

EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

North Carolina's child care licensing system establishes education standards for the child care workforce. Staff in all child care positions must meet minimum education requirements. Staff may also meet voluntary enhanced standards in education beyond the minimum requirements by completing post-secondary coursework at a college or university which will contribute to a higher star rating for their facility.

Education Evaluation Specialists in the Early Education Branch, Workforce Education Unit of the North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) assess the education of individuals working in child care to determine their qualifications. All applicants must apply through the Workforce Online Reporting and Knowledge System (WORKS). To find out more information about WORKS, helpful information and resources, please visit the DCDEE website at www.ncchildcare.nc.gov

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS AND EQUIVALENTS

The first step in this process is documenting in WORKS how you completed high school.

The requirement for completion of high school can be met through a number of options, as described below:

- High School Diploma:** This diploma is issued through a high school and requires completion of all state and local graduation requirements. High schools issuing diplomas must have **nationally recognized regional accreditation** in the United States (see page 6 for more information). The diploma may indicate a track the student took to meet requirements (college prep, technical, occupational, etc.). The diploma awarded is the same regardless of the chosen track.
- Adult High School Diploma (Adult HSD):** This diploma is issued through the community college system in most states. There are exceptions and other colleges could be approved to issue adult high school diplomas. Colleges issuing adult high school diplomas must have **nationally recognized regional accreditation** in the United States (see page 6 for more information).
- Home School Diploma:** This diploma is issued by a non-public school where the student receives academic instruction from his/her parent, legal guardian or a member of the household in which the student resides. The chief administrator of the home school issues the diploma.

What is a legitimate home school?

The NC Division of Non-Public Education is authorized by state law to receive home school notices of intent to begin initial operation, to terminate operation and to annually inspect the school's student attendance and nationally standardized achievement test result records. They provide a list of home schools by county at this website: <http://www.ncdnpe.org>

GED (General Education Development) Credential: The GED Tests measure the academic skills and knowledge expected of high school graduates in the United States. Successfully passing the tests results in award of a GED credential (which may be called a diploma, certificate, credential or endorsement).

- The only official GED is given by the GED TESTING SERVICE and its approved sites. All approved testing locations are listed at www.GEDtest.org.
- The official GED is **not offered online via the internet**. Currently the GED is a paper and pencil test only. The GED test is a series of 5 tests covering different subjects and takes 7 hours to complete.

Graduation Certificate and Certificate of Achievement: These are high school exit documents for students who do not meet the requirements for a diploma. These documents are NOT recognized as high school diplomas or equivalents.

APPLICATION

The second step in this process is applying through WORKS for individual positions.

Please apply through WORKS and upload and/or mail all necessary documentation.

Individuals can apply for the following private setting (nonpublic schools) child care position(s) in WORKS:

- ★ Family Child Care Home Providers
- ★ Teachers
- ★ Lead Teachers
- ★ Group Leaders
- ★ Program Coordinators
- ★ Child Care (Birth-12 yrs) Administrators
- ★ School-Age (5-12 yrs only) Administrators

Individuals can apply for the following public setting (public schools) child care position(s) in WORKS: (Note: These forms must be signed by either the Principal of the public school where the individual is employed or the Superintendent of the school system in the county where the public school is located.)

- ★ Teacher/Teacher Assistant
 - Individuals who need qualification as a Teacher or Teacher Assistant working in a public school preschool
- ★ Administrators
 - Individuals who need qualification as an Administrator working in a public school preschool

Individuals who want to earn a NC credential certificate and qualify for the position(s) indicated below must complete the required credential coursework at a NC community college:

- **North Carolina Early Childhood Credential (NCECC) certificate** – completion of EDU 111 and 112 **OR** EDU 119 meets the requirements for you to qualify as Lead Teacher, Teacher and/or Family Child Care Home Provider if approved for this credential
- **North Carolina Family Child Care Credential (NCFCCC) certificate** – completion of EDU 111 and 113 **OR** EDU 119 and EDU 113 **OR** EDU 114 meets the requirements for you to qualify as Family Child Care Home Provider if approved for this credential
- **North Carolina School Age Credential (NCSACC) certificate** – completion of EDU 145 and 235 **OR** EDU 145 and 263 meets the requirements for you to qualify as Program Coordinator if approved for this credential

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS AND OTHER EDUCATION PAPERWORK

The third step in this process is to submit verification of completed post-secondary coursework.

Official Transcripts provide official documentation from a college or university of completed post-secondary coursework, certificates, diplomas and/or degrees.

What Counts and What Doesn't?

