

# Colorado Early Childhood Professional Credential 2.0

## Initial Scoring System

### I. Overview

This model provides a common system for all Colorado early childhood professionals to document and quantify their professional growth and accomplishments, and by doing so to define and advance the profession. The model uses Colorado's Competencies for Early Childhood Educators and Administrators (approved by Colorado's Early Childhood Leadership Commission in May, 2013) framework to integrate the pathways of formal education, training, experience, and specialized credentials and certifications. Individuals accumulate points along each of four pathways-- formal education, in-service training and continuing education, experience, and credentials and certifications. Total points assign one of 6 professional designations.

The model is guided by Colorado's Early Learning Professional Development System Plan (endorsed by Colorado's Early Childhood Leadership Commission in 2010). Goal One of the plan specifically addresses the credential: Improve the effectiveness of early learning professionals by establishing and adopting an aligned, research-based, tiered set of competencies as the basis for credentialing early learning professionals at all levels and approving professional development program (including teacher preparation programs).

The following guiding principles serve as the underlying foundation for the implementation of the PD Plan:

- An **accountable** professional development system collects and evaluates data to demonstrate effectiveness, tracks child progress, plans improvements and assures quality through a continuous improvement process.
- An **innovative** professional development system is flexible, incorporates relevant research and research-based practices and experiments with new approaches for preparing, credentialing and rewarding early learning professionals.
- An **accessible** professional development system offers affordable and convenient options for education, training and coaching, acknowledging multiple avenues towards teacher effectiveness including college courses, prior experience and alternative classroom-and field-based training.
- An **inclusive** professional development system promotes culturally-sensitive practices, engages diverse stakeholders, embraces individuals of all abilities and actively seek to diversify the early learning profession.
- An **aligned** professional development system provides a coherent, easily navigable and coordinated system for guiding early learning professionals' college preparation, recruitment and ongoing professional development activities across all early learning settings.
- A **well-financed** professional development system provides equitable opportunities for early learning professionals to achieve higher levels of competency through college education and ongoing professional development that is tied to increased compensation and benefits.
- A **collaborative** professional development system is developed by and built upon authentic partnerships among the Department of Education, higher education, Department of Human Services, Head Start, local Early Childhood Councils, resource and referral, the Early Childhood Professional Development Team and recipients of professional development services.

## II. Pathways

### A. Formal Education

**Rationale:** Being an Early childhood professional means having an understanding of the specialized knowledge required to be effective in the field early childhood education. This section of the Early Childhood professional credential recognizes and honors formalized education as a path for attaining this specialized knowledge. While a degree in any field demonstrates increased professional knowledge, degrees and coursework that are directly related to the field of early childhood and aligned to Colorado's Competencies for Early Childhood Educators and Administrators demonstrate the truly specialized knowledge required to most effectively support young children's growth and learning. To more accurately reflect a current understanding of the science of early childhood, points for Areas of Study, ECE Coursework and Aligned Coursework are time limited. A maximum of 50 points can be earned for Formal Education.

#### 1. **Degrees**

Points are awarded for the **highest degree attained**, regardless of major course of study.

Associates degree = 5 points; Bachelor's degree = 10 points; Master's degree = 15 points; Education Specialist = 18 points; Doctorate = 20 points.

#### 2. **Area of Study**

Points are awarded to a professional who has completed a degree in Early Childhood Education, Early Childhood Special Education, Human Development, Child Development or Family Studies. 4 points are awarded for each degree earned in these specific areas of study.

#### 3. **Early Childhood Coursework**

One point is awarded for each ECE 3 credit hours completed at an accredited institution with a passing grade of "C" or better in the last 15 years. These points do not require the completion of a degree and are awarded in addition to Degree and Area of Study points.

#### 4. **Coursework Aligned to Competencies**

Points will be awarded for college coursework from an accredited institution that has specific application to the care and education of young children and is aligned with Colorado's Competencies for Early Childhood Educators and Administrators. Professionals will receive 2 points for each aligned ECE 3 credit hours completed at an accredited institution with a passing grade of "C" or better in the last 15 years. To be considered for points, coursework must be demonstrated to be aligned to the Competencies for Early Childhood Educators and Administrators through the Professional Development Information System. These points do not require the completion of a degree and are awarded in addition to Degree and Area of Study points.

