



**Welcome to the June 14, 2022, meeting of the
Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity.
The meeting will begin at 9:00 AM**

Members of the general public will remain muted throughout the meeting and will have the opportunity to comment during the public comment period.

To make a comment, please leave your name, the organization you represent, and the topic you would like to address in the Q&A section by **10:30am**. The Q&A function is in the corner of the screen. We will call on you during the public comment period and ask that you keep your remarks to under three minutes.

If you have technical difficulties during the meeting, please contact David Antonacci at antonacci@ibhe.org or via text to 217-720-5269.



ECACE
EARLY CHILDHOOD ACCESS
CONSORTIUM FOR EQUITY

June 14, 2022



**Illinois
State Board of
Education**



**Governor's Office of
Early Childhood Development**





AGENDA

1. Call to Order, Welcome, and Opening Remarks
2. University Partners' Work to Meet AAS Transfer Requirements, Lewis University and University of Illinois Urbana Champaign
 - Presentation and Panel Discussion
3. Awarding Higher Education Credit for the Child Development Associate (CDA)
 - Action Item
4. Institutional Teams, Illinois State University and Southwestern Illinois College
 - Panel
5. Consortium-related Work
 - Updates
6. Meeting Minutes for Consideration and Approval – April 19, 2022
 - Consent Action Item
7. Public Comment: Members of the public address the Consortium
8. Adjourn

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- *Foundation for decisions, processes, policies*
- *Set the stage for how we operate collectively and individually*



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Center Student Success

Principle 2: Share Leadership

Principle 3: Behave as Equals

Principle 4: Respect Consortium Agreements, While Accommodating Institutional Differences

Principle 5: Simplify Student Navigation

University Partners' Work to Meet AAS Transfer Requirements



Main campus situated on 410 acres in Romeoville, 35 miles southwest of Chicago.

6,359 undergraduate and graduate students. Eighth largest private, not-for-profit in Illinois.

Best Value Schools ranked Lewis #14 on their Top 50 schools in the nation that have a nontraditional student body of 25% or higher.



In 2012, the Lewis University Early Childhood program was “born” into a university context that was already innovating to serve “nontraditional” students through specific programming and supports.

By 2018, the ECE program was beginning to see evidence to support the idea that the AAS to BA pathway was not only doable but PREFERRED.

BA, Early Childhood Education

Early Childhood (birth-2nd)
Special Education (birth-2nd)
ESL (PreK-12th)

Optional: Bilingual Education (Pre-K - 2nd)
Optional: Degree without ISBE PEL



2 Options for taking classes:

100% online

accelerated (8-week)

blended online & in-person

traditional (16-week)

- One, fully-integrated degree plan with multiple options for completion.
- AAS degrees are fully transferable.
- Free to apply.
- 2.0 GPA required.
- Non-PEL General Education requirements are waived once credit hours are met.

IBHE Support

EPPI Grant (2015-2016)

Supported articulation work among Lewis and community college partners:

*identified new AAS transferable courses

*established a smooth pathway for AAS transfer

*infant-toddler content

EC4 Grant (2020-2022)

Supporting 90 members of the EC incumbent workforce in degree and credential completion:

+credit for experience (PLA)

+individualized study plans w/transfer credits

+prioritize teachers of color & bilingual educators

+Professional Learning Communities for support

ECACE (2022-2024)

Facilitating additional changes & supports for:

+removing unnecessary general education courses

+curricular work: infant-toddler; PLC; expand methods w/added content; eliminate unneeded courses

+AAS to BA 2+2 plans

+further developing PLA

+mentoring, supporting incumbent workforce

Sample Plan of Study for:

Child Care Center teacher

AAS in ECEC or CDEV



Completing BA w/PEL in 15 months (fastest plan – most take 2 yrs):

8/22 – 10/22	1 major classes, 1 general education: 1 evening per week online and 1 asynchronous online
8/22 – 12/22	Professional Learning Community: meets online briefly each week to provide support for classes
10/22 – 12/22	2 major classes: 1 evening per week online and 1 asynchronous online
1/23 – 3/23	1 general education and 1 major class: 2 evenings per week online (w/asynchronous sessions)
1/23 – 5/23	Professional Learning Community + 1 major class
3/23 – 5/23	1 general education and 1 major class: 1 evening per week online and 1 asynchronous online
Summer 2023	1 major class + 3 general education classes (w/options for CC)
8/23 – 10/23	1 major class: 1 evening per week online
8/23 – 12/23	Professional Learning Community + Student Teaching/Internship <i>in current classroom</i>
10/23 – 12/23	1 major class: 1 evening per week online
December 2023	Graduate with BA in Early Childhood Education + PEL with ECED, ECSE & ESL endorsements

Student Feedback



I am now allowing myself to express my thoughts in a more natural way to create connections. (I started seeing this already and I feel like my children feel a bigger connection with me).

I loved the projects that we had because they are real life experiences.

(Instructor) helped us to create projects that would be more beneficial for us in the environments we were in and not having to go out and do more work.

The assignments were very relevant and meaningful to my current work as a preschool teacher. I learned a lot through experience and applying to the children in my classroom.



Rebecca Pruitt, Ph.D.
Early Childhood Education Program Director
Cell: 405-863-8618

ECACE@lewisu.edu





College of Education

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

UIUC Early Childhood Professional Education – Our Goals



Move students from **associate degree** completion, including AAS, to **bachelor's degree** completion

Commitment over the next three years – **64 students** (80% increase in enrollment)

Offer a **convenient program** for working, adult students

Provide **holistic student supports** to maintain success, persistence and completion

Create an online **community of learners**



UIUC Early Childhood Professional Education – Our Program

Designed for the Working Adult

- Mixture of **Online Synchronous** and **Asynchronous** Courses
- 8 and 16-week formats
- **Cohorts**
- **One evening** a week
- Possibility to complete **clinical fieldwork** at their place of work
- **Licensure and Non-Licensure** option
- Formal and informal **learning supports**
- Opportunities for **community building/peer support**



UIUC Early Childhood Professional Education – Successes and Challenges

Challenges

- **Timing** – program approval
- Convert 16-week face to face courses to **8-week online**
- Provide **similar experiences** for ECPE as our on-campus program
- Recognize “**what they know**” with wide variety of experiences
- Getting the **word out**



UIUC Early Childhood Professional Education – Successes and Challenges

Successes

- Program approval (almost)!!!
- Completed **full program/course** design
- Starting to **enroll** students
- Understanding and support of **innovation**



Panel Discussion and Questions

CDA and Higher Education Credit

CDA: Legislative Requirements

Public Act 102-0174, Section 20 (b)(10)

By **January 31, 2022**, the Consortium shall **decide how to assign college credit** for the incumbent workers who have a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential and for future workers obtaining a CDA.

