



# Program of Study Guide: **Early Childhood Education - DRAFT**

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Comprehensive guidelines and course standards  
for the Early Childhood Education

Office of College and Career Pathways

July 2025

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## Purpose

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**The purpose of this document is to communicate the required Career and Technical Education (CTE) academic standards for the Early Childhood Education Program of Study. The academic standards in this document are theoretical and performance based. The standards contain content from multiple state departments of education, the Council for Professional Recognition, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and have been reviewed and vetted by members of the Maryland business and industry community.**

In addition to academic standards, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has incorporated into this document Labor Market Information (LMI) definitions and explanations for the Program of Study; program aligned Industry Recognized Credentials; and Work-Based Learning resources and requirements by course level.

This document is intended for use by educational administrators and practitioners. A similar document is available for each state-approved CTE Program of Study.

## Standards Sources

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Early Childhood Education and Child Development Associate (CDA) standards are based on a variety of research-backed sources, best practices, and national frameworks that guide effective early childhood education. The following sources provide a rigorous foundation for the CDA and Early Childhood Education standards, ensuring that they are well-rounded, research-driven, and aligned with national expectations and young learners' unique needs.

Here are the primary sources that these standards draw from:

1. **Research in Child Development and Early Learning**

- A. **Source:** Harvard Center on the Developing Child; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)
- B. **Purpose:** Research in developmental psychology, neuroscience, and early learning studies provides insights into how young children learn and develop best. Key areas include social-emotional learning, cognitive development, language acquisition, and physical development.
- C. **Relevance:** This research underpins the standards for early childhood education, informing best practices that support the growth of essential developmental skills. These findings have shaped benchmarks in social, cognitive, and physical domains within the CDA and early learning standards.
- D. **Access:** Harvard Center on the Developing Child: <https://developingchild.harvard.edu>; NICHD: <https://www.nichd.nih.gov>

2. **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**

- A. **Source:** National Association for the Education of Young Children
- B. **Purpose:** Research in developmental psychology, neuroscience, and early learning studies provides insights into how young children learn and develop best. Key areas include social-emotional learning, cognitive development, language acquisition, and physical development.
- C. **Relevance:** This research underpins the standards for early childhood education, informing best practices that support the growth of essential developmental skills. These findings have shaped benchmarks in social, cognitive, and physical domains within the CDA and early learning standards.
- D. **Access:** Harvard Center on the Developing Child: <https://developingchild.harvard.edu>; NICHD: <https://www.nichd.nih.gov>

### 3. Council for Professional Recognition

- A. Source:** National Association for the Education of Young Children
- B. Purpose:** Research in developmental psychology, neuroscience, and early learning studies provides insights into how young children learn and develop best. Key areas include social-emotional learning, cognitive development, language acquisition, and physical development.
- C. Relevance:** This research underpins the standards for early childhood education, informing best practices that support the growth of essential developmental skills. These findings have shaped benchmarks in social, cognitive, and physical domains within the CDA and early learning standards.
- D. Access:** Harvard Center on the Developing Child: <https://developingchild.harvard.edu>; NICHD: <https://www.nichd.nih.gov>

### 4. National Early Learning Standards and Frameworks

- A. Source:** Office of Head Start, Common Core State Standards Initiative
- B. Purpose:**
  - 1. **Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF):** Sets expectations for children's development from birth to age five, focusing on domains like social and emotional development, language and literacy, cognition, and approaches to learning.
  - 2. **Common Core State Standards (CCSS):** Although not specific to early childhood, CCSS informs early literacy and numeracy expectations, supporting readiness for primary education.
- C. Relevance:** The ELOF and CCSS provide baseline developmental and academic expectations, aligning early childhood programs with national standards in readiness for continued education.
- D. Access:** Head Start ELOF: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness/article/head-start-early-learning-outcomes-framework>; CCSS: <http://www.corestandards.org>

### 5. State-Specific Early Learning Standards

- A. Source:** Various state education departments
- B. Purpose:** States create early learning and pre-kindergarten standards to align local programs with national expectations while accommodating regional needs and community goals.
- C. Relevance:** These state-specific standards support the CDA by incorporating NAEYC, Head Start, and other research-based frameworks, ensuring flexibility for community needs.
- D. Access:** State-specific information available through each state's Department of Education website.