### B. Ongoing Professional Development

**Rationale:** Ongoing professional development reflects the importance of continuous quality improvement. This section of the Early Childhood Professional Credential recognizes and honors the role of training in providing ongoing professional development that supports a professional's continued growth throughout a career in early childhood education. Research demonstrates that training series that take place over time and include 'job-embedded' components such as Professional Learning Communities or Coaching more effectively increase a professional's knowledge and skills. This section awards points for training hours and/or CEUs earned in the last 3 years. Additionally, 2 points are earned for each training that focuses on children with high needs, is a series, includes a 'job-embedded' component, or for maintaining a qualifying certificate, credential or endorsement. A maximum of 30 points can be earned for Training.

### C. Experience

**Rationale:** With experience, early childhood professionals have the opportunity to apply the knowledge gained through formal education and training to increase their skills as professionals. Experience awards 1 point for every year worked in the field up to a maximum of 20 points. "Experience" for purposes of this model includes:

1) Direct work\* with young children (birth - 8) and families, includes field experiences;

- 2) Supervision, leadership, or management of programs;
- 3) Program coordination, development, or regulation;
- 4) Training, instruction, or technical assistance of programs;
- 5) Evaluation or research in the field.

\* must be 16 years of age or have senior standing in Career Tech or JVS program.

### **D. Demonstration of Competencies**

**Rationale:** It is this area that allows a professional to demonstrate what he/she genuinely knows about early childhood and is truly able to do to support children’s growth and development. The goal of Formal Education, Training and Professional Experience is to increase competence. Ultimately, it is a professional’s competence that most accurately measures expertise. The goal of this area is to incorporate current research-based measures of competencies and best practices for EC professionals. Beginning in 2014, the Early Learning Challenge Grant provides funding to research and adopt measures of the EC Competencies Framework and develop scoring for this section. Initially, these points will be awarded as ‘additional’ points toward a credential.

## **III. Early Childhood Professional Designations**

“Points” are totaled across **Formal Education, Ongoing Professional Development, Experience, and Demonstration of Competencies**. The total points place a professional within one of the following designations:

- Early Childhood Professional I (10 - 20 points) \*must have points from at least 2 areas
- Early Childhood Professional II (21-35 points) \*must have points from at least 2 areas
- Early Childhood Professional III (36-50 points) \*must have points from at least 2 areas
- Early Childhood Professional IV (51-60 points) \*must have points from all 3 areas
- Early Childhood Professional V (61-70 points) \*must have points from all 3 areas
- Early Childhood Professional VI (71+ points) \*must have points from all 3 areas

## **IV. Advancement**

Early childhood professionals will advance to higher levels as they obtain more education, ongoing professional development, and experience.

## **V. Renewal Requirements**

All Levels must be renewed every 3 years.

# Early Childhood Professional Credential Worksheet

## A. Formal Education 50 points possible

POINTS

1. Degree

- Enter points for highest degree attained  
Associate's = 5 points; Bachelor's = 10 points Master's = 15 points;  
Education Specialist = 18 points; Doctorate = 20 points

2. Area of Study

- Enter 4 points for each degree with a major in Early Childhood Education, Early Childhood Special Education, Human Development (w/30 EC Credits), Child Development or Family Studies (w/30 EC Credits)

3. Early Childhood Coursework

- Enter 1 point for each ECE specific 3 credits completed in the last 15 years

4. Coursework Aligned to Competencies

- Enter 2 points for each aligned 3 credits completed in the last 15 years

Subtotal for Formal Education =

up to a maximum of 50

## B. On Going Professional Development 30 points possible

- Enter total number of Early Childhood related training hours from the last 3 years  
1 – 15 hours = 5 points; 16 – 30 hours = 10 points 31+ hours = 15 points  
(This will change to 'approved' trainings in the future)

- Enter total number of Early Childhood related CEUs earned in the last 3 years  
.1 – 1.5 CEUs = 5 points; 1.6 - 3 CEUs = 10 points 3.1+ CEUs = 15 points  
Do not count hours & CEUs for the same training

Of the Early Childhood Professional Development you've participated in:

- Enter 2 points for each full day (6 hours) training Completed that focus on children with high needs (SPED, ELL, Families in Poverty, Social/Emotional, Cultural Competence...)