Section 20 (b)(4)The Consortium shall cooperate in all of the following:
....The development of **standardized methods for awarding credit for prior learning.**

CDA for Credit Working Group Members

- Christi Chadwick, IBHE (convener)
- Marcus Brown, ICCB (convener)
- Ashley Nazarak, Carole Robertson Center for Learning
- Beth White, Illinois State University
- Beth Smaka, Sauk Valley Community College
- Brenda Smith, Skip-A-Long Child Development Services
- Carolyn Beal, Southwestern Illinois Community College
- Ireta Gasner, Start Early
- Jason Dockter, Lincoln Land Community College
- Jean Zaar, College of DuPage
- Johnna Darragh Ernst, Heartland Community College
- Joi Patterson, Governor's State University
- Kate Connor, Truman College
- Kelsey Swanson, Child Care Resource & Referral of Midwestern Illinois
- Linda O'Connell-Knuth, Waubensee Community College
- Lindsay Meeker, Western Illinois University
- Marcy Mendenhall, SAL Family & Community Services
- Melissa Bachelor, Lewis and Clark Community College
- Melissa Johnson, Highland Community College
- Melissa Szymczak, Joliet Junior College
- Nichole Miller and Kelsey Ward, Children's Home and Aid
- Rachel Adeoudu, Northeastern Illinois University
- Rebecca Swartz, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
- Ty Jiles, Chicago State University

Ashley Nazarak, Carol Robertson Center for Learning

THANK YOU!

This work makes a significant impact on the lives of employers, employees, and the children and families we serve.



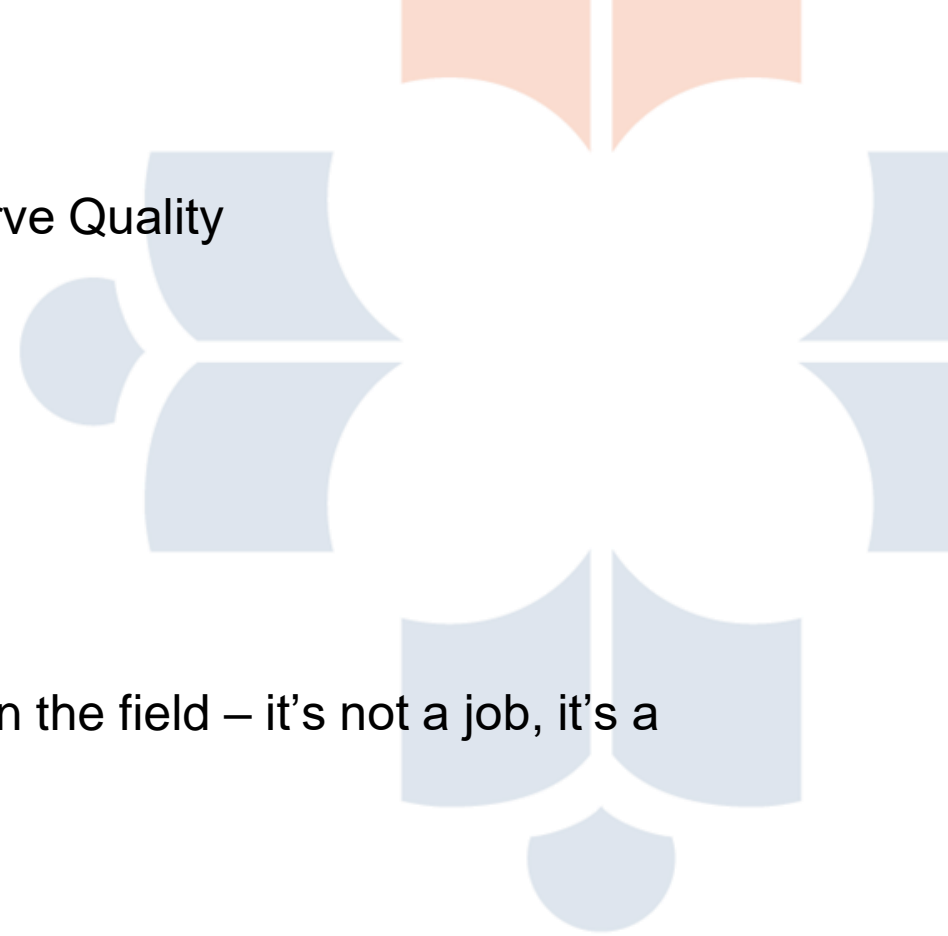
Providers Need Teachers NOW... And We Know Children Deserve Quality

For Employers, the CDA provides:

- A **pathway** to upskill quickly

And CDA for course credit will provide:

- A **pipeline** to support staff members who want to develop in the field – it's not a job, it's a career!