### 6. Professional and Ethical Guidelines

- A. Source:** NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct
- B. Purpose:** The NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct provides an ethical framework for early childhood educators, covering professional behavior, confidentiality, and children's rights.
- C. Relevance:** These guidelines are foundational to the CDA's standards for professionalism and ethical practice, setting expectations for integrity and respect in early childhood education.
- D. Access:** NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct: <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/ethical-conduct>

## Course Descriptions

Course Level	Course Information	Description
Required Core: Course 1	Early Childhood Education I SCED: <XX> Grades: 9-12 Prerequisite: None Credit: 1	Early Childhood Education I introduces students to the fundamentals of early childhood development and education, emphasizing the role of caregivers in fostering safe, healthy, and developmentally appropriate environments for young children. Students will explore the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional developmental stages of children from birth to age five. They will also learn basic observation techniques, foundational principles of positive guidance, and strategies for building effective relationships with families. This course prepares students with introductory knowledge and skills for the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, focusing on professional ethics and initial portfolio development.
Required Core: Course 2	Early Childhood Education > II SCED: <XX> Grades: 10-12 Prerequisite: Early Childhood Education I Credit: 1	Early Childhood Education II builds on the foundational knowledge and skills acquired in Early Childhood Education I, focusing on practical applications and furthering students' understanding of child development and effective teaching strategies. In this course, students apply their knowledge to create developmentally appropriate activities, enhance observation and assessment skills, and develop family engagement techniques. Students will continue building their CDA professional portfolio, documenting competencies in areas such as safety, health, and communication. Through experiential learning, students gain deeper insights into managing classroom environments, guiding behavior, and maintaining professionalism in diverse early childhood settings.



Course Level	Course Information	Description
Optional Flex: Course 1	Early Childhood Education III SCED: <XX> Grades: 11-12 Prerequisite: Early Childhood Education I and II Credit: 1	Early Childhood Education III advances students' skills in early childhood education, with a focus on completing the majority of the CDA credential requirements. Students will refine their abilities in creating age-appropriate curriculum, conducting detailed child observations, and documenting their experiences. Through supervised work in early childhood settings, students will accumulate hours toward the CDA's experiential requirements, deepening their practical experience and confidence. This course emphasizes professionalism, effective communication, and inclusive practices, supporting students in developing a strong CDA portfolio that demonstrates their competencies in supporting children's developmental needs and building family relationships.
Optional Flex: Course 2	Career Connected Learning I SCED: <XX> Grades: 11-12 Prerequisite: Early Childhood Education I and II Credit: 1	This flexible, work-based learning course introduces students to real-world applications of classroom knowledge and technical skills through on-the-job experiences and reflective practice. Students engage in career exploration, skill development, and professional networking by participating in youth apprenticeships, registered apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, internships, capstone projects, or other approved career-connected opportunities. Variable credit (1–3) accommodates the required on-the-job training hours and related instruction. By integrating industry standards, employability skills, and personalized learning goals, Career Connected Learning I equips students to make informed career decisions, develop a professional portfolio, and build a strong foundation for success in postsecondary education, training, or the workforce.

Course Level	Course Information	Description
Optional Flex: Course 3	Career Connected Learning II  SCED: <XX> Grades: 11-12 Prerequisite: Career Connected Learning I Credit: 1	Building on the foundational experiences of Career Connected Learning I, this advanced work-based learning course provides students with deeper on-the-job practice, leadership opportunities, and refined career exploration. Students continue to enhance their technical and professional skills, expanding their industry networks and aligning personal goals with evolving career interests. Variable credit (1–3) remains aligned with the required training hours and related instruction. Through elevated responsibilities and skill application, Career Connected Learning II prepares students to confidently transition into higher-level postsecondary programs, apprenticeships, or the workforce.

***Dual Enrollment and Career Connected Learning Experiences Must be Aligned to the CTE Core.***

## Industry-Recognized Credentials and Work-Based Learning

**Industry-Recognized Credentials – The standards in this document are aligned to the following certifications:**

**By the end of Early Childhood Education III:** Child Development Associate and/or ParaPro

**CDA Credential Requirements:**

1. **Education** - Complete 120 hours of formal early childhood education training. This training covers the growth and development of children and includes at least 10 hours in each of the eight CDA subject areas.
2. **Work Experience** – Obtain 480 hours of professional work experience in early childhood settings.
3. **Professional Portfolio** – Prepare a CDA professional portfolio that includes all required documentation.

