



Director Credential

Application for Higher Education Institutions

in early education

Introduction

Administering an early childhood or school-age program is a complex job that requires extensive skills, competencies, and knowledge of how children grow and learn; an understanding of child development, program administration, personnel supervision, leadership and job-related experience. The Pennsylvania Director Credential is designed as a standard to measure and validate the abilities and competencies of directors and administrators to manage high quality early childhood and school-age programs. Additionally, it represents the level of personal and professional accomplishments of directors and administrators, their professional contributions through demonstrated leadership, and active engagement in professional endeavors beyond the scope of the daily operation of a program. Leadership abilities, program administration, and fiscal management of early childhood and school-age directors and administrators are measured through the core knowledge competencies aligned to this credential. There are eight core knowledge areas and seventy-one (71) competencies within the Director Credential. Upon completion of a PA Keys approved Director Credential program, Directors and Administrators will meet the Keystone STARS standards for STAR 3 and 4 centers and will be able to apply their knowledge of these core knowledge competencies to their professional work as a leader and manager in an early childhood program.

Additional information on criteria related to the administrative and management requirements of a director or administrator may be found in the document *Business Course Framework*. This guide can be used as a supplemental tool when aligning director credential courses with the Core Knowledge Competencies listed below.

Application Requirements

The following identifies the set of criteria and specific requirements that have been established for the *Pennsylvania Director Credential*. Your *PA Director Credential* program application must meet these requirements to be reviewed:

- 1. Name of granting Higher Education Institution**

The granting institution can be either a 2-year college or 4-year college/university with or without graduate programs. Provide the division/department within which the credential program is housed, include the name and contact information for the individual who will be responsible for answering questions about the application.

- 2. Name of credential program**

Pennsylvania Director Credential must be the name of the program.

- 3. Coursework/Credits**

The *PA Director Credential* must be offered as a credit program. Nine (9) credits are required to earn the credential.

- 4. Articulation**

While there is no requirement that the *PA Director Credential* articulate to a degree

program, it is desirable to have an articulation agreement(s) in place. Indicate if your credential can articulate into a degree program. If so, provide the specifics regarding your articulation agreements for the credential program (i.e., where they exist, requirements that must be met for your program to articulate into a degree program).

5. Prerequisites

Specify if prerequisites are required for a student to enroll in the program of study. Also, indicate if there are additional experience requirements for students to be awarded the credential by the Pennsylvania Key.

6. Credit for prior learning

Indicate if your institution has a mechanism in place to give credit for prior learning from another college/institution approved by the PA key to offer the Director Credential program. If so, please describe how credit can be earned and specify any limitations as to the number of credits that a student may earn for prior learning.

7. Method(s) of instruction

The methods of instruction for the *PA Director Credential* must adhere to the principles of adult learning, specifically with regard to assessing prior learning, placing a priority on solving authentic work-based problems; providing a balance between theory and practice; and incorporating both classroom and experiential learning opportunities; current research; best current professional practice. Describe the methods of instruction that are incorporated into the credential program.

8. Instructional modality

Indicate if the instruction will be delivered through extended studies programs, the classroom, distance education (e.g., Internet-based coursework, independent video-based learning units), on-site, or some combination thereof.

9. Faculty

Specify the qualifications and experience of faculty working in the credential program, which are required by your institution. Faculty is required to have PQAS approval as a certified instructor, specialty discipline instructor, or a faculty instructor. If a faculty members PQAS number has expired, they may not continue to instruct until the renewal application has been approved by the Pennsylvania Key. At least annually, or as changes occur, you must submit a list of approved PQAS instructors teaching the Director Credential courses for your institution.

10. Core Knowledge Competencies

Assignments, requirements, and assessments must be aligned with the Director Credential core knowledge competencies listed and applicable to the role and responsibilities of an early childhood program director. Identify which knowledge area, competency group, and specific competencies align with the course objectives.