The Numbers Tell the Story! Honoring the Experience of Our Workforce:

For employees, the CDA provides:

- A well established credential that showcases their work in the field

And CDA for course credit will provide:

- A **formalized and clear** way to grow within the professional with a formal acknowledgement that their experience matters

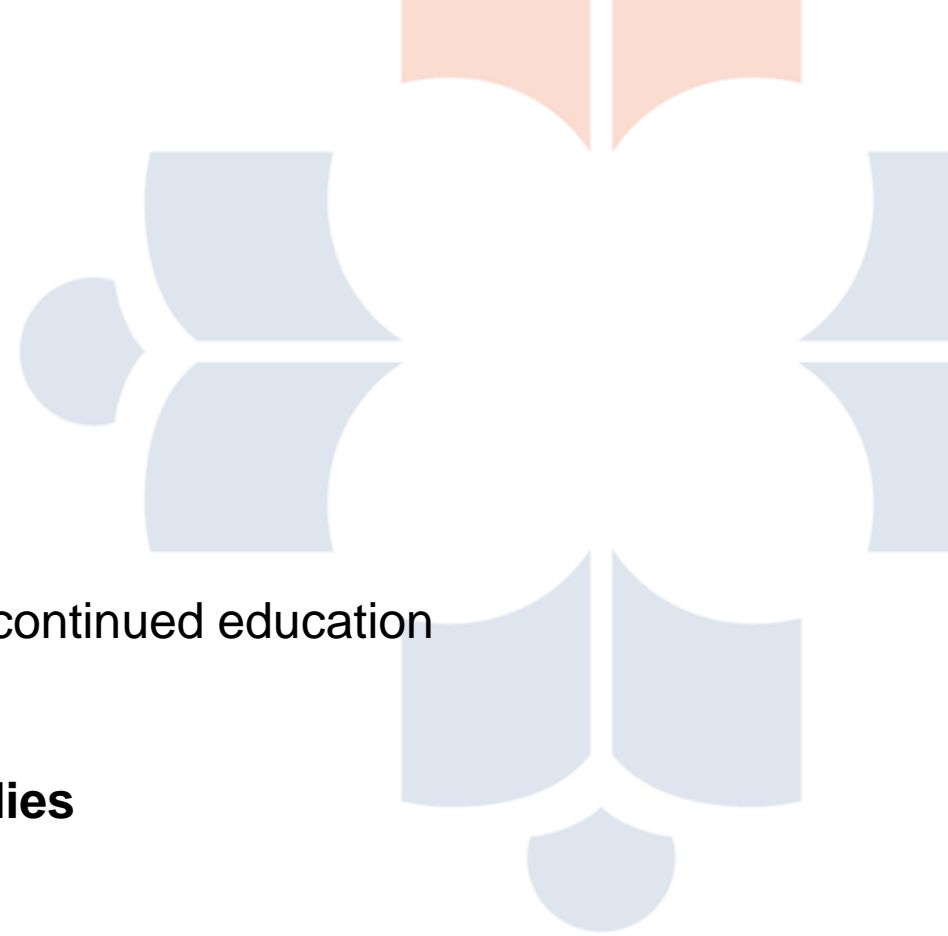
Win-Win-Win

We have essential needs in the field that this work will fulfil

- Increase amount of educators in the field
- Increase retention in existing teacher-roles
- Increase educator skills and knowledge over time through continued education
- Increased opportunity for pay as an employee

=

Better ECE infrastructure of Illinois children and their families



Credit for the CDA

- Consortium charged with determining how to **assign college credit** for the National CDA (current and future)

What is the CDA?

- An assessment of competencies through a portfolio, a standardized test (Pearson), and 4-hour observation + 120 clock hours of training +480 hours of experience
- A national credential, awarded by the Council for Profession Recognition
- Over 800,000 CDAs awarded
- An assessment of a foundational level of competency to work with young children
- In Illinois, with a CDA, someone can serve as a lead teacher, and be alone with children



Initial Agreements

Our first priority is students/workforce, and we respect needs of other stakeholders including employers, etc.

May not be **one** single model that this working group recommends

For example, there may be:

Variation by institution

Variation by whether student already has a CDA or is seeking a CDA

May be some things that are fundamental and some that are more flexible, optional, agreed upon

All must align to/adhere to our fundamental principles.



Working Group

- Working group of 2/4 year institutions + employers + CCRR reps + advocates meeting weekly/bi-weekly since December
- Looked at cross-walks of CDA competencies to Gateways competencies
- Interviewed states (OK, MA, PA, MD) and individual institutions about how they are awarding credit
- Reviewed history of CDA
- Looked across programs for commonalities
- Dug into programs to see where competencies reside
- Considered how this might work in different institutions and programs



HISTORY OF THE CDA

- First awarded in 1975 – grew out of a crisis to provide Head Start assistant teachers and child care teachers with competencies and a credential.
- Workforce shortage and a need for a large cadre to quickly upskill and get the competencies needed to work with young children.
- Many Early Childhood leaders including Ed Zigler, Jenni Klein, Sue Bredekemp, Marilyn Smith, Carol Brunson Day led the work and was supported by organizations like Bank Street College of Ed, NAEYC, and many others.
- NAEYC administered the CDA for a time before it established the Council for Professional Recognition.
- Aligned to NAEYC's Power to the Profession Level 1 on the Career Ladder.

naeyc®

Join/Re...

Our Work

Resources

Events

Accreditation

Get Invol...

CDA Candidates

🏠 CDA Candidates

The Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential™ is a widely recognized credential in early childhood education administered by the [Council for Professional Development](#). The CDA Credential guides early child care professionals as they work toward becoming qualified teachers of young children. Obtaining a CDA is an important accomplishment and one that develops well informed practitioners knowledgeable in child development and best practices for teaching young children.