**Optional Credentials (via the Flex Course options):** 90 Clock Hour Certificate – not an IRC and/or Apprenticeship

### Work-Based Learning Examples and Resources

Early Childhood Education I and II: <b>Career Awareness</b>	Early Childhood Education III: <b>Career Preparation</b>	<b>Flex Courses: Career Preparation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry Visits</li> <li>• Guest Speakers</li> <li>• Participation in Career and Technical Student Organizations</li> <li>• Postsecondary Visits – Program Specific Site Tours</li> <li>• Mock Interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of Career Awareness plus the following:</li> <li>• Job Shadow</li> <li>• Paid and Unpaid Internships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paid and Unpaid Internships</li> <li>• Apprenticeships</li> </ul>

## Labor Market Information: Definitions and Data

Labor market information (LMI) plays a crucial role in shaping Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs by providing insights into industry demands, employment trends, and skills gaps. This data helps education leaders assess the viability of existing programs and identify opportunities for new offerings. By aligning CTE programs with real-time labor market needs, schools can better prepare students for in-demand careers and ensure that resources are effectively utilized to support pathways that lead to high-quality, sustainable employment.

### Standard Occupational Code (SOC) and Aligned Industry:

Indicator	Definition	Pathway Labor Market Data
<b>High Wage<sup>1</sup></b>	Those occupations that have a 25th percentile wage equal to or greater than the most recent MIT Living Wage Index for one adult in the state of Maryland, and/or leads to a position that pays at least the median hourly or annual wage for the DC-VA-MD-WV Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). <i>Note: A 25th percentile hourly wage of \$24.74 or greater is required to meet this definition.</i>	<b>Standard Occupational Code:</b> 25-2011: Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education in Maryland <b>Hourly Wage/Annual Salary:</b> 25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile: \$17.27 / \$35,921.60 50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile: \$18.43 / \$38,334.40 75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile: \$22.61 / \$47,028.80
<b>High Skill</b>	Those occupations located within the DC-VA-MD-WV Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) with the following education or training requirements: completion of an apprenticeship program; completion of an industry-recognized certification or credential; associate's degree, bachelor's degree, or higher.	<b>Typical Entry-Level Education:</b> Education and training requirements vary based on settings and state regulations. Preschool teachers typically need at least an associate's degree. Some states require preschool teachers to obtain the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential offered by the <a href="#">Council for Professional Recognition</a> . Obtaining the CDA credential requires coursework, experience in the field, a written exam, and observation of the candidate working with children. The CDA credential must be renewed every 3 years.
<b>In-Demand</b>	Annual growth plus replacement, across all Maryland occupations, is <u>405</u> openings between 2024-2029.	<b>Annual Openings</b> 956

<sup>1</sup> Living Wage Calculator: <https://livingwage.mit.edu/states/24>

**Labor Market Information Data Source**

Lightcast Q4 2024 Data Set. Lightcast occupation employment data are based on final Lightcast industry data and final Lightcast staffing patterns. Wage estimates are based on Occupational Employment Statistics (QCEW and Non-QCEW Employees classes of worker) and the American Community Survey (Self-Employed and Extended Proprietors). Occupational wage estimates are also affected by county-level Lightcast earnings by industry. Foundational data for the state of Maryland is collected and reported by the Maryland Department of Labor.

**Methodology for High Wage Calculations**

To combine labor market data across multiple Standard Occupational Classifications (SOCs), a weighted average approach was used to ensure accurate representation of the marketplace. Median wages for each SOC were weighted based on their respective employment levels, reflecting the relative demand for each occupation. This method ensures that occupations with higher employment contribute proportionately to the overall wage calculation. Additionally, job openings from all relevant SOC's were summed to determine the total projected demand. For example, if Mechanical Engineers account for 67% of total employment and Electrical Engineers for 33%, their respective wages are weighted accordingly, and job openings are aggregated to provide a comprehensive view of labor market opportunities. This approach delivers a balanced and accurate representation of both wages and employment demand for the program.