- ★ Only post-secondary credit is counted in education evaluations. The college or university awarding post-secondary credit (including schools offering distance education such as on-line coursework) must be accredited. This credit must appear on official transcripts from post-secondary schools that have received **nationally recognized regional accreditation** (see page 7 for more information).
- ★ The transcript must be "official" with a raised seal or on distinctive paper and with the registrar's signature, as specified by the college or university. Photocopies, computer print-outs, unofficial student copies, internet copies and grade reports are not accepted.
- ★ If a degree has been earned, it must be shown on the official transcript including the major and the date the degree was awarded. Copies of degrees are not accepted as verification of completion.
- ★ Continuing education and in-service training hours are never counted in determining an individual's education qualifications.

When do you submit an official transcript (OT)?

- ★ You need to submit an OT when you initially apply in WORKS if you have completed any college or university level coursework, certificates, diplomas and/or degrees.
- ★ Official transcripts may be opened before you send them to the Workforce Education Unit. **The transcript does NOT need to arrive at DCDEE in a sealed envelope.** However, if the transcript does not look official or if the name of the college or university is not clearly noted on the transcript, it is helpful to include the original envelope from the college or university when sending the official transcript to DCDEE. We strongly recommend opening the official transcript and making a copy for your record before submitting it to the Workforce Education Unit.
- ★ Review your official transcript before submitting it to the Workforce Education Unit to verify all coursework and degrees earned at the college or university are documented on the transcript. Official transcripts must be from colleges or universities with **nationally recognized regional accreditation** in order to be evaluated for coursework and degrees (see page 7 for more information).
- ★ **All education paperwork for an individual is maintained in ONE record in the Workforce Education Unit.** It is not necessary to send duplicate transcripts when applying for more than one position or when applying for a new position if a current official transcript has already been submitted.

What is needed when the official transcript is a foreign transcript?

- ★ Foreign transcripts and/or degrees must be evaluated by an international education evaluation service to determine how they compare to U.S. education standards.
- ★ For higher education institutions outside of the United States, the recognized system of the specified country's accreditation process will be accepted.
- ★ The report from the international education evaluation service should be submitted to DCDEE in place of a transcript. These services can be found through an internet search for international education evaluators.
- ★ Cost for this service is the responsibility of the individual requesting the evaluation.
- ★ A **copy** of this evaluation should be submitted to the Workforce Education Unit. A translation from the original language to English is **not** sufficient.

Which child care positions require other education paperwork?

- ★ **Group Leader** – Completion of Basic School Age Care (BSAC) training is required for qualification as a Group Leader; upload into WORKS a legible copy of the BSAC certificate.
- ★ **Program Coordinator**
 - If you are qualifying as a Program Coordinator by completion of Basic School Age Care (BSAC) training, you must also be qualified as a Lead Teacher or Administrator; upload into WORKS a legible copy of the BSAC certificate **OR**
 - If you are qualifying as a Program Coordinator by earning the Early Educator Certification (EEC), upload into WORKS a legible and current (non-expired) copy of the EEC certificate.
- ★ **Lead Teacher**
 - If you are qualifying as a Lead Teacher by completion of a current national certificate, upload into WORKS a legible copy of the CDA, CCP or Montessori (AMS or AMI) certificate **OR**
 - If you are qualifying as a Lead Teacher, Teacher and/or Family Child Care Home Provider by earning the Early Educator Certification (EEC), upload into WORKS a legible and current (non-expired) copy of the EEC certificate.
- ★ **Administrator** – If you tested out of either the Administration I or Administration II test or both to meet the requirement for completion of Administration coursework, upload into WORKS the following paperwork:
 - Independently complete in WORKS a portfolio to be graded **OR**
 - Upload into WORKS documentation in resume format of at least five (5) years of experience as a child care director, co-director or assistant director to waive the portfolio requirement, including the following information:
 - Name of facility
 - Facility ID# (if located in NC)
 - Location of facility
 - Date started
 - Date ended (if applicable)
 - Duties as Director

Failure to complete all the above steps will delay the processing of your application and may affect your facility's rated license education points.

ACCREDITATION

The fourth step in this process is verification of the high school and/or college/university's accreditation status.