WHAT WE LEARNED: CREDIT HOURS

- **Oklahoma** – 6 semester hours required, any course
- **Nebraska** – Range now of 3 – 9, but imminently implementing 3 common courses across institutions equaling 9 semester hours
- **Massachusetts** – All receiving state CDA grants must provide 9 semester hours of credit
- **Pennsylvania** – Range of 3 – 12 credit hours
- **Ann Arundel in Maryland** - 6 semester hours
- **Montgomery College in Maryland** – 6 semester hours
- **Jefferson State in Alabama** – 9 semester hours
- **Rasmussen** - 9 Quarter Hours/(11ish Semester Hours)
- **Eastern Iowa Community Colleges** (Scott, Clinton, Muscatine) – 18 semester hours

WHAT WE LEARNED: COURSES

Courses for which credit was awarded

- Many said *Health, Safety and Nutrition* AND *Intro to Early Childhood*
- Others also included:
 - Child Development (or Preschool Development or Infant Toddler Development)
 - Methods Classes
 - Field Experiences

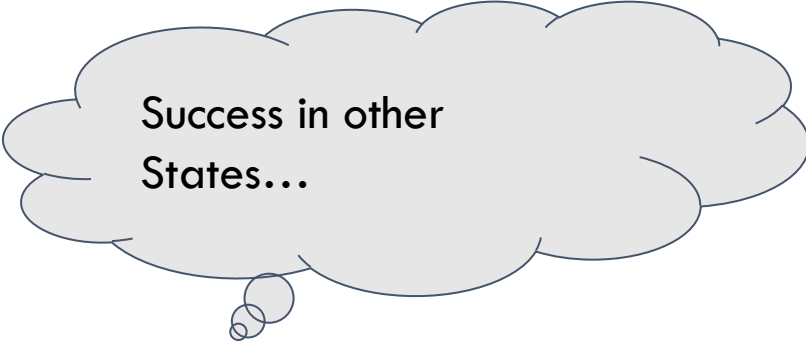
To Receive Credit:

- None we spoke with required a prior learning assessment or other activity to award credit (One asked to sit down with students and their portfolio – but not to determine the award).
- Credit was all in early childhood and applied to the degree program.

ABOUT CDA IN ILLINOIS

CDA Specialty Type	Total Active
Preschool	1,936
Infant Toddler	2,394
Family Child Care	726
Home Visiting*	66
Total	5,122

Higher Education and Workforce Partnerships...Win!

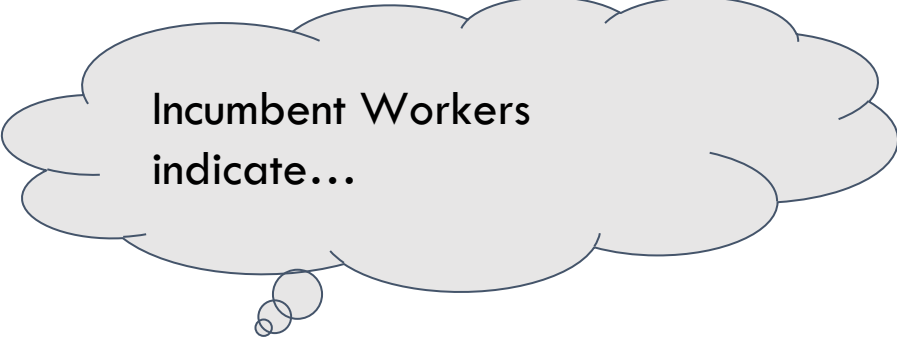
A light gray thought bubble with a black outline and two smaller circles at the bottom left, containing the text "Success in other States...".

Success in other
States...

Positive launch point for incumbent workforce to go back to school...building on success and valuing their expertise from the field

Research indicates incumbent workforce students awarded credit for prior learning stick with it! (Ex: 60% AAS, 50% of those went on to pursue the Bachelors!)

Found that when credit for the CDA is given early in the students' degree pathway, there is opportunity to cycle skills and concepts back into courses later on to ensure preparedness upon graduation.

A light gray thought bubble with a black outline and two smaller circles at the bottom left, containing the text "Incumbent Workers indicate...".

Incumbent Workers
indicate...

Getting credit for the CDA created positive energy for them to want to go back to school - Black women specifically noted it was one barrier remover that helped them get “unstuck” or motivated, even in an inequitable system.

Positive, supportive partnerships with their local colleges and universities as well as supportive center directors were crucial in their success.

(Blake, 2021; Voller, 2021)

Bonus: Granting a common range of credit for the CDA in a flexible manner allows higher education institutions to elevate equitable access and value what incumbent workers, while also having wiggle room to do what works in their curriculum and processes. It's important for the entire institution to be on board so Early Childhood faculty can apply the legislation and grant credit with agility.



FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES (In Brief)

- Meaningful credit that can be applied to the next degree
- Students do not have to “re-prove” themselves for the competencies they have; institutions recognize and provide credit for this
- The process is transparent to the student
- Standard range or number of credits
- Timely and affordable

Approved by the Consortium in January 2022

Thinking, Working, Grappling to Find Solution(s) That Work for the State

- How do we value student's prior learning and experience AND make it work in our programs?
- Encountered some 'stickiness'



Framework

- 6 semester hours for an active CDA
- Not contingent on other factors
- Credit in “early childhood” or related
- Implementation no later than January 31, 2023 for Preschool CDA and January 31, 2024 for Infant Toddler; (same CDA competencies)
 - No requirement for Home Visiting or Family Child Care (Compromise)
- Documented on the students’ transcript
- Exceptions, such as if they already have an AAS or credit for another CDA

MODELS

Redesign/Design

Redesign the curriculum to align six semester hours to the CDA. Could be used for both prior and “CDA on the Way”.

- Core courses that include the competencies (Gateways aligned to CDA)
- Elective courses that include the competencies (Gateways aligned to CDA)
- Modularized courses that represent “Level 2” aligned to CDA competencies

Best Fit

Credit upon enrollment based on analyzed best fit.

- 6 semester hours of credit for courses that represent the “best fit” (e.g., *Health, Safety and Nutrition, Introduction to Early Childhood, Practicum courses*)
- 6 semester hours of ‘best fit’ PLUS if additional competencies are in other courses, providing a Prior Learning Assessment of non-CDA competencies for additional credit

Additional Recommendations for State Agencies

- ICCB review agency policies for prior learning assessment to ensure that any barriers to implementing the recommended process for awarding credit for the CDA are addressed.
- Illinois State Board of Education ensure a clear process for making programmatic changes related to acceptance of the CDA

ECACE Advisory Committee

- **Creation:** Created through the same legislation as the Consortium
- **Purpose:** To provide guidance on the operation of the Consortium
- **Co-Chairs:**
 - Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE)
 - Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)
 - Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)
 - Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS)
 - Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD)
- **Membership:** Employers and experts appointed by the Co-Chairs
 - Community providers and school districts
 - Early childhood advocates
 - Legislators (House and Senate Higher Education Majority and Minority Leaders)
 - State agencies (6)
 - Unions
 - Public and private colleges and universities