**Methodology for In-Demand Calculations**

The baseline for annual job openings, taking into account new positions and replacement positions, was determined by taking the average of all annual job openings between 2024 and 2029 across all 797 career sectors at the 5-digit SOC code level. For the 2024-2029 period, average job openings (growth + replacement) is 405.

## Course Standards: Early Childhood Education I

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- 1. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS.** This course is recommended for students in Grades 9-12, and there is no prerequisite.
- 2. INTRODUCTION**
  - A. Career and Technical Education (CTE) instruction provides content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant technical knowledge and skills for students to further their education and succeed in current or emerging professions.
  - B. The Education Career Cluster spans careers aimed at fostering learning from early childhood to adulthood, including teaching, instructional design, counseling services, community engagement, learner support, and educator training. This Cluster emphasizes quality education standards and lifelong learning, preparing individuals for success through all life stages by nurturing knowledge, skills, and critical thinking and encouraging personal and societal growth in a constantly evolving world.
  - C. The Early Childhood Development CTE Program of Study emphasizes careers and educational pathways dedicated to nurturing the holistic growth of children from birth to 8 years old through education, care, and early intervention. Professionals in this field specialize in fostering physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development in early learners by applying proven and promising strategies for whole-child wellness.
  - D. Early Childhood Education I introduces students to the fundamentals of early childhood development and education, emphasizing the role of caregivers in fostering safe, healthy, and developmentally appropriate environments for young children. This course prepares students with introductory knowledge and skills for the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, focusing on professional ethics and initial portfolio development.
  - E. Students will participate in at least two Career-Connected Education and Work-Based Learning experiences in this course, which might include informational interviews or job shadowing relevant to the program of study.
  - F. Students are encouraged to participate in extended learning experiences through aligned Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs). CTSOs are a cocurricular requirement in the Carl D. Perkins Act, and alignment to CTSO activities is an expectation for CTE programs in the state of Maryland.

**3. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- A. **The student demonstrates the necessary skills for career development, maintenance of employability, and successful completion of course outcomes. The student is expected to:**
1. Identify and demonstrate positive work behaviors that enhance employability and job advancement, such as regular attendance, promptness, proper attire, maintenance of a clean and safe work environment, and pride in work.
  2. Demonstrate positive personal qualities such as flexibility, open-mindedness, initiative, active listening, and a willingness to learn.
  3. Employ effective reading, writing, and technical documentation skills.
  4. Solve problems using critical thinking techniques and structured troubleshooting methodologies.
  5. Demonstrate leadership skills and collaborate effectively as a team member.
  6. Implement safety procedures, including proper use of software and following privacy guidelines.
  7. Exhibit an understanding of legal and ethical responsibilities in the educational field, following copyright laws and regulations.
  8. Demonstrate time-management skills and the ability to prioritize tasks in a technical setting.
- B. **The student identifies various career pathways in the educational field. The student is expected to:**
1. Develop a career plan that includes the necessary education, certifications, job skills, and experience for specific roles in education.
  2. Create a professional resume and portfolio that reflect skills, projects, certifications, and recommendations.
  3. Demonstrate effective interview skills for roles in educational fields.
- C. **The student develops technology and digital literacy skills. The student is expected to:**
1. Use technology as a tool for research, organization, communication, and problem-solving.
  2. Use digital tools, including computers, mobile devices, collaboration platforms, and cloud services, to access, manage, and create information.
  3. Demonstrate proficiency in using emerging and industry-standard technologies.
  4. Understand ethical and legal considerations for technology use, including the principles of data protection, copyright, and responsible technology use.
- D. **The student integrates core academic skills into educational practices. The student is expected to:**
1. Demonstrate the use of clear communication techniques, both written and verbal, that are consistent with industry standards.
  2. Apply English concepts such as writing informative texts when documenting student progress, lesson plan development, and guardian communication letters.
  3. Use mathematical concepts for measurement and conversion (Fahrenheit vs. Celsius), ratios and proportions as well as fraction and decimal conversions.

