

**Caswell County Partnership for Children**  
**2023-2024 Smart Start Professional Development Incentive Program**  
**Guidelines: Criteria & Policies**



*The Caswell County Partnership for Children (CCPFC) will offer Professional Development Incentives to early childhood professionals based on their education level & years of continuous service at the same facility, following the criteria and policies included below. The goals of this program are to reduce turnover and increase the education and compensation for Caswell County's early childhood workforce.*

**Criteria:**

To be eligible for a Professional Development Incentive (Incentive), the early childhood professional (provider) must meet ALL of the following requirements:

1. Work in a Division of Child Development & Early Education (**DCDEE**) **regulated** facility in **Caswell** County.
2. Work with children between the ages of **birth to 5 years**.
3. Work at least **20 hours** per week.
4. Be employed in the **same** child care facility or Pre-K site, at a minimum, from October 2, 2023 – present.
5. Work in a capacity of **administrative or direct teaching staff** or **staff responsible for curriculum and/or lesson plans**. This includes, but is not limited to, those individuals who spend a majority of their day working with children (e.g. lead teachers, teacher assistants, directors and/or family child care home providers). Attach a job description for any other position to be considered.
6. Have a minimum education of 1) high school diploma or GED **and** 2) NC Early Childhood Credentials (EDU 111 and EDU 112 or EDU 119; completed as of May 17, 2024).
7. Have at least an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education (ECE) **OR** if you do not have the Associates yet, be working towards an Associates Degree in ECE.

**A. Provide a Professional Development Plan IF you do not have at least an Associate Degree in ECE.**

Providers should work with their college or university advisor to develop their plan for completing the Associate Degree in ECE. The Professional Development Plan should outline the courses you plan to take to complete your degree in Early Childhood Education. The Plan should include the following:

- a. The date you met with your college or university advisor
- b. The advisor's name
- c. The Certificate, Diploma or Degree you are working to complete
- d. The courses you plan to take and which semester(s) you plan to enroll in the courses
- e. The date you expect to earn your degree

*If you do not have your Associate Degree in ECE, we recommend that you begin working with your college or university advisor in the Fall semester to develop your professional development plan.*

**B. Complete College Credits IF you do not have at least an Associate Degree in ECE.** Providers are required to **complete at least one college course** with a **grade "B-" or better in a birth to five focused course** between May 14, 2023 and May 17, 2024 (may include Summer '23, Fall '23, Winter '24 and/or Spring '24 semesters). **Do not include a course that you have received an incentive for in the past.**

8. **Early Educator Certificate (EEC) is REQUIRED!** EEC is an acknowledgement of an individual's verified level of educational achievement, based on a standardized scale. The simple, fee-based EEC Application process includes the submission of an application & official transcripts to The North Carolina Institute for Child Development Professionals. For information & the application, contact The North Carolina Institute for Child Development Professionals at [info@ncicdp.org](mailto:info@ncicdp.org) or [919-942-7442](tel:919-942-7442) or visit [ncicdp.org/certification-licensure/eec-overview/](https://ncicdp.org/certification-licensure/eec-overview/). *The application process may take several weeks. If you do not have your EEC, we recommend that you submit your application prior to January 1, 2024. We will accept expired EEC for the purpose of establishing education level.*
9. **Submit your completed, signed original application, required documentation, including the CCPFC Request for Exception Form, if applicable, to CCPFC between Monday, April 1 and Friday, May 17, 2024. If the application is missing information or incomplete, CCPFC may contact you to schedule an appointment to provide the missing or incomplete information.**

**CCPFC provides group and one on one information sessions to any interested provider. If this is your first time applying for the Incentive, we recommend that you contact us prior to January 1, 2024 to schedule a session to help you get started on completing the application and obtaining all necessary documents.**

For providers who demonstrate that they meet the eligibility criteria and submit a completed application by the due date, with supporting documentation, including exception requests, **incentives will be awarded** based on the following **components**:

- A. Education level
- B. Length of continuous employment at same facility
- C. College credits

## **Policies:**

CCPFC will follow these policies when reviewing Professional Development Incentive applications and making awards:

1. When requested, CCPFC reserves the right to make exceptions to requirements if proper documentation is provided. **All exception requests must be submitted in writing, using the CCPFC Request for Exception Form, and turned in with the application by the due date. All exceptions should be included on one form. CCPFC will consider exceptions such as:**

- The provider does not have the requested documentation to support his or her hire date and pay rate
- The provider does not work the minimum of 20 hours **EACH** week
- The provider cannot provide a copy of their High School Diploma or GED
- The provider has taken an alternate course to the NC Early Childhood Credentials
- The provider completes a course not defined in Component C below.

Note: If you received an exception as part of your approved FY 2022-2023 application for any of the following requirements, you will not need to request another exception:

- Hire Date
- High School Diploma/GED
- NC Early Childhood Credentials

2. The funding for Professional Development Incentives is contingent upon the approval and availability of Smart Start funding provided through the CCPFC.
3. Incentive details included here are **ESTIMATES**; **final funding levels will be adjusted according to available funding. Each incentive component is subject to be capped. Incentives are provided for college credits not previously rewarded.**
4. **If the provider's employment status changes (*i.e. leaves the facility, hours are reduced, no longer works with children birth – 5 years*), the provider is required to notify CCPFC in writing of the change when it occurs.**
5. **Awards will only be made to providers employed continuously at the same facility who meet all eligibility criteria at the time of funding disbursement.** If it is determined that the provider is not employed at the child care facility at the time of funding disbursement or that the provider does not meet the eligibility criteria, the provider will be required to return the awarded funds to CCPFC by a date established by CCPFC.
6. Each provider is responsible for submitting a complete application no later than May 17, 2024.
7. Providers can only participate in one salary supplement program. If a provider is participating in the AWARD\$ program, the provider is not eligible for the Professional Development Incentive.
8. Funding awards will be made no later than June 30, 2024.

