed data landscape would build upon what we have today so that ALL programs and the workforce will have access to modernized technology that simplifies their business operations, and ALL families will have access to a robust set of information to facilitate confident child care decisions.

Stakeholder Engagement

CDSS is leveraging its vast network of internal and external relationships to comprehensively strengthen opportunities for modernizing the current system. Partners include the First 5 California, Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA), R&Rs, Alternative Payment Programs, Associations, child care and development programs and the workforce, the Child Care Providers Union (CCPU), counties, families, advocates, federal agencies, and private, non-profit and philanthropic organizations. CDSS will also engage with the California Department of Education. These stakeholders will serve a key role in development and user testing. R&Rs, APPs, county welfare departments, and others will be key to assisting the state with technology adoption, change management, and ongoing supports to families.

Timeline

This data vision includes infrastructure development and will be informed by the technology solution planning and the stakeholder organizational change management process. The estimated timeline for the planning and procurement process is approximately 18 months and is subject to change and the completion of the required state IT planning approval lifecycle process. Working in partnership with stakeholders, the CDSS, in collaboration with the HHSA and the California Department of Technology, will move through key planning phases to ensure high quality, and well-defined specifications.