

# Pennsylvania School-Age Professional Credential FAQ



## 1. What is the *Pennsylvania School-Age Professional Credential*?

The *Pennsylvania School-Age Professional Credential* is a competency based program modeled after the Child Development Associate (CDA). It provides individuals working in school-age programs the opportunity to examine their work in relation to the Pennsylvania School-Age Care Competency Standards.

## 2. Who administers the credential?

It is administered by the PA Key.

## 3. What are the eligibility requirements?

Individuals interested in obtaining the credential must:

- Be working in a Department of Public Welfare facility working with school-age children (5-12 years-old);
- Have a minimum of a high school diploma or GED;
- Have completed a Professional Development Record (PDR);
- Have worked at least 480 hours with school-age children in the past 5 years

## 4. What are the steps in the process?

- Request credential materials packet from the PA Key at 800-284-6031
- Begin taking coursework equivalent to 120 hours
- Form and work with a team consisting of an advisor and parent
- Complete coursework and documentation collection including observations, family questionnaires, Portfolio and Resource File
- Have an observational assessment, interview and review of documentation

## 5. Who is administering the course work?

To find out about who is administering the School-Age Professional Credential coursework in your region, contact your regional school-age project. An on-line options are also available through colleges in the Northeast Region and Northwest Region.

### **Central Region**

570-601-9736  
800-346-3020

### **Northeast Region**

610-437-6000 ext 2328  
800-528-7222

### **Northwest Region**

800-860-2281 ext 132

### **South Central**

717-854-3539 ext 250  
800-864-4925 ext 250

### **Southeast Region**

610- 617-4550 (opt. 4)

### **Southwest Region**

412-421-3889

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## 6. How do I find out more about it?

Contact your regional school-age project at the numbers listed above or visit the PA Key website at <http://www.pakeys.org/profdev/CredentialPrograms.aspx>

## 7. How do I apply for the credential?

You apply for the credential by using the Assessment Visit Request form in the credential materials packet. This form is submitted with payment after you have completed your course work, and documentation collection.

## 8. How much is the assessment fee?

The assessment fee will be waived for the first 120 individuals (from across the state) meeting all credential requirements. Individuals will be responsible for paying a \$60.00 non-refundable processing fee.

## 9. How is the credential recognized in Keystone STARS?

For individuals working in school-age programs the *Pennsylvania School-Age Professional Credential* is equivalent to the CDA.

## 10. How do I request credential materials and what are they?

Credential materials can be requested by contacting the PA Key at 800-284-6031. When an individual requests a credential packet, they will receive all information needed for each member of their team. This includes the materials for the Candidate as well as the materials for the Advisor and Parent/ Community Representative. These materials include:

### Candidate Materials:

- Assessment System and Competency Standards
- Competency Standards
- Candidate Instructions
- Assessment Visit Request Form

### Advisor Materials:

- Advisor Instructions
- Competency Standards
- Observation Instrument (for Advisor/Assessor)

### Parent/Community Representative materials:

- Parent/Community Representative Instructions
- Competency Standards
- Parent/Community Representative Observation Instrument

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### **11. Will the credential course work articulate to college credit?**

Regional School-Age Projects are working with their Regional Key Professional Development Committees to have the credential recognized by local colleges for articulation. The rigor of the credential requirements were written to appeal to the assessment requirements of colleges. The credential does articulate for credit at several colleges.

### **12. How does the Department of Welfare certification recognize the credential?**

The School-Age regulatory language reads *“A Pennsylvania School-Age Professional Credential is equivalent to 9 credit hours from an accredited college or university in elementary education or child development and 1 year experience with children.”*

### **13. Is there a self-study option for the credential?**

Although not recommended, the credential may be obtained through a self-study option. The individual wishing to obtain the credential in this manner will need to document 120 hours of course work covering the credential competencies. They will also need to complete all other documentation collection requirements and meet eligibility requirements.

### **14. How do I find an Advisor?**

Your regional school-age project will be able to help you find an Advisor. They are responsible for arranging Advisor Professional Development Institutes as needed in each region. You can also contact the PA Key.