



Dedicated to the Future

The Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC) is making Illinois a better place for professionals who work with children and their families.

Who They Are

Gateways to Opportunity is Illinois' statewide professional development system for early care and education, school-age and youth development practitioners. It was created by the Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC) - a group of highly qualified practitioners, educators and advocates from around the state. PDAC's overall strategy is to improve the stability of the early care and education, school-age and youth development workforce through increased professional development and improved opportunities for career advancement. They are accomplishing this through their dedicated efforts and involvement within six PDAC committees.

What They Believe

The partners involved in this collaborative effort are truly committed to developing an integrated statewide professional development system. Their goal is to promote professionalism within the early care and education, school-age and youth fields and provide opportunities and compensation for professionals to further education and training.

How They Are Helping

Gateways to Opportunity is designed to:

- Encourage professionals to obtain more education and training
- Provide recognition to professionals with specialized training and different levels of education
- Unify the different aspects of the early care and education, school-age and youth development fields by building consistency among settings
- Ensure that early care and education, school-age and youth development professionals have online access to a central resource for career opportunities and the education and training required to advance within the field
- Help ease barriers to completing college coursework
- Make it possible for transfer students to receive credit for their coursework
- Meet the growing demand for certified teachers
- Promote the most efficient use of professional development resources