11. Methods of measuring learning outcomes

Specify the methods of measuring the learning outcomes and the point(s) in time when outcomes are measured (e.g., at the end of each course). Methods may include both informal (e.g., group exercises, question and answer sessions, and discussion) and formal (authentic assessment techniques such as observation and evaluation of performance, portfolios, or objective testing). Be clear and explicit about the criteria and methods used to determine if a student has successfully completed the credential program. Please submit all relevant syllabi as your source of evidence.

12. Cost

There is no specific cap in the costs for the *PA Director Credential*; however, there is a cap in what the Pennsylvania Key will pay. Please refer to www.pakeys.org for details. Click on Career Development and Financial Assistance to find the Rising STARS Tuition Assistance information. Specify the cost of completing the credential program for a student; include a breakdown of all costs, including course tuition, fees, books and materials, etc. Please explain how you will notify students of the cost difference and what resources you will make available to the students to make up the difference (United Way, Regional Key, etc.).

13. Opportunities for student scholarships

There is no specific requirement that your *PA Director Credential* program have scholarships available for students. However, having scholarship opportunities available is desirable. Please specify other available scholarship opportunities.

14. Applying for the PA Director Credential after courses are completed

PA Program Director Credential programs must have a system in place to inform students who successfully complete a program of study on the process for applying to the Pennsylvania Key to receive the credential. Individuals should apply to Pennsylvania Key for the credential once they have completed the program of study and have the requisite degree requirements and experience. Indicate how your institution communicates this information to students enrolled in your Director Credential program.

15. Course curriculum aligns to the PA Core Knowledge Competencies for Early Childhood and School-Age Professionals

The Director Credential program should be offered as a set of three courses selected from a menu of pre-approved courses. Identify how your course curriculum and other learning experiences meet the knowledge requirements aligned with the PA Core Knowledge Competencies for Early Childhood and School-Age Professionals. An online version of the CKC can be obtained at www.pakeys.org or you can order hard copies at www.childcorepublishing.com.

Pennsylvania Core Knowledge Competencies

Applicants completing requirements for PA Director Credential will be able to:

Knowledge Area 1: Child Growth & Development	
D1.1 C2	Adopt programmatic systems to support reciprocal communication strategies with families about child development including individual children’s abilities, interests and needs.
D1.4 C2	Employ knowledge of brain development to facilitate children’s learning, socio-emotional development and self-regulation within the program.
D1.4 C3	Examine strategies/practices for ways to continuously improve instructional practices to support children’s learning, socio-emotional development and self-regulation.
D1.5 C2	Model effective strategies for staff in the selection of appropriate groupings of children staff assignments, and transitions based on children’s age, development, culture, language, and ability differences that align with research-based practices.
D1.5 C3	Develop and evaluate program curriculum and environments using the PA Learning Standards as a framework based on the developmental needs of the children in your care.
D1.6 C3	Analyze the strategies which support evidence-based child development practices through program scheduling and adoption, adaptation, or creation of responsive curriculum and play in alignment with PA Learning Standards.
D1.7 C2	Develop program schedules and implement curriculum to ensure responsiveness to individual needs of children and families.
D1.8 C2	Monitor the implementation of instructional practices that support the development of communication skills, problem solving, and creativity.
D1.10 C2	Model effective strategies for staff in the selection of appropriate groupings of children staff assignments, and transitions based on children’s age, development, culture, language, and ability differences that align with research-based practices.

Knowledge Area 2: The Environment, Curriculum, and Content	
Learning Environment:	
D2.1 C2	Illustrate to teaching staff flexible, creative ways to support learning outcomes through learning environments that are responsive to all children’s ages, abilities, interests, home culture, and language and that are linked to the PA Learning Standards.
D2.2 C2	Demonstrate to staff ways to intentionally use appropriate strategies to meet individual learning outcomes based on a child’s needs (biology, age, temperament, and physical needs).