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- E. **The student demonstrates the ability to establish and maintain a healthy, safe, and supportive learning environment. The student is expected to:**
1. Identify health and safety risks and apply preventive measures within an early childhood setting, such as choking hazards from small toys, allergen exposures, and unauthorized pick-ups.
  2. Create routines that promote children's health and hygiene, such as handwashing and healthy eating habits.
  3. Prepare and maintain a safe physical environment that meets children's developmental needs.
- F. **The student demonstrates an understanding of developmental milestones and supports physical and cognitive growth through engaging activities. The student is expected to:**
1. Organize activities that support fine and gross motor skills in a developmentally appropriate way.
  2. Introduce cognitive learning activities, including basic problem-solving and early literacy skills, tailored to young children's developmental stages.
  3. Use play-based learning strategies to stimulate exploration, curiosity, and critical thinking.
- G. **The student demonstrates skills in fostering social and emotional growth through positive guidance and responsive interactions. The student is expected to:**
1. Establish supportive relationships with children, responding to their needs with empathy and respect.
  2. Model and reinforce positive behaviors, such as sharing and cooperation, to support a respectful classroom environment.
  3. Develop strategies for conflict resolution that help children learn self-regulation and emotional expression.
- H. **The student demonstrates effective communication and collaboration skills with families to support children's development. The student is expected to:**
1. Communicate consistently and professionally with families—using varied modes (e-mail, phone, in-person, digital platforms)—to share individualized updates on progress, developmental milestones, and next steps.
  2. Adapt communication style, language, and tone to honor each family's preferences, cultural norms, and unique circumstances, demonstrating keen attention to detail and respect for confidentiality.
  3. Integrate families' cultural practices, languages, and knowledge into classroom routines, curriculum, and celebrations to affirm every child's identity and sense of belonging.
  4. Create and facilitate meaningful family-engagement opportunities, such as classroom events, at-home learning activities, and community resource connections, that strengthen the home-school partnership.
  5. Participate in structured role-plays and mock conferences that simulate routine, sensitive, and potentially uncomfortable scenarios, using feedback and reflection to refine empathy, professionalism, and collaborative problem-solving skills.
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- I. **The student designs an inclusive, fully accessible classroom environment that enables every child—including those with functional or developmental needs—to explore, learn, and participate without barriers. The student is expected to:**
1. Evaluate and organize classroom layouts to ensure unobstructed mobility and equitable access to all materials, accommodating children who use mobility aids or have other physical considerations.
  2. Arrange learning centers, shelves, and seating at varied heights and orientations so children can independently reach, manipulate, and engage with resources.
  3. Select, adapt, or create materials (e.g., varied-grip manipulatives, tactile graphics, visual schedules) that address diverse sensory, motor, and cognitive needs.
  4. Model and promote respectful, inclusive language to (Add d foster a culture of acceptance.
  5. Provide peers and families with age-appropriate resources, literature, and discussion strategies that encourage understanding, empathy, and active support for children with functional or developmental needs.
- J. **The student demonstrates an understanding of diverse cultural backgrounds and integrates inclusive practices to support every child's unique identity. The student is expected to:**
1. Create classroom activities that respect and celebrate cultural differences, helping children develop a sense of identity and respect for others.
  2. Apply culturally responsive teaching practices, adjusting interactions and activities to meet the needs of all children.
  3. Collaborate with families to learn about their cultural values and integrate them into classroom routines and celebrations.
- K. **The student demonstrates the ability to integrate age-appropriate technology to support learning and documentation in early childhood education. The student is expected to:**
1. Select and use developmentally appropriate digital tools that enhance learning, such as educational apps or digital storybooks.
  2. Use technology for documenting children's progress and sharing it with families in accessible ways.
  3. Adhere to screen time guidelines such as COMAR regulations 13A.16.09.01C and NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP). Ensure technology use supports interactive and hands-on learning.
- L. **The student demonstrates commitment to personal growth and improvement through self-reflection and professional development. The student is expected to:**
1. Engage in self-assessment to identify strengths and areas for improvement in their teaching practice.
  2. Participate in professional development activities, workshops, or continuing education related to early childhood education.
  3. Seek feedback from mentors, supervisors, and peers to refine their practices.

