

Working Together to Grow NC Early Educator Certification *Increasing Professional Recognition & Rewards*

Overview: Thousands of Early Educators across the state are now certified! NC Early Educator Certification® (EEC) is North Carolina’s certification system for the early care and education field.

EEC is an acknowledgement of an individual’s verified level of educational achievement, based on a standardized scale. EEC does not replace teacher licensure and is designed to compliment that process. No test is currently required to obtain EEC in North Carolina. Education is coursework taken at a regionally accredited college or university. All public community colleges and universities in North Carolina are regionally accredited. For a list of regionally accredited college and university programs go to the [Council for Higher Education Accreditation](#) website.

Voices from the Field

“I feel that having this certification shows how important we as teachers take our career. Early Childhood Teachers aren’t given the recognition that they deserve. This certification is a step in the right direction for our profession.”

Certifying Body: The NC Institute for Child Development Professionals is the certifying body for Early Educators. Early Educators include teachers and teacher assistants in child care, pre-kindergarten and Head Start settings, school age group leaders and coordinators, family child care providers, administrators, faculty, specialists, education coordinators, trainers, consultants, researchers and more.

Cost: The fee for initial processing and certification is \$50. The fee for EEC recertification is \$25, if completed prior to the issued expiration date. In some cases, support for application fees may be provided by local agency grants, professional associations, an employer or other sources.

Benefits: The benefits of being a certified Early Educator are many – for Early Educators, for the field, and for children and families.

- Certification supports our profession. Most occupations have a form of certification and/or licensure to work in a particular field. The field of early childhood education does not have the status or compensation afforded to other professions earning similar degrees from the same institutions. This will take time; EEC can help us take this important next step.
- Certification provides an incentive to support continued education and that being certified is a form of professionalism and legitimizes their role in the field and society.
- Certification rewards education through EEC Rewards®. Certified Early Educators receive a professional frame-ready certificate and a wallet-sized card which may be used to access professional discounts through [EEC Rewards®](#). Up-to-date information can be found on our website www.ncicdp.org or on Facebook (*search Early Educator Certification*).
- Certification documents education levels for families who use early care and education services, for employers, for facility licensure, and more.
- Certification provides a centralized source of workforce data to bring efficiencies to workforce education review currently being conducted by many organizations and agencies in a variety of ways.

Voices from the Field

“As a director I plan to use this as an interviewing tool. Having this will show that a perspective employee cares enough to go that extra mile towards her profession.”

Help spread the word & grow EEC Rewards!

If you support the professional development of Early Educators:

- Include an article on EEC in newsletters and emails.
- Post an EEC Flyer on bulletin boards in child care centers, colleges, partnership and R&Rs.
- Link to the Institute and EEC on your website.
- Post EEC updates on your agency's Facebook page and/or blog.
- Hold "application parties" and offer to submit EEC applications for all attendees.
- Ask a local news reporter to write a story about certified Early Educators in your area.
- Include a list of certified Early Educators in the local/regional newspapers (with permission).
- Offer incentives to child care facilities whose entire staff is certified.
- Celebrate certified Early Educators at scheduled events.
- Tie EEC to quality improvement/maintenance efforts.
- Contact friends and businesses in your community and ask for their participation in the EEC Rewards program (<http://ncicdp.org/certification-licensure/eec-rewards/>).
- Ask your agency's Board for their help in building community-based EEC Rewards.

Voices from the Field

"I appreciate the opportunity to be recognized as an Early Childhood Professional. It is a very rewarding career and this certification shows the people around me that I have strived to do my best."

If you teach a continuing education session, workshop, or college course:

- Share EEC materials with students in your workshops and classes.
- Require your students to complete the EEC application upon course completion.
- Require going to Institute website as part of the course.
- Tell your students to share information with their peers.

If you work directly with Early Educators:

- Take EEC materials directly to child care facilities.
- Share the Institute website and EEC Facebook page during site visits.
- Send emails to the directors/owners of licensed child care facilities.
- Encourage directors to write a parent newsletter article about EEC.
- Offer to submit EEC paperwork for providers.
- Encourage providers to frame and hang their EEC certificate by their classrooms.
- Take pictures of providers with their certificates and post them to the EEC Facebook page.
- Share local and state EEC Rewards with provider community.

Voices from the Field

"I am glad to be a part of EEC! I am looking forward to experiencing all the benefits that come along with being a member of this professional organization. I am also looking forward to helping the organization grow if possible."