Accessing Higher Education: Pathways & Models

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spring into action

@IAFC_Cares #SIACConf18
The crux of quality in early childhood education lies squarely in the interactions that transpire between teachers and children (Phillips, Austin, and Whitebrook, 2016)
What impacts the ‘quality’ of teacher child interaction?

Competencies of the teacher (what the teacher knows and is able to do)

- Informed by the science of children’s health, development and learning
- Requires increases in formal education and credential attainment

Socio-cultural continuity between teachers and children

- Potential to promote better attachment
- Potential to increase family engagement
Illinois i2I team

Project Theory of Change

Qualifications
Create a coherent, competency-based, unified credentialing system for early childhood educators through regulatory change

Pathways
Create “user centered” pathways to help current workforce attain credentials & attract new professionals

Outcome
Diverse, well-qualified early childhood workforce
Why Qualifications based on competencies?

**What:** Specific, measurable, observable behaviors that reflect knowledge, skills and dispositions and distinguishing levels of professional practice within a standard-based assessment system.

**Provides:** A structure for coherence across multiple systems.

**Creates:** Opportunities for more seamless, coherent, user-centered pathways across IHEs and professional development systems.
# Illinois Early Childhood Educator Preparation Pathway

**Stephanie A. Bernett and Janet N. Helt**

## Gateways ECE Credentials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Additional Postsecondary Education</th>
<th>Preparation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 5</strong></td>
<td>Lead Teacher (Level 5)</td>
<td>Completion of additional ECE coursework, supervised experience, and possible specialization in Infant/Toddler, ESL/Bilingual, Early Childhood Special Education.</td>
<td>Prepares competent early childhood classroom lead teachers with leadership and advocacy knowledge and skills, and possible educator licensure through ISBE.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Level 4</strong></td>
<td>Teacher (Level 4)</td>
<td>Completion of general education, 3 additional hours of ECE, and child development practicum</td>
<td>Prepares competent early childhood classroom teachers with foundational knowledge and skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Level 3</strong></td>
<td>Entry-Level Teacher (Level 3)</td>
<td>Completion of 1 hour each of English, math, and general education</td>
<td>Prepares competent entry-level early childhood classroom teachers with basic knowledge and skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Level 2</strong></td>
<td>Assistant Teacher (Level 2)</td>
<td>Completion of 2 additional hours</td>
<td>Prepares competent early childhood assistant teachers with foundational knowledge and skills.</td>
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<td><strong>Level 1</strong></td>
<td>A series of basic trainings on health, safety, and other topics aligned with the Illinois Department of Human Services requirements that may be used to supplement high school education.</td>
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*Gateways to Opportunity*
http://www.ilgateways.com


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**Further Graduate Education and Gateways Level 6**

**Entry to Employment**

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Credit for assistance with competency-based pathway to Diane Christanson, feathers by Emily, Barry Lahti, and Wendy Merkle, faculty consultants. Illinois ECE Technical Assistance Project. 2011 – 16.
Program: UIC ECE Alternative Certification Program

- Partnership between Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Community Partnership Program (CPP) and UIC College of Education
- Certified nearly 100 teachers across seven cohorts in seven years
“Alternative” Programing

Admissions: Focus on student strengths, particularly cultural competence and perseverance

Practicum: “On the job” support for the whole center

Advising: Based on principles of reflective supervision – regularity, collaboration and reflection
BA degree: Human Development and Learning

- Flexible options for transfer course to program domain rather than course to course
- Earn Il Gateways credentials in ECE and/or school age & youth development
- Clear, viable pathway to M.Ed and teacher licensure with multiple endorsements
- Evening classes and online options
Parent Pathway: Chicago Commons Project

➢ Dual purpose: Support parents and provide pipeline of teachers of and from the community

➢ Provides “meaningful” supports to students (e.g. site-based course work, specialized advising, 100% tuition and fees, child care, supported classroom experiences in center)

➢ Alignment with necessary credentials for employment (e.g. Headstart CDA, Ill gateways credential, six ECE credit hours)

➢ Focused on college-level coursework and credential attainment
Next steps: Competency-based Education

- Competency-based education (CBE) is focused on actual student learning, and the application of that learning, rather than time spent in class/on material.

- Learners’ progress is measured when they demonstrate their competence through a system of rigorous assessments, meaning they prove they have mastered the knowledge and skills, required for a particular competency or area of study.