- Glad to see that we're **removing barriers** as students navigate institutions...
- Giving incumbent workforce members an **opportunity to gain credit** for their work experience - a great way to begin the educational process for workers that might not have engaged in higher education before.
- I am excited for those older workforce members to receive **6 hours of higher education credit**.
- This will be a **great source of encouragement to continue** their education.
- I'm excited about how recognizing the CDA prior knowledge **accelerates students to completing** their programs.
- The ability for staff to see how their efforts to obtain a **CDA translates to collegiate achievement**.
- Love the **adult focus and recognizing learning versus seat time**. Adult learners can structure use of their time for learning as it fits their lives and still stay on track to completing their credentials.
- Excited to see how this **helps recruit and retain** additional teachers for the workforce.
- An awesome **steppingstone** in an individual's career development.
- Tickled pink that this work is seriously moving forward in a **collaborative way** and that we are **deliberately pushing for greater inclusion and equity**.
- A majority of Head Start and Early Head Start **programs utilize the CDA to support development of entry level staff**, including a majority of parents. Head Start/Early Head Start have a large percentage of staff who were former parents.

Questions?



**Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE)
Recommendations for Consideration: Credit for the CDA**

Finalized May 31, 2022

Finalized 5.31.22, for Consideration During the June 14, 2022 ECACE Consortium Meeting

Recommendation Area:

Assigning Higher Education Credit for the Child Development Associate®

The CDA for Credit working group recommends the Consortium endorse the following recommendations for awarding higher education credit for the most widely recognized early childhood credential, the national Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, and the following dates for implementation of the recommendation for all Consortium institutions.

Summary of Recommendation:

Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) member institutions should award six semester hours of college credit for holders of the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential aligned with Fundamental Principles adopted by the ECACE on January 21, 2022 and as outlined in the May 31, 2022 Recommended Framework for Assigning Higher Education Credit for the Child Development Associate. This recommendation acknowledges the competencies demonstrated by holders of the CDA through the CDA assessment coupled with training and experience and increases working adults' interest in and likelihood to enroll, persist, and complete additional credentials and degrees, as supported by research. This recommendation is in keeping with similar efforts at other institutions of higher education and higher education systems across the nation.

Background on the Recommendation:

[Public Act 102-0174](#), Section 20 (b) (10) states: *By January 31, 2022, the Consortium shall decide how to assign college credit for the incumbent workers who have a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential and for future workers obtaining a CDA.*

Since December 20, 2022, an ad hoc working group has been meeting to develop recommendations for consideration by the Consortium. Members of the working group include representatives from consortium community colleges and universities, employers, advocates, and state agencies. A complete list of working group members is provided in Appendix A.

On January 21, 2022, the working group recommended:

1. **Fundamental principles for awarding credit for the CDA within consortium institutions.**
In brief, the Fundamental Principles include that credit must be meaningful and apply to a degree or credential, transparent, and offered in a timely and affordable way. The state should agree upon a standard number or range of credits and to the degree possible, students should not have to “reprove” themselves to receive the credit, as competencies have already been demonstrated.
2. **The working group provide recommendations for best practice models and ways to operationalize CDA for credit in Illinois by May 31, 2022.** During this time, the CDA for Credit working group will continue to meet to study other state and institutional models for awarding credit for the CDA.
3. **ECACE member institutions have in place a mechanism to award credit for the CDA that is built upon the fundamental principles no later than January 31, 2023.**

On January 25, 2022, the Consortium approved all three recommendations made by the CDA for Credit Working Group, including the Fundamental Principles for Awarding Higher Education Credit for the CDA (See Appendix B). Accordingly, the working group continued its efforts through May 2022.

About the Child Development Associate Credential:

The [CDA](#) is the most widely recognized credential in early childhood, a national credential that recognizes competencies demonstrated by the early childhood workforce in understanding ways to advance children’s health, physical, intellectual, and social emotional development; building relationships with parents; being a professional; and observing and recording children’s learning. The credential requires 120 clock hours of training and 480 hours of professional work experience. Competency in required areas is assessed through:

- Submission of a professional portfolio
- Observation by and reflective session with a child development specialist, and
- A standardized assessment.

Over 800,000 CDAs have been awarded since its inception in 1976. The CDA was established in the early 1970s by early childhood leaders in the field, such as Ed Zigler and Marilyn Smith to meet the increasing demand for early educators with a foundational level of competency. The credential has been adapted over time and is reviewed regularly to ensure its validity and reliability. Historically, many community colleges across the country have developed pathways for students to build upon the credential towards degrees.

Rationale for the Recommendation:

Providing meaningful pathways into higher education in a way that recognizes prior learning and student competencies will benefit both students and higher education programs. Evidence from a [2020 study](#) published by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education and the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning shows that adult student of all races, ethnicities, and income levels who received credit for prior learning were more likely to complete college credentials than adult students who did not.

The working group recognized that as the workforce shortage has been exacerbated in Illinois; anecdotally, we are hearing that more employers/providers and staff have turned to the CDA to provide a timely and affordable pathway to a foundational level of competence. In Illinois, earning the CDA allows workforce members to serve as lead teachers in a licensed center and be left alone with young children without supervision.

As of March 2022, there are currently 5,122 people in Illinois with a CDA. Please see below for the breakdown of those CDAs.

CDA Type	Specialty	Total Active
Preschool		1,936
Infant Toddler		2,394
Family Child Care		726
Home Visiting*		66
Total		5,122

*The working group did not contemplate credit for the home visiting CDA, as it was determined to be out of the purview of the working group and how the associated legislation defines incumbent early childhood workforce.

The working group recognized the value of awarding credit for the CDA, in a meaningful way, to:

- Acknowledge the competencies demonstrated by CDA holders through the CDA assessment process,
- Serve as a steppingstone towards career advancement and a higher education pathway towards additional credentials and degrees for working adults,
- Build the confidence of working adults and individuals with some or no college experience in their ability to be successful in higher education, and
- Increase students' interest in and likelihood to enroll, persist, and complete additional credentials and degrees, as supported by research.