Curriculum:	
D2.7 C2	Provide opportunities for teaching staff to implement the programmatic elements of the curriculum to ensure the content is adapted to meet individualized needs as defined by the PA Learning Standards and children's Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs).
D2.7 C3	Build additional opportunities for teaching staff to deepen their knowledge of working with children with differing abilities and to expand their implementation of the intervention strategies and content goals in children's Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs).
D2.10 C2	Document and communicate the ways in which curriculum supports play and enhances children's approaches to learning, social and emotional development, and academic subjects.
Instruction:	
D2.11 C2	Collaborate with staff to develop the program's curriculum philosophy that includes all domains of development (emotional, social, language, cognitive, physical, and creative).
D2.12 C2	Guide staff in using observation and assessment data to select individual learning goals for children which include play experiences and reflect children's ages, abilities, ability differences, culture, language, developmental levels, interests, and capacities.
D2.14 C2	Adopt intentional, evidence-based frameworks to teaching strategies or modify existing ones based on the PA Learning Standards, targeting children's approaches to learning through play, social interactions, creativity, initiative, persistence, problem solving, and decision making.
D2.15 C3	Create supportive systems for ongoing evaluation and continuous quality improvements to the instructional practices, curriculum, and learning environment.

Knowledge Area 3: Families in Society	
D3.1C2	Adopt practices that involve, sustain, and strengthen respectful and reciprocal relationships with families to support children's development and learning.
D3.4C2	Provide information to families on appropriate social, mental health, educational wellness, and medical service.
D3.5C2	Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of divorce, abuse, unemployment, deployment, poverty, inclusion, etc. on child development and family systems to provide quality services.
D3.5C3	Create and utilize multiple, strength-based strategies to educate families and staff with challenging issues such as divorce, abuse, unemployment, deployment, poverty, inclusion, etc.
D3.6 C2	Communicate and document the importance of involving families in the program and implement a variety of methods to achieve inclusion of families within program operations and practices.
D3.7 C3	Evaluate ways that diverse family cultures enrich program offerings, materials, staff-child groupings, school readiness, and seamless transition strategies.
D3.9 C3	Design and apply multiple strategies to involve families in the program,

	including, but not limited to conferences, parent handbooks, group activities, and community events.
Knowledge Area 4: Child Assessment	
Comprehensive Assessment System	
D4.3 C3	Analyze the degree to which assessment information is used and managed in appropriate ways by program staff.
D4.5 C2	Support staff in implementing the results of their staff evaluation to make changes to instructional techniques and to identify professional development goals.
D4.7 C2	Support teaching staff in the use of appropriate methods of child assessment in line with PA Learning Standards and Standards Aligned Systems (SAS) and Pennsylvania required child assessment systems.
D4.11 C3	Design and implement strategies to build partnerships with families for effective child assessment.
D4.12 C3	Evaluate program's processes for reviewing of child assessment data to recognize when further evaluation by another professional is indicated.

Knowledge Area 5: Communication	
D5.1 C3	Design and implement an evidence-based framework for responsive internal and external communication with diverse families, staff, children, schools, and communities that addresses various communication styles, elaborates resources, recognizes barriers, uses current technology, and models cooperative communication for mediating challenging situations.
D5.3 C2	Apply effective techniques and resources to communicate and negotiate across potential culture and linguistic barriers (e.g. verbal and print messages, translations into primary family language, and signing and/or assistive devices as appropriate).
D5.7 C3	Analyze communication components aimed at supporting, extending, and scaffolding communication to determine outcomes for each child in the program.
D5.9 C3	Develop a framework that provides opportunities for open communication, team discussion, and decision-making with colleagues and families.