- Enter 2 points for each training completed as a series (Series is defined as at least 12 hours over more than one occasion at least one week apart)

- Enter 2 points for each training that included a 'job-embedded' component (Participation in at least 8 contact hours of Coaching)

- Enter 2 points for each ECE related certification, credential or endorsement (See list of qualifying certifications, credentials and endorsements)

Subtotal for Training =

up to a maximum of 30

**C. Experience 20 points possible**

Enter number of year(s) worked in field up to 20

Subtotal for Experience =

up to a maximum of 20

**D. Demonstrated Competencies option for up to 10 supplemental points**

NOTE: The Demonstration Competencies area does not apply toward the minimum required areas for each level of the credential.

Currently Approved Tools:

- CLASS
- Environment Rating Scales
- Colorado State Model Evaluation System

Please see the [Demonstrated Competencies page on the PDIS](#) for the Scoring Protocol for each tool

Subtotal for Demonstrated Competencies =

up to a maximum of 10

**Total Points**

Add all points in subtotal boxes together

Total Credential Points =

**Early Childhood Professional Designation**

_____	Early Childhood Professional I	(10-20 points) *must have points from at least 2 areas
_____	Early Childhood Professional II	(21-35 points) *must have points from at least 2 areas
_____	Early Childhood Professional III	(36-50 points) *must have points from at least 2 areas
_____	Early Childhood Professional IV	(51-60 points) *must have points from all 3 areas
_____	Early Childhood Professional V	(61-70 points) *must have points from all 3 areas
_____	Early Childhood Professional VI	(71+ points) *must have points from all 3 areas

**Renewal Requirements**

- All levels must be renewed every 3 years.

Qualifying List of Credentials, Certificates and Endorsements	Documentation Required
Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)	Certificate from the Council for Professional Recognition
Developmental Intervention Assistant	Transcripts from University/College
Developmental Intervention Assistant Supervisor	Transcripts from University/College
Pyramid Plus Certified Trainer	Certificate from Pyramid Plus Center
Pyramid Plus Certified Coach	Certificate from Pyramid Plus Center
EQIT Instructor	Certificate from state level EQIT Training of Trainers
EQIT RELATE Coach	Certificate from state level EQ RELATE Coaching Training
IIK IY Certified Peer Coach	Certificate from Invest in Kids
IIK IY Certified Trainer	Certificate from Invest in Kids
Touchpoints Trainer	Certificate from Brazelton Touchpoints Community Level Training (CLT)
AMS (American Montessori Society) Infant/Toddler Credential	Certificate from AMS
AMS (American Montessori Society) Early Childhood Credential	Certificate from AMS
AMI (Association Montessori Internationale) Certification Birth to 3	Certificate from AMI
AMI (Association Montessori Internationale) Certification ages 3 to 6	Certificate from AMI
MACTE (Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education) Infant/Toddler	Certificate from MACTE accredited program
MACTE (Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education) Early Childhood	Certificate from MACTE accredited program
Licensed Practical Nurse	Current License
Registered Nurse	Current License
Nurse Consultant	Current License
Board Certified Pediatrician	Current License
Infant Mental Health Endorsement	Endorsement Certificate
Developmental Interventionist	Transcripts from University/College
State Issued Early Childhood Teacher License	Current Teaching License from State Education Agency
State Issued Early Childhood Special Education Teacher License	Current Teaching License from State Education Agency
State Issued Early Childhood Special Education Specialist Teacher License	Current Teaching License from State Education Agency
Occupational Therapist Assistant (OTA)	Transcripts from University/College
Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA)	Current License
Licensed Speech/Language Pathologist (SLP)	Current License
Licensed Occupational Therapist (OT)	Current License
Licensed Physical Therapist (PT)	Current License
Licensed Social Worker (LSW) or Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)	Current License
Licensed Mental Health Professional (Psychologist, Therapist, Counselor)	Current License
Certified CLASS Observer (must have current status)	Certificate from Teachstone
Certified Environment Rating Scale Observer (must have current status)	Certificate from Clayton Early Learning
Current 'Reliable' status on TPOT	Certificate
Strengths-Based Family Workers/Family Development Credential	Documentation from Temple University, Cornell University, or University of Connecticut

Speech Language Pathology Assistant	CDE SLPA Authorization
CLASS Affiliate Trainer	Certificates/Card from Teachstone
CDA PD Specialist	Documentation from the Council for Professional Recognition
State issued Principal License	Current license issued by State Education Agency