Activities of the Working Group:

From December 2022 through May 2022, the working group met ten times. In between meetings, members met with national organizations and colleges and universities in other states with experience providing higher education credit for the CDA. Those institutions and organizations are listed in Appendix C. The group also reviewed documents such as a cross-walk of the Gateways and CDA competencies and discussed possible models that members of the group were considering.

Many individual institutions and other state higher education systems have developed seamless pathways for those who earn the CDA credential to receive credit towards higher level credentials and degrees, primarily but not exclusively, through state community colleges. Of those we spoke with, a few key themes emerged.

- **Number of Credits:** Generally, institutions who provide credit for already earned CDAs provide six semester hours of credit that apply to the AAS degree.
 - Of the institutions we spoke with, none provide less than six semester hours. Some provide nine, and one provided 18 semester hours (though believed this was too many).
 - In Oklahoma, all institutions received funding for state scholarships offer 6 credit hours for those with a CDA. In Nebraska, there is wide variation, but most offer 6 – 9 semester hours and some as little as 3. Nebraska is in the process of finalizing a statewide agreement to award 9 semester hours for three common courses designed to be used across all institutions. In Massachusetts, community colleges offer credit for the CDA and are provided state funding for scholarships and program support. Institutions are required to offer 9 semester hours (of their choice).
 - One of the working group members reached out to Rasmussen University, a private, for-profit institution with locations in Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Florida, Kansas, and North Dakota; she reported that the institution offers 12 *quarter hours* (or a little less than 9 semester hours) for the CDA.
- **Contingencies or Reassessment:** None of the institutions we spoke with required students to (re)demonstrate competencies or complete additional assessments.

- **Common Courses:** Institutions tended to award credit for two courses, “Introduction to Early Childhood” and “Health, Safety, and Nutrition.” Some also provided credit for methods courses, practicum experiences, or “Child Development.”

Recommendations:

The CDA for Credit Working Group recommends the following.

1. The Consortium approve the following framework for Consortium Institutions to provide credit for the CDA.
2. The Consortium endorse the following implementation models for providing credit.
3. The Illinois Community College Board review agency policies for prior learning assessment to ensure that any barriers to implementing the process are addressed.
4. The Illinois State Board of Education ensure a clear process for making programmatic changes related to acceptance of the CDA.

Recommendation 1: Recommended Framework for Assigning Higher Education Credit for the Child Development Associate

- a. **Six semester hours of ‘meaningful’ credit** will be awarded for those with an active Child Development Associate (CDA) upon enrollment into any two- or four- year Consortium institution, unless one of the exceptions listed below exist. Credit must apply to the early childhood credential or degree. Institutions are not expected to award separate credit for multiple CDAs.
- b. **The awarding of credit will not be contingent** upon the completion of other activities, coursework, or assessments. Institutions may award additional credit as deemed fit through an assessment of prior learning or other appropriate process.
- c. **Credit awarded must be an early childhood or related course** (e.g., child development, human development). This cannot be a general education course, unless the course is early childhood related (e.g., child development, human development).

It is recommended but not required that credit be given for required early courses that contain the Gateways competencies that align to those competencies assessed through the CDA, as the intention is to recognize competencies met and not require students to have to repeat coursework for competencies achieved.

- d. **Institutions will provide credit for the Preschool CDA at the earliest opportunity and no later than January 31, 2023 and the Infant Toddler CDA no later than January 31, 2024.**
 - a. It is recommended, but not required, that institutions provide credit for both the Preschool and Infant Toddler CDAs at the same time and no later than January 2023 for consistency and transparency for the early childhood field. The CDA competencies are the same across the Preschool, Infant Toddler, and Family Child Care Credentials; student demonstration of the competencies varies somewhat by the age and setting in which they work.

Awarding credit for the Family Child Care CDA is optional at this time. The Working Group did not contemplate awarding credit for the Home Visiting CDA credential.¹

e. **Institutions must document credit for the CDA clearly on students' transcripts.**

f. **Exceptions to awarding credit include the following:**

- Credit for the CDA has already been awarded at another institution or awarded for another CDA specialization (e.g., preschool, infant toddler, family child care). Institutions are not expected to award separate credit for multiple CDAs.
- The student has already completed an Associate of Applied Science degree in early childhood or a Gateways Level 2 or higher (though the 4-year would accept credit that had been awarded for CDA). If a student already has an Associate of Arts degree, the students' CDA will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Institutions would need to
- The student has already completed all courses that include the Gateways competencies that align to the CDA competencies.
- The CDA is expired, in which case, credit will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the individual enrolling institution.

None of these exceptions are meant to preclude the award of credit by individual institutions on a case-by-case basis in a way that aligns with the institution's policy for awarding CDA credit.

Recommendation 2: Implementation Models

Below are a few of the models that the group discussed during its work. Most of these models were used in other states and/or institutions. These models align to the fundamental principles and recommended framework for awarding higher education credit for the CDA. The working group considered the existing crosswalk of CDA competencies to Gateways competencies in awarding credit when considering possible models.

Curricular Design/Redesign: This option might include redesigning the curriculum to align six semester hours to the CDA. These courses could be used for learners interested in earning a "CDA on the Way", while taking courses as well. These courses might include:

- Courses that include Gateways competencies at varied levels and include CDA competencies,
- Modularized courses that represent Gateways Level 2 competencies that are aligned to CDA competencies, and
- Elective early childhood courses covering Gateways Competencies aligned to the CDA.

Each of these options represents non-duplicative learning for students that contributes to the attainment of credentials and degrees and are reflective of CDA competencies.

Best Fit: Best fit alignment assumes an analysis of existing courses and the placement of Gateways aligned CDA competencies. These options might include:

¹ The legislation does not include Home Visitors in the definition of the incumbent workforce; therefore, the working group determined that consideration of the Home Visiting CDA was outside of their charge.