Knowledge Area 6: Professionalism and Leadership	
Professionalism	
D6.1 C2	Demonstrate ethical/professional behavior, set standards and expectations for staff and families and act as a role model.
D6.2 C3	Evaluate program staff current teaching-learning skills, roles, and strategies and cooperatively design ways to support their professional development, extend their learning and enhance their teaching-learning effectiveness to support their career development.
D6.3 C2	Apply multiple strategies to promote professionalism among staff, including participatory management style that values knowledge and experience of all

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	staff members.
D6.3 C3	Create and maintain a professional, inclusive, collaborative, and trusting environment in the workplace.
D6.5 C2	Apply knowledge of credentialing, teacher certification, and induction when mentoring and advising program staff on their professional growth and development.
D6.5 C3	Justify staff use of the PA Professional Development Record, referencing the Career Lattice, to advance professional development.
Ethics	
D6.6 C2	Use available local, state and national resources that establish regulatory and professional standards for quality programs.
D6.8 C2	Demonstrate the ability to design and use action research that can be used to improve individual or program quality, inform practice, remediate problems, and discover solutions for challenging situations and/or continuous quality improvement (CQI) efforts.
Advocacy and Leadership	
D6.10 C2	Communicate support in a variety of ways for the children and families being served, as well as the early childhood community at large.
D6.10 C3	Create a program environment that advocates for children, families, and the early childhood community to appropriate stakeholders and decision makers.
D6.11 C1	Describe a vision and mission for high quality program for children and families.
D6.11 C3	Design with stakeholders and support staff and implement the program vision and mission through interpretation and communication of the program's philosophy to advocate for children, families, staff, and board (if applicable) to meet strategic goals.
D6.12 C2	Assign mentors/coaches as appropriate to support staffs' continuous quality improvement within the program.

Knowledge Area 7: Health, Safety, and Nutrition	
D7.1 C2	Implement an evidenced-based framework to ensure compliance with current health, safety, and nutrition standards.
Health	
D7.3C3	Develop, implement and assess program policies to ensure compliance with local, state, and national health/safety standards, and incorporate health and fitness activities in daily curriculum for every child.
D7.4 C3	Assess current practices for effectiveness and conformity with national health and safety standards for early learning and school-age programs and institute corrective actions where needed, including determining the need for obtaining, and using the help of outside expertise.
D7.5 C3	Develop a plan to infuse community health resource information into various areas of the program to deepen knowledge and more fully support children, families, and staff needs.
D7.6 C2	Develop and implement procedures to ensure appropriate exchanges and maintenance of staff and child health information.

Safety	
D7.8 C3	Evaluate policies and procedures for continuous monitoring of the environment, both indoor and outdoor, for health and safety hazards.
D7.12 C3	Evaluate program menu and food policies to ensure nutritional value of snacks and meals, and are inclusive of children’s special nutritional needs and family preferences.

Knowledge Area 8: Program Organization and Leadership	
Program Organization	
D8.1C2	Categorize program operations based on the program’s vision, mission, and strategic plan.
D8.2C3	Evaluate the business plan’s effectiveness in making decisions critical to program operations and continuous quality improvement of program and make changes as required.
D8.3 C3	Evaluate and revise (as necessary) risk management policies and procedures in compliance with required guidelines.
D8.5C3	Analyze and monitor an annual program budget based on needs and resources and adjust accordingly to ensure a balance between revenue and expenses.
D8.6 C2	Implement appropriate methods for accurate monitoring of income and expenses.
D8.7 C2	Write a financial plan based upon needs and resources to support programmatic goals.
D8.8C3	Evaluate and modify policy and procedure documents that are compliant with local/ state/national standards, and best practices.
Personnel	
D8.9 C2	Implement and follow employment policies that reflect standard labor and employment laws.
D8.10 C2	Develop and implement an employee handbook.
D8.11C2	Employ multiple strategies for staff hiring, developing, motivating, retaining, and appropriate separation that are in compliance with applicable state and federal hiring/labor laws, anti-discrimination laws, tax codes, contracts liability, and ADA.
D8.11C3	Develop, review, and revise job descriptions, staff policies, and performance review procedures as necessary.
D8.12C3	Supervise, evaluate, and share staff performance based on job descriptions, staff/program policies, Teacher Effectiveness Rubrics, and cooperatively create individual continuous quality improvement plans using the core competencies.
D8.13 C3	Monitor, assess, and facilitate the professional development of staff in line with program and individual needs.
D8.14C2	Convene and facilitate staff meetings to support program priorities and promote positive group dynamics.
Technology and Marketing:	