## Course Standards: Early Childhood Education II

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1. **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS.** This course is recommended for students in Grades 10-12, and Early Childhood Education I is a prerequisite.
2. **INTRODUCTION**
  - A. Career and Technical Education (CTE) instruction provides content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant technical knowledge and skills for students to further their education and succeed in current or emerging professions.
  - B. The Education Career Cluster spans careers aimed at fostering learning from early childhood to adulthood, including teaching, instructional design, counseling services, community engagement, learner support, and educator training. This Cluster emphasizes quality education standards and lifelong learning, preparing individuals for success through all life stages by nurturing knowledge, skills, and critical thinking and encouraging personal and societal growth in a constantly evolving world.
  - C. The Early Childhood Development CTE Program of Study emphasizes careers and educational pathways dedicated to nurturing the holistic growth of children from birth to 8 years old through education, care, and early intervention. Professionals in this field specialize in fostering physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development in early learners by applying proven and promising strategies for whole-child wellness.
  - D. Early Childhood Education II builds on the foundational knowledge gained in Early Childhood Education I. Students will learn to design and implement engaging, developmentally appropriate activities that support the holistic development of children from birth to eight years old. Emphasis is placed on enhancing communication skills with families and stakeholders, utilizing assessments to inform instruction, and applying strategies for inclusive practices in diverse learning environments. Students will continue building their CDA professional portfolio, documenting competencies in areas such as safety, health, and communication.
  - E. Students will participate in at least two Career-Connected Education and Work-Based Learning experiences in this course, which might include informational interviews or job shadowing relevant to the program of study.
  - F. Students are encouraged to participate in extended learning experiences through aligned Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs). CTSOs are a cocurricular requirement in the Carl D. Perkins Act, and alignment to CTSO activities is an expectation for CTE programs in the state of Maryland.

**3. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- A. The student demonstrates the necessary skills for career development, maintenance of employability, and successful completion of course outcomes. The student is expected to:**
1. Identify and demonstrate positive work behaviors that enhance employability and job advancement, such as regular attendance, promptness, proper attire, maintenance of a clean and safe work environment, and pride in work.
  2. Demonstrate positive personal qualities such as flexibility, open-mindedness, initiative, active listening, and a willingness to learn.
  3. Employ effective reading, writing, and technical documentation skills.
  4. Solve problems using critical thinking techniques and structured troubleshooting methodologies.
  5. Demonstrate leadership skills and collaborate effectively as a team member.
  6. Implement safety procedures, including proper use of software and following privacy guidelines.
  7. Exhibit an understanding of legal and ethical responsibilities in the educational field, following copyright laws and regulations.
  8. Demonstrate time-management skills and the ability to prioritize tasks in a technical setting.
- B. The student identifies various career pathways in the educational field. The student is expected to:**
1. Develop a career plan that includes the necessary education, certifications, job skills, and experience for specific roles in education.
  2. Create a professional resume and portfolio that reflect skills, projects, certifications, and recommendations.
  3. Demonstrate effective interview skills for roles in educational fields.
- C. The student develops technology and digital literacy skills. The student is expected to:**
1. Use technology as a tool for research, organization, communication, and problem-solving.
  2. Use digital tools, including computers, mobile devices, collaboration platforms, and cloud services, to access, manage, and create information.
  3. Demonstrate proficiency in using emerging and industry-standard technologies.
  4. Understand ethical and legal considerations for technology use, including the principles of data protection, copyright, and responsible technology use.
- D. The student integrates core academic skills into educational practices. The student is expected to:**
1. Demonstrate the use of clear communication techniques, both written and verbal, that are consistent with industry standards.
  2. Apply English concepts such as writing informative texts when documenting student progress, lesson plan development, and guardian communication letters.
  3. Use mathematical concepts for measurement and conversion (Fahrenheit vs. Celsius), ratios and proportions as well as fraction and decimal conversions.