- **Best Fit, 6 hours:** Providing 6 semester hours of credit for courses that represent the “best fit” for providing credit for the CDA (Health Safety and Nutrition, Introduction to Early Childhood, Practicum courses, Child Development, etc.). This option provides credit upon enrollment based on analyzed best fit.
- **Best Fit Plus Model:** This model would include providing six semester hours of credit upon enrollment in courses that provide the ‘best fit’ and are best aligned to the appropriate competencies. In addition, institutions could provide additional or specific alternative credit through an assessment of non-CDA-aligned competencies (e.g., for competencies in these courses that are not covered through the CDA). It is important to note, however, that students must be guaranteed six hours of credit, regardless of outcomes on any prior learning assessment. The prior learning assessment should be used as an opportunity to receive additional or alternative course credit (e.g., a core course instead of an elective).

Recommendation 3: The working group recommends that the Illinois Community College Board review agency policies for prior learning assessment to ensure that any barriers to implementing the recommended process for awarding credit for the CDA are addressed.

Recommendation 4: The working group recommends that Illinois State Board of Education ensure a clear process for making programmatic changes related to acceptance of the CDA.

Appendix A

Working Group Members

The following members participated in one or more of the working group meetings. The working group was convened by IBHE and ICCB and include members from Illinois colleges and universities, providers/employers, representatives from regional Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, and early childhood advocates.

Christi Chadwick, IBHE (convener)
Marcus Brown, ICCB (convener)
Ashley Nazarak, Carole Robertson Center for Learning
Beth White, Illinois State University
Beth Smaka, Sauk Valley Community College
Brenda Smith, Skip-A-Long Child Development Services
Carolyn Beal, Southwestern Illinois Community College
Ireta Gasner, Start Early
Jason Dockter, Lincoln Land Community College
Jean Zaar, College of DuPage
Johnna Darragh Ernst, Heartland Community College
Joi Patterson, Governor's State University
Kate Connor, Truman College
Kelsey Swanson, Child Care Resource & Referral of Midwestern Illinois
Linda O'Connell-Knuth, Waubensee Community College
Lindsay Meeker, Western Illinois University
Marcy Mendenhall, SAL Family & Community Services
Melissa Bachelor, Lewis and Clark Community College
Melissa Johnson, Highland Community College
Melissa Szymczak, Joliet Junior College
Nichole Miller and Kelsey Ward, Children's Home and Aid
Rachel Adeodu, Northeastern Illinois University
Rebecca Swartz, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Ty Jiles, Chicago State University

Appendix B

Fundamental Principles for Awarding Credit for the CDA Within Consortium Institutions

Approved by ECACE, January 2022

The CDA for Credit Working group recommends the following fundamental principles should be adhered to by all Consortium member institutions.

- **Meaningful Credit for the CDA:** Programs must provide a clear pathway from the CDA to higher level credentials **or** degrees, and credit awarded must count towards the next credential **or** degree, in a way that shortens the pathway to graduation
- **Recognizing Acquired Competencies:** Programs must recognize the knowledge, skills, and abilities that the workforce has and for which they have been assessed, and, to the degree possible, students should not have to “re-prove” themselves through additional coursework and assessments for the competencies assessed through the CDA.
- **Transfer of Credit:** Students must be able to transfer CDA credit to both 2-and 4-year Consortium member institutions and have this credit count towards credentials and degrees.
- **Transparency:** How and what credit is awarded must be transparent to current and potential students and employers.
- **Standard Number/Range of Credits:** All institutions should award a standard number or range of credits for the CDA.
- **Timely and Affordable:** Awarding credit to those who already hold the CDA when they come to a higher education institution must be timely and affordable and must not cost the same (time or money) as taking a class.

Additionally, the working group recognized the value of the following for students and higher education programs. However, at this time, the working group believed that these pathways should be optional and recommended further work to understand how other states and institutions have implemented these principles.

- **CDA on the Way:** Students should be able to earn college credit while they work towards the CDA. Early Childhood coursework and the embedded CDA competencies could be sequenced so that students can attend higher education programs and, early in the program, meet the educational requirements and have the required competencies to be awarded the CDA. In addition, programs could embed activities needed to complete the portfolio within these courses
- **Embedding CDA within High School Dual Credit Programs:** Programs might consider working with area high schools to establish dual credit programs that embed CDA competencies within the work. Students would be able to then meet the education requirements for the CDA prior to high school. Upon earning the requisite professional experience and other assessments, they could be awarded the CDA. Aligned competencies toward the Level 2 Credential could also be partially met, putting them on a pathway to higher credentials and degrees.

Appendix C

National Context – States and Institutions Awarding Higher Education Credit for the CDA

Maryland

- MD Department of Education: Angeline Bishop, Branch Chief, Credentialing Branch; LaTanya Taylor, Credentialing Specialist
- [Montgomery College](#), Sonia Hernandez, Collegewide Senior Director/Chair, Early Childhood Education Programs at Montgomery College
 - 6 semester hours of credit: Introduction to Early Childhood Education and Child Health, Safety and Nutrition
- Anne Arundel Community College, Candace Place, Director TEACH Institute Special Projects
 - 6 semester hours of credit: Introduction to Early Childhood Education and Child Health, Safety and Nutrition

Massachusetts

- Strategies for Children, Amy O’Leary, Executive Director and Marisa Fear, Associate Director of Research and Policy
 - 9 semester hours for those receiving grants and scholarships from the State of Massachusetts.
- [North Shore Community College](#), MA; Kathy Gallo, Director, Education & Care Partnership Office
 - 9 semester hours: Child Growth and Development, Field Placement, Seminar 1

Nebraska

- [Nebraska Department of Education Office of Early Childhood](#), Julie Miller, Early Childhood Career Development Specialist; Jene Chapman, Program Specialist
 - Currently credit varies by institution, but NE is finalizing a plan to award 9 semester hours of credit for common courses across community colleges

Oklahoma

- Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, Gina McPherson, Special Programs Manager
 - [6 semester hours of credit](#): Institutional choice

