

Workforce Supports & Pathways



Governor's Office of
Early Childhood Development

PDG B-5 Projects: Sharing Best Practices & Professional Development for the ECEC Workforce

- Early Childhood Credential Completion Cohort Grant (IBHE)
- ECE Competency-based B.A. Program (NLU)
- Family Specialist Credential (INCCRRA)
- Infant Toddler Competency Project (INCCRRA)
- Gateways New & Renewal Credential Fees (INCCRRA)
- Education Reimbursements - Debt Relief (INCCRRA)
- Gateways Scholarship Program (INCCRRA)
- ECE Level 5 to PEL Pathway (INCCRRA)
- Prior Learning Assessment Articulation/Transfer Planning (INCCRRA)

Early Childhood Credential Completion Cohort Grant (IBHE)

- Create and implement four early childhood education and care (ECEC) cohorts for educator candidates lasting up to two years in length, including tailored supports to ensure persistence and credential/degree attainment.
- The target audience for cohort participants will be adults working in early childhood education and care settings, including centers, homes, and schools.
- Cohorts will be designed to support attainment of additional credentials along the early childhood career pathway, with particular focus on supporting educators in attaining one or more of the following: moving from a Gateways ECE Credential Level 5 to a Professional Educator License; a Child Development Associate Credential to a Gateways ECE Credential Level 2, 3, or 4; a Gateways Infant-Toddler Credential Level 4 or 5; or a Gateways bilingual/ESL credential.

ECE Competency-based B.A. Program (NLU)

- Support the tuition and fees to provide high-quality, innovative, cohort-based accelerated ECE B.A. program leading to the Illinois Professional Educator License (PEL) with an ECE endorsement and the Gateways Level 5 ECE and Infant Toddler Credentials.
- This program will prioritize the under-paid incumbent early care and education workforce as well as individuals of color.
- Recruit, enroll and support 50 students for the ECE competency pilot.
- Support students with application process, including FAFSA and securing transcripts.
- Tuition and fees will be paid for 50 students to enroll in the pilot at National Louis University.

Family Specialist Credential (INCCRRA)

- A minimum of five (potentially five to eight) higher education institutions will align their programs to become entitled for the Gateways to Opportunity Family Specialist Credential (FSC).
- Target outreach toward institutions, both two-year and four-year, that have programs with coursework and programs for the workforce that provides “family support”.
- Funding will be utilized to provide stipends to faculty for release time needed to complete the Gateways FSC Entitled Application and to gain approvals within their institutional hierarchy.
- [Family Specialist Credential - Gateways to Opportunity \(ilgateways.com\)](http://ilgateways.com)

Infant Toddler Competency Project (INCCRRA)

- A consortium of faculty from Illinois higher education institutions selected through an RFP process will work collaboratively to build out curriculum into discrete modules using the Illinois Gateways Infant Toddler Credential (early childhood teacher preparation) competencies as the basis.
- This work will ensure a cohesive statewide pathways for the workforce.
- Each competency will utilize the assessment infrastructure and existing rubrics developed through previous Illinois collaborative work.
- To ensure and expand student access, this modularization work will incorporate innovative technology approaches, flexible learning modalities, and integrate opportunities for assessment of prior learning.
- A team of Infant Toddler experts, invited from the Illinois Faculty Fellows group, will actively participate in the review cycle and revision process to strengthen design.
- Work in 2021 will form the basis for piloting of the modularized coursework in 2022 at partnering higher education institutions.

Gateways New & Renewal Credential Fees (INCCRRA)

- INCCRRA will offer funding opportunities to the Illinois early care and education workforce by waiving the \$65 Gateways to Opportunity® Credential new and renewal application fee.
- The waiver will be allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis for new and renewal for the credential applications received by INCCRRA for the Gateways ECE, Infant Toddler, Illinois Director, Family Child Care, Family Specialist, and/or Technical Assistance Credentials.
- This universal access, provided by PDG B-5 funding, will help mitigate the significant \$65 application fee barrier for our under-paid early care and education workforce.

Education Reimbursements - Debt Relief (INCCRRA)

- Direct to provider education reimbursements.
- Provide a maximum education reimbursement of \$600.
- Debts can pose a barrier to individuals enrolling or continuing with education at Illinois higher education institutions.
- This program activity will supply a modest reimbursement to support providers as they attempt to overcome barriers.
- Funds will be targeted to supporting providers currently enrolled or barred from enrollment at an accredited Illinois higher education institution.
- [Education Reimbursement - Gateways to Opportunity \(ilgateways.com\)](http://ilgateways.com)

Gateways Scholarship Program (INCCRRA)

- The Gateways Scholarship Program will pay a portion of tuition for eligible professionals working in early childhood education and care who want to earn college credit, credentials, or degrees.
- Eligible participants include those pursuing coursework leading to a Professional Educator Licensure (PEL) with an Early Childhood endorsement, at 4-year accredited institutions in Illinois.
- Allocate no more than 15 semester hours or 23 quarter hours of support per person to their participating Illinois institution.
- [Scholarship - Gateways to Opportunity \(ilgateways.com\)](http://ilgateways.com)

ECE Level 5 to PEL Pathway (INCCRRA)

- Partner with four-year institution faculty who have been offering unique, individualized pathways to the workforce holding an ECE Credential Level 5 toward PEL attainment on a state model pathway which will increase transparency and access for the workforce.
- Discussion will focus on identified gaps in educational content between the ECE Credential Level 5 and PEL (excluding Gen Eds, EdTPA, and Content Test).
- Options for a state model will be identified, with agreement on a shared model. The shared model will be further refined for institution agreement and implementation by partnering institutions in this discussion.
- Potential development of competencies that could be utilized as the “pathway model” will be supported.
- This structure could be used as a statewide pathway model so that the workforce holding an ECE Credential Level 5 adds a “prescribed set of courses” (similar to an endorsement) to gain a PEL.
- [ECE Credential Levels 2-6 - Gateways to Opportunity \(ilgateways.com\)](http://ilgateways.com)

Prior Learning Assessment Articulation/Transfer Planning (INCCRRA)

- Statewide agreement on use of the Illinois Gateways ECE Credential competencies as the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) structure and specific agreement on identified competencies (e.g. ECE Level 2) to utilize.
- Illinois higher education institutions with an interest in offering PLA with consistency throughout the State will be invited to join in facilitated discussions about creating a PLA structure.
- Institutions who partner in this work will receive a stipend to buy out faculty time and to support related costs to ensure project completion by 12.30.2021.
- National partners such as Competency Based Education Network (CBEN) may be included, and experts from institutions who currently offer PLA will be brought in to guide conversations.

Contact Information

Zach Allen

Workforce Policy Coordinator

Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD)

160 North LaSalle Street, Ste N-100 | Chicago, IL 60601

Cell (217) 280-3560

Zachary.L.Allen@illinois.gov