**Incentive Details:**

The Incentives include three components (education level, longevity and continuing education towards an ECE degree). By completing an application, providers will be considered for each component.

**Component A. Existing Education Level**

**Component A.1.** Honors the level of education already achieved based on the Early Educator Certification (EEC) levels.

*\*Providers that do not have at least an Associate Degree in ECE must have completed at least one college course with a grade of 'B-' or better between May 14, 2023 and May 17, 2024 in a birth to five-focused course as described below.*

FY 2022-2023 Awards:	EEC Level	Education Required
\$4,350	14*	Doctorate Degree plus or including at least 18 birth to five focused semester hours <i>*Includes "bump" in the EEC scale based on CCPFC priorities</i>
\$3,625	13	Doctorate Degree plus or including at least 18 birth to five focused semester hours
\$2,950	12	Doctorate Degree plus or including at least 12 birth to five focused semester hours <i>or</i> Master's Degree plus or including at least 18 birth to five focused semester hours
\$2,350	11	Master's Degree plus or including at least 12 birth to five focused semester hours <i>or</i> Bachelor's Degree plus or including at least 18 birth to five focused semester hours
\$1,800	10	Bachelor's Degree plus or including at least 12 semester hours in birth to five focused coursework <i>or</i> 90 semester hours toward a Bachelor's Degree including at least 18 birth to five focused semester hours
\$1,375	9	Doctorate Degree plus or including at least 6 birth to five focused semester hours <i>or</i> Master's Degree plus or including at least 6 birth to five focused semester hours <i>or</i> Bachelor's Degree plus or including at least 6 birth to five focused semester hours
\$1,050	8	Associate Degree plus or including at least 24 birth to five focused semester hours <i>or</i> Doctorate Degree (less than 6 birth to five focused semester hours) <i>or</i> Master's Degree (less than 6 birth to five focused semester hours) <i>or</i> Bachelor's Degree (less than 6 birth to five focused semester hours)
\$800	7	Associate Degree plus or including at least 18 birth to five focused semester hours <i>or</i> 57 semester hours of general education including at least 24 birth to five focused semester hours
\$600	6	Associate Degree plus or including at least 12 birth to five focused semester hours <i>or</i> 45 semester hours of general education including at least 18 birth to five focused semester hours
\$450	5	Associate Degree plus or including at least 6 birth to five focused semester hours <i>or</i> 70 semester hours of general education including at least 6 birth to five focused semester hours
\$300	4	36 semester hours of general education including at least 12 birth to five focused semester hours <i>or</i> Associate Degree (less than 6 birth to five focused semester hours) <i>or</i> 70 semester hours of general education (less than 6 birth to five focused semester hours)
\$200	3	24 semester hours of general education including at least 6 birth to five focused semester hours
\$100	2	18 semester hours of general education including at least 4 birth to five focused semester hours <i>or</i> Early Childhood Certificate <i>or</i> CDA Credential (Child Development Associate Credential) earned for at least 12 semester hours <i>or</i> 12 birth to five focused semester hours
\$50	1	6 birth to five focused semester hours

**Component A.2.** This component ONLY applies to Family Child Care Home Providers or Center Directors. Honors any **Business Administration** education providers may have obtained by providing a 'bump' up the EEC scale levels based on the following:

+1 Level for Certificate or Diploma	+2 Levels for Associate Degree	+3 Levels for Bachelor's Degree
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**Component A.3.** Honors Infant and Toddler Direct Teaching Staff by providing a 'bump' up 2 Levels of the EEC scale levels. For providers to qualify for this component, they must be working with children ages birth – 35 months and have checked this box on the application.

**Component A.4.** Honors Family Child Care Home Providers by providing a 'bump' up the EEC scale levels based on the following:

+1 Level for 3 Stars	+2 Levels for 4 Stars	+3 Levels for 5 Stars
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**Component B.** Longevity: Honors continuous years of service at the same facility as of March 31, 2024. FY 2022-2023 awards ranged from \$100 for only 6 months up to \$250 per year for 26 years of service. *(Only ½ amounts awarded if no Associate Degree in ECE!)*

**Component C.** Continuing Education: Rewards college credits earned in an approved course leading towards an ECE/CD degree. Successfully complete at least one course with a grade of "B-" or better in an approved college level course:

- in a program leading to a degree in Early Childhood Education or Child Development
- in courses designated as UNC Core Hour courses and pre-curriculum remedial courses leading to ECE/CD degree
- at a community college, or two or four year college or university
- *for Family Child Care Home Providers/Center Directors only:* in a program leading to degree in Business Administration or related area

*Grades below "B-", withdrawals, and incomplete classes will not be considered for this Incentive. For any other course to be considered, provider must submit a request using the CCPFC Request for Exception Form along with the completed application. CCPFC reserves the right to deny an Incentive for a course it does not consider as described above.*

In FY 2022-2023 providers earned \$150 per college credit hour for each qualifying course successfully completed.

***Amounts provided here are actual amounts from last fiscal year, only estimates for this year.***

Questions? Call, email or visit **Caswell County Partnership for Children**  
336-694-1538, [ccp4child@esinc.net](mailto:ccp4child@esinc.net), 1084 NC Hwy 86 North in Yanceyville

***The Professional Development Incentives are brought to you by the  
Caswell County Partnership for Children through Smart Start funding.***

**Caswell County Partnership for Children**  
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