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- E. **The student demonstrates proficiency in designing and implementing a developmentally appropriate curriculum that fosters children's learning and growth. The student is expected to:**
1. Plan curriculum activities that address the diverse needs, interests, and cultural backgrounds of young children and are aligned with age-appropriate milestones.
  2. Implement hands-on learning experiences that enhance children's language, literacy, math, and social-emotional skills.
  3. Continuously adapt curriculum plans based on observations, assessments, and children's responses.
- F. **The student demonstrates advanced skills in guiding young children's social and emotional growth. The student is expected to:**
1. Implement proactive, age-appropriate practices—such as calm-down corners, mindfulness routines, visual schedules, cooperative games, and peer-mediated problem-solving—to strengthen children's focus, self-regulation, and conflict-resolution skills.
  2. Model and scaffold empathy, respect, and self-advocacy by labeling emotions aloud, using social stories and role-plays (e.g., "I-feel/I-need" sentence stems), and providing specific positive reinforcement that builds self-confidence, identity awareness, and a sense of belonging in every child.
  3. Create and sustain an inclusive, culturally responsive classroom culture by integrating children's home languages and family traditions into lessons, curating anti-bias books and materials, and co-developing class agreements that honor individual differences while promoting a supportive group dynamic.
- G. **The student demonstrates professional behavior and ethical standards essential for working effectively with young children and families. The student is expected to:**
1. Adhere to confidentiality policies, safeguarding the privacy of children and their families.
  2. Participate in professional development activities to stay informed on best practices and current trends in early childhood education.
  3. Engage in reflective practices, consistently seeking feedback and striving for continuous improvement in their work.
- H. **The student demonstrates effective management skills necessary for maintaining a well-organized and structured classroom environment. The student is expected to:**
1. Organize classroom spaces to encourage both individual and group learning, balancing structured and free-choice periods.
  2. Establish predictable routines and schedules to support children's emotional security and engagement.
  3. Evaluate and adjust the classroom layout for accessibility, safety, and appeal, encouraging children's exploration and independence.
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- I. **The student demonstrates proficiency in assessing children's progress and using assessments to create individualized learning plans. The student is expected to:**
    - 1. Use informal and formal assessment tools to monitor children's growth and identify individual learning needs.
    - 2. Engage families in discussions about assessment results, collaboratively setting goals for children's development.
    - 3. Develop personalized learning plans informed by assessment data, tailoring instruction to support each child's progress.
  - J. **The student demonstrates ethical decision-making and upholds professional responsibilities in early childhood education. The student is expected to:**
    - 1. Adhere to ethical standards set by professional organizations (e.g., NAEYC) in their daily interactions and decisions.
    - 2. Maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive information about children and families.
    - 3. Navigate ethical dilemmas with professionalism, consulting mentors or resources as appropriate.
  - K. **The student builds collaborative partnerships with families to support children's learning and development. The student is expected to:**
    - 1. Implement strategies to involve families in classroom activities, fostering meaningful engagement.
    - 2. Provide families with developmentally appropriate resources for at-home learning.
    - 3. Maintain regular, clear communication with families, adapting methods to meet diverse family preferences.
  - L. **The student demonstrates leadership by contributing to program improvements and supporting colleagues. The student is expected to:**
    - 1. Actively participate in team meetings, offering insights for enhancing program quality.
    - 2. Provide mentorship or peer support to foster collaborative implementation of best practices.
    - 3. Contribute to initiatives like safety programs, parent workshops, or curriculum development projects, showing commitment to program-wide goals.

## Course Standards: Early Childhood Education III

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1. **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS.** This course is recommended for students in Grades 11-12, and Early Childhood Education I and II are prerequisites.
2. **INTRODUCTION**
  - A. Career and Technical Education (CTE) instruction provides content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant technical knowledge and skills for students to further their education and succeed in current or emerging professions.
  - B. The Education Career Cluster spans careers aimed at fostering learning from early childhood to adulthood, including teaching, instructional design, counseling services, community engagement, learner support, and educator training. This Cluster emphasizes quality education standards and lifelong learning, preparing individuals for success through all life stages by nurturing knowledge, skills, and critical thinking and encouraging personal and societal growth in a constantly evolving world.
  - C. The Early Childhood Development CTE Program of Study emphasizes careers and educational pathways dedicated to nurturing the holistic growth of children from birth to 8 years old through education, care, and early intervention. Professionals in this field specialize in fostering physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development in early learners by applying proven and promising strategies for whole-child wellness.
  - D. Early Childhood Education III advances students' skills in early childhood education, focusing on completing most of the CDA credential requirements. Students will refine their abilities to create age-appropriate curriculum, conduct detailed child observations, and document their experiences. Through supervised work in early childhood settings, students will accumulate hours toward the CDA's experiential requirements, deepening their practical experience and confidence. This course emphasizes professionalism, effective communication, and inclusive practices, supporting students in developing a strong CDA portfolio that demonstrates their competencies in supporting children's developmental needs and building family relationships.
  - E. Students will participate in at least two Career-Connected Education and Work-Based Learning experiences in this course, which might include informational interviews or job shadowing relevant to the program of study.
  - F. Students are encouraged to participate in extended learning experiences through aligned Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs). CTSOs are a co-curricular requirement in the Carl D. Perkins Act, and alignment to CTSO activities is an expectation for CTE programs in the state of Maryland.