Pennsylvania

- [Pennsylvania Keys](#) (nonprofit arm of Office of CD and Early Learning), Dr. Marnie Aylesworth; Rebecca Lamar; Knouse, Elizabeth;
 - Credit varies by institution, from 3 to 12 hours, depending on the school and program. Probably most typically 6 hours. For example:
 - Bucks Community College: 6 credits, Foundations for Early Learning and Early Learning and Development 1

- Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (Clinton Community College, Scott Community College, Muscatine Community College), Heather Anderson, SCC, Early Childhood Education Department Coordinator
 - 18 semester hours of credit: Introduction to Early Childhood Education 3; Child Health, Safety and Nutrition* 3; Early Childhood Curriculum I & 2 6; Early Childhood Guidance
- Jefferson State Community College, Birmingham AL, Dr. Cindy Shackelford
 - 9 semester hours of credit: Introduction to Early Care and Education of Children 3; Materials and Methods for Teaching Children 3; Children's Health and Safety 3

National Organizations

Council for Professional Recognition: The Council is the organization that administers the CDA program and awards credentials. Over the course of the committee's work, we talked to the Council multiple times. The Council shared data, information, and materials.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC): NAEYC formerly administered the CDA and current accredits early childhood higher education programs. We spoke with them about accreditation issues related to awarding credit for a prior credential.

ECACE Advisory Committee Jamboard Activity Feedback

May 19, 2022

One thing I'm excited about...

- Giving incumbent workforce members an opportunity to gain credit for their work experience - a great way to begin the educational process for workers that might not have engaged in higher education before.
- I'm excited about the recognizing the CDA prior knowledge accelerates students to completing their programs.
- the ability for staff to see how their efforts to obtain a CDA translates to collegiate achievement
- An awesome stepping stone in an individuals career development.
- Tickled pink that this work is seriously moving forward in a collaborative way and that we are deliberately pushing for greater inclusion and equity.
- A majority of Head Start and Early Head Start programs utilize the CDA to support development of entry level staff, including a majority of parents. Head Start/Early Head Start have a large percentage of staff who were former parents.
- I love seeing all of the different options for those in the workforce. I am excited about the CDA credit as well and the prior learning credit options.
- I'm excited about the possibilities of alignment with all of the ways the workforce can obtain licensure/certification and how we will communicate this information in a cohesive, systemic and systematic way.
- I am excited for those older workforce members to receive 6 hours of higher education credit. This will be a great source of encouragement to continue their education.
- Love the adult focus and recognizing learning versus seat time. Adult learners can structure use of their time for learning as it fits their lives and still stay on track to completing their credentials.
- Excited about this serving as a model for other professions as well: a possible win-win for other careers?
- Excited to see how this helps recruit and retain additional teachers for the workforce.
- If, indeed, the CDA is available in multiple languages, it also serves as a positive launch point for multilingual staff. We all know the ECE system is in tremendous need of multilingual staff to support our young children and families.
- Glad to see that we're removing barriers as students navigate institutions...

A question I have is....

- This is being addressed for both Infant Toddler and Preschool CDA, correct?
- How are the institutions embracing this option? Are there concerns on their end?
- Will college credit only apply for the time that the CDA is valid (2-3 years)?
- Will it be possible to cohesively, systemically and systematically have an EC workforce pathway that is easily accessible and attainable?
- Will there be a campaign to contact those who have completed a CDA to inform them about the 6 hours of EC and encourage them to continue their education?
- Are there any barriers for CDA holders who are bilingual and how are we addressing them?

- What will the outreach look like to the incumbent workforce that would benefit from the CDA?
- Is there more we can do to support this work?
- How are we building an intentional structured support mechanism to support technology challenges prior to students enrolling in programs?
- The CDA also offers a credential for home visitors.

JH notes/headlines/categories below...

One thing I'm excited about...

Honoring prior learning and leveraging the CDA to (re)engage adult learners.

- Giving incumbent workforce members an opportunity to gain credit for their work experience is a great way to begin the educational process for workers that might not have engaged in higher education before.
- I'm excited about the recognizing the CDA prior knowledge accelerates students to completing their programs.
- The ability for staff to see how their efforts to obtain a CDA translates to collegiate achievement.
- An awesome stepping stone in an individuals' career development.

CDA as an equity issue.

- Tickled pink that this work is seriously moving forward in a collaborative way and that we are deliberately pushing for greater inclusion and equity.

CDA as professional development and entry point into the ECE workforce.

- A majority of Head Start and Early Head Start programs utilize the CDA to support development of entry level staff, including a majority of parents. Head Start/Early Head Start have a large percentage of staff who were former parents.

Opening up options for the workforce and the potential for honoring other prior learning.

- I love seeing all of the different options for those in the workforce. I am excited about the CDA credit as well and the prior learning credit options.

Aligning systems for the benefit of the workforce.

Supporting adult learners.

Recognizing different forms of learning.

CDA as a workforce recruitment tool.

Influencing professions

- I'm excited about the possibilities of alignment with all of the ways the workforce can obtain licensure/certification and how we will communicate this information in a cohesive, systemic and systematic way.
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Institutional Teams

Amy Hurd and Kelli Appel, Illinois State University

Carolyn Beal, Southwestern Illinois College



Updates

Scholarship:

- **AY 2022 (Fall 21 – Summer 22)**
 - Scholarships to students at 57 institutions
 - Last day to request payment – June 29
 - 900 Applications, 674 prequalified
- **AY 2023 (Fall 22 – Summer 23)**
 - Application OPEN
 - Priority Deadline: Changed to **July 15, 2022**
 - “School view” to open in July 2022 and institutions will be able to see incomplete, ineligible complete status
 - Prequalification: Late July 2022
 - Payments Begin – August 2022

Grant Updates

IBHE

- You should have received a template to use for payment requests and for the periodic financial report
- We will be sending out an interim 'program report' to use for this fiscal year
- Also, we will be sending out information for a webinar on Friday at 10, if anyone has questions about billing and grant reporting, budgets, or implementation plans

ICCB

Meeting Minutes

Public Comment

Next Steps

- Next Scheduled meeting -- October 11, 2022

May schedule additional update meetings