The recognized regional accrediting bodies for high school diplomas (and the geographic regions they serve) are:

- ★ North Central Association/Southern Association of Colleges and Schools CASI (Council on Accreditation and School Improvement) www.advanc-ed.org/oasis2/u/par/search
Serves a wide variety of educational institutions ranging from early childhood through elementary, middle and secondary schools. The two associations combined and operate as divisions of AdvancED
(NCA) Arkansas, Arizona, Colorado, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Nebraska, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin Wyoming and the Navajo Nation
(SACS) Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and as well as for American students in Mexico, the Caribbean and Central/South America
- ★ Middle States Commission on Secondary Schools www.msa-cess.org
Serves public and non-public middle, intermediate, and/or secondary schools, non-degree granting vocational technical and postsecondary institutions, special purpose schools, supplementary education centers and distance education institutions
Delaware, the District of Columbia (D.C), Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands
- ★ New England Commission on Public Secondary Schools <http://cpss.neasc.org/> and New England Commission on Independent Schools <http://cis.neasc.org/>
Serves schools which include traditional boarding and day preparatory schools, private elementary schools, schools serving students with special needs and religiously affiliated schools of many faiths
Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont
- ★ Western Association of Schools and Colleges (Secondary schools are listed under The Accrediting Commission for Schools) www.acswasc.org
California and Hawaii, its territories of Guam, American Samoa and Northern Marianas Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, the Pacific Basin, East Asia and areas of the Pacific and East Asia where American schools or colleges may apply to it for service
- ★ Northwest Accreditation Commission www.northwestaccreditation.org/
Serves a variety of schools, including K-12, elementary, middle and high schools; schools offering distance education; non-degree granting post-secondary institutions; and special purpose, supplementary education, travel education and trans-regional schools – Division of AdvanceED
Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Washington

The nationally recognized regional accrediting bodies for colleges and universities (and the geographic regions they serve) are:

- ★ Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools www.middlestates.org/
Delaware, the District of Columbia (D.C), Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands
- ★ New England Association of Schools and Colleges www.neasc.org/
Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont
- ★ North Central Association of Colleges and Schools www.northcentralassociation.org/
Arkansas, Arizona, Colorado, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Nebraska, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin Wyoming and the Navajo Nation
- ★ Northwest Accreditation Commission www.northwestaccreditation.org/
Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington
- ★ Southern Association of Colleges and Schools www.sacs.org/
Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and as well as for American students in Mexico, the Caribbean and Central/South America
- ★ Western Association of Schools and Colleges <http://www.acswasc.org/>
California and Hawaii, its territories of Guam, American Samoa and Northern Marianas Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, the Pacific Basin, East Asia and areas of the Pacific and East Asia where American schools or colleges may apply to it for service

Diplomas from high schools and official transcripts from colleges or universities without regional accreditation are not recognized by the Division of Child Development and Early Education Workforce Education Unit.

ACCEPTABLE COURSEWORK AND DEGREES

The fifth step in this process is determination of which courses and/or degrees are countable.

The following criteria apply to coursework that is counted in order to qualify for a specific child care position and/or count towards extra hours for the position:

- ★ When reviewing transcripts for coursework to be countable towards early childhood/child development (EC/CD) semester credit hours to either initially qualify or as extra hours, Education Evaluation Specialists look for courses that emphasize a developmental understanding of young children and developmentally appropriate educational approaches for the early years. This is why elementary education degrees and coursework often do not qualify for credit. For the same reason, general education courses required for a degree are NOT counted.
- ★ Courses routinely counted as Early Childhood/Child Development (EC/CD) include:
 - Most EDU courses in the NC Community College System **except** a group of vocational courses (EDU 250 – PRAXIS I Preparation, EDU 285 – Internship Exp-School Age)
 - Some ASL (American Sign Language) prefixes (limited to developmental language and communication skills)
 - DDT 120 Teaching the Developmentally Disabled (in NC Community Colleges)
 - Courses with Kindergarten (K) in the name or course description
 - Some Psychology courses, including General, Introduction, Child Psychology and Child Development
- ★ Additional courses counted for School-Age positions include:
 - The same EDU prefixes in the NC Community College System that count for EC/CD **except** EDU 234 Infants, Toddlers and Twos
 - The same Psychology courses plus Child/Adolescent Psychology and Child/Adolescent Development
 - Elementary Education courses and degrees

Note: An Elementary Education degree is considered a degree in the field for School Age positions and therefore, semester credit hours will not be counted separately as extra hours.
- ★ Practicums, internships and student teaching experiences are never counted as EC/CD courses, although they may have earned course credit toward a degree.
- ★ Other courses may be considered for appropriateness through review of course descriptions provided by the applicant. If such coursework is deemed appropriate, credit will be given on a case by case basis.

The following degrees are accepted as Early Childhood/Child Development (EC/CD) degrees:

- ★ AA/AAS in Child Care Administration/ Child Development/ Early Childhood Education/ ECE-Special Education/ ECE-Teacher Associate/ Human Growth and Development/ School Age Children/ Special Education
- ★ BA/BS or higher in Birth-Kindergarten/ Child Care Administration/ Child Development/ Child Psychology/ Early Childhood Education/ ECE-Special Education/ ECE-Teacher Associate/ Human Growth and Development/ School Age Children/ Special Education