### 3. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- A. **The student demonstrates the necessary skills for career development, maintenance of employability, and successful completion of course outcomes. The student is expected to:**
1. Identify and demonstrate positive work behaviors that enhance employability and job advancement, such as regular attendance, promptness, proper attire, maintenance of a clean and safe work environment, and pride in work.
  2. Demonstrate positive personal qualities such as flexibility, open-mindedness, initiative, active listening, and a willingness to learn.
  3. Employ effective reading, writing, and technical documentation skills.
  4. Solve problems using critical thinking techniques and structured troubleshooting methodologies.
  5. Demonstrate leadership skills and collaborate effectively as a team member.
  6. Implement safety procedures, including proper use of software and following privacy guidelines.
  7. Exhibit an understanding of legal and ethical responsibilities in the educational field, following copyright laws and regulations.
  8. Demonstrate time-management skills and the ability to prioritize tasks in a technical setting.
- B. **The student identifies various career pathways in the educational field. The student is expected to:**
1. Develop a career plan that includes the necessary education, certifications, job skills, and experience for specific roles in education.
  2. Create a professional resume and portfolio that reflect skills, projects, certifications, and recommendations.
  3. Demonstrate effective interview skills for roles in educational fields.
- C. **The student develops technology and digital literacy skills. The student is expected to:**
1. Use technology as a tool for research, organization, communication, and problem-solving.
  2. Use digital tools, including computers, mobile devices, collaboration platforms, and cloud services, to access, manage, and create information.
  3. Demonstrate proficiency in using emerging and industry-standard technologies.
  4. Understand ethical and legal considerations for technology use, including the principles of data protection, copyright, and responsible technology use.
- D. **The student integrates core academic skills into educational practices. The student is expected to:**
1. Demonstrate the use of clear communication techniques, both written and verbal, that are consistent with industry standards.
  2. Apply English concepts such as writing informative texts when documenting student progress, lesson plan development, and guardian communication letters.
  3. Use mathematical concepts for measurement and conversion (Fahrenheit vs. Celsius), ratios and proportions as well as fraction and decimal conversions.

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- E. **The student demonstrates the skills required to create a professional portfolio for the CDA credential, demonstrating initial mastery of professional documentation. The student is expected to:**
1. Compile documentation of professional work, including samples of student-created learning materials, completed lesson plans, and reflection logs, to begin assembling a CDA professional portfolio.
  2. Exhibit understanding of child development through detailed reflections and documented observations included in the CDA portfolio, covering cognitive, emotional, physical, and social domains.
  3. Develop reflective statements on learning experiences that illustrate competency in key CDA areas, including safety, health, and learning environment, for inclusion in the professional portfolio.
  4. Design and document age-appropriate, inclusive lesson plans that support children's developmental needs, providing evidence of applied skills in instructional planning.
- F. **The student demonstrates professionalism and ethical practices during supervised experiential hours, logging hours and experiences to meet CDA requirements. The student is expected to:**
1. Complete supervised experiential hours in early childhood settings, documenting hours and learning outcomes, and demonstrating effective application of learned skills.
  2. Demonstrate professional conduct in work experiences, completing a log of hours, setting-specific responsibilities, and reflections to track growth and areas for improvement.
  3. Practice and document communication with families and colleagues to support children's educational experiences, compiling examples of family engagement materials and communication strategies for the portfolio.



## Course Standards: Career Connected Learning I and II

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**Career connected learning is an educational approach that integrates classroom instruction with real-world experiences, enabling high school students to explore potential careers and develop relevant skills before graduation. By participating in work-based learning opportunities—such as apprenticeships, internships, capstone projects, and school-based enterprises—students apply academic concepts in authentic settings, gain practical industry knowledge, and build professional networks. This hands-on engagement helps students connect their studies to future career paths, strengthens their problem-solving and communication skills, and supports a smoother transition into college, vocational programs, or the workforce.**

All Career and Technical Education Programs of Study include aspects of work-based learning, and almost all of the programs include two Career Connected Learning (CCL) courses. Below are the course descriptions for CCL I and CCL II. [The CCL standards can be found via this link:](#)