

# Family Specialist Credential Pilot

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## Final Report

April 2016





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# History of the Gateways Family Specialist Credential

The development of a Credential for the workforce providing direct services to families began in 2007 when a committed group of advocates and professionals formed the Quality Practice Partnership (QPP) in Chicago. QPP members—representing a variety of entities, and agencies—recognized that an important component of quality services for children and families were front-line family support workers. QPP identified a critical need for a strengths-based, research-centered, competency-based Credential for professionals that serve Illinois families. Other states, such as New York through Cornell University, had laid groundwork in the development and implementation of a Family Development Credential. In Illinois, QPP specifically wanted to create a Credential that would develop the knowledge, skills, and competencies of family support workers to: (1) be in a strength-based relationship with families (2) support families in developing the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to develop to their full potential (3) strengthen the bonds between parent and child, and (4) work with families to set achievable goals and become leaders within their own families and communities.

It was during the first meeting in 2007 that QPP learned of other strength-based training and credentialing efforts in Illinois. However, it was noted while there was a “placeholder” in the Gateways to Opportunity® Illinois Professional Development System Strategic Plan for a “family and community credential,” it did not include comprehensive trainings or educational competencies for front-line family workers. The QPP continued their efforts to develop a proposal to move the “family worker credential” development forward in Illinois. QPP began exploratory discussions regarding the possibilities of including the proposed Credential within the Gateways system.

In 2009, key members of the QPP Committee initiated discussions with the Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC) and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Bureau of Child Care and Development regarding the need to develop a Credential for the workforce directly serving families. Of key significance was the language in Administrative Rule granting IDHS the authority to award Gateways Credentials to practitioners who serve children, youth, and families that was in legislative process. The language was intentionally drafted by IDHS to include families, thereby providing the critical opportunity to develop and implement a family worker type of Credential within Gateways to Opportunity. This administrative language was finalized and approved January 2010; effective retroactively to July 2009 (Appendix A). The PDAC Strategic plan was revised in 2009 to strengthen inclusion of families in the vision and mission statement.

In October 2010, with encouragement from IDHS, and Shannon Christian, Director of the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD), QPP partnered with INCCRRA to convene a statewide Family Worker Credential meeting in Bloomington, Illinois. The purpose was twofold: to affirm the need and interest in a family worker Credential and to identify and engage state stakeholders to support the proposed work. Key state agencies in attendance who agreed upon the need for a family worker Credential, and committed time and/or other resources to assist in the development, included:

- Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies (IACAA)
- Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (IDCFS)
- Illinois Department of Human Services, Bureau of Child Care and Development (IDHS)
- Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)

- Illinois Head Start Association (IHSA)
- Illinois Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO)
- Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)

Additional key entities participating in the kickoff meeting who committed time/support to future development of a Family Worker Credential included:

- Baby TALK
- Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies—various CCR&R's throughout the state
- Local Health Departments from across the state including All Our Kids Network (AOK)
- Ounce of Prevention Fund
- Provider Connections—Early Intervention
- Strengthening Families Illinois

Following the launch meeting, the QPP team expanded its membership and redesign as the Quality Practice Partnership Credential Committee reporting to the Qualifications, Credentials and Pathways Committee of the Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC). Co-chairs Dr. Jamilah R. Jor'dan—Associate Professor and Interim Associate Dean at Chicago State University and JoAnne Kelley—Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Healthy Child Care Illinois Coordinator were identified and a Credential timeline was developed (Appendix B). The QPP Credential Committee established the following goals:

- Guide the development of a Gateways to Opportunity Family Worker Credential utilizing best practices and current research
- Conduct a nation-wide scan of other state's Credentials to inform development in Illinois
- Conduct cross-walks for various related curricula and content to inform core knowledge development
- Ascertain target audience(s) for the Credential based on employer survey data and other key information/data resources
- Identify the core knowledge and competencies for the Credential to meet needs in Illinois
- Ensure alignment with the seven Gateways to Opportunity Content Areas and other Credential requirements as established by PDAC
- Represent the "family agenda" on other PDAC Committees

In 2011, Diane Scruggs—Executive Director of Healthy Families Chicago joined Dr. Jamilah R. Jor'dan as co-chair of the QPP Credential Committee.

Key employers that would benefit from the development of a Family Worker Credential were identified. Information gathered at the launch meeting and from state employment data showed that a significant numbers of professionals whose primary function was to provide support to families held these roles:

- Head Start Family Support/Family Specialist Workers
- Healthy Families Family Support Workers
- IDCFS Family Support Workers
- Mental Health Family Resource Workers
- IDHS Family Case Managers
- Family Community Specialist working in Community Action Agencies

In July 2011, Gina Ruther of the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) finalized and signed approval for the development of a Family Worker Credential to become part of Gateways to Opportunity, Illinois Professional Development System, administered by INCCRRA (Appendix C). The Gateways Family Worker Credential would need to meet parameters and requirements as set forth by PDAC, convened and coordinated by INCCRRA, to ensure consistency in Credentials embedded within the state professional development (PD) system. Leadership would be provided by the QPP and integrated within the existing PDAC structure.

In October 2011 the QPP Credential Committee voted to change the Credential name to “Family Specialist.” At the same meeting, consensus was gained on this vision statement:

**“The Family Specialist Credential validates family systems knowledge, skills, and competencies required for direct service staff who work in relationship with families to promote optimal child and family outcomes.”**

## Credential Development

In May 2012, the QPP Credential Committee conducted a statewide survey directed toward employers of family workers. The survey was designed to capture key information needed to inform Credential development, ensure employer needs were met, and to identify target audiences for the Credential. Thirty-seven (37) employers responded to the survey. Employers indicated their staff worked directly with families in roles such as Family Support Specialist, Family Resource Specialist, Family Case Manager, Parent Educator, Family Advocates, and Social Workers. The QPP Credential Committee decided these roles would be used to guide the development of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions embedded within this Credential (Appendix D).

Key Survey findings:

- 75% of employers with family workers feel there is a need for development of competency-based family support/family development training for staff.
- 67% of employers with family workers feel there is a need to develop statewide agreement regarding the knowledge, skills and dispositions required for staff who works directly with families.
- 67% of employers with family workers would be willing to share agency job descriptions and/or salary ranges for each job title of staff who works directly with families.

During 2012, the QPP Credential Committee reviewed national and state relationship-based models for direct service to families. Credentials from Connecticut, North Carolina, and New York (Cornell University) were reviewed and evaluated. The following models were investigated to inform the development of a Credential in Illinois:

- Baby TALK
- Competency Goals for Head Start Staff Working with Families
- Family and Community Development Specialist
- Family Development Specialist Credential
- Head Start Family Worker Credentialing
- Home Visitor Task Force
- Maternal Infant Home Visiting Program
- Parent Community Engagement Framework

- Providing Access to Help (PATH) Crisis Agency
- Relationship Based Competencies Framework

Information and evidence from these Credentials and models were used to develop the education and training requirements for the Gateways Family Specialist Credential.

At the end of 2012, the QPP Credential Committee formally changed its name to the Family Specialist Credential (FSC) Committee. By spring 2013, much needed funding was provided through the Early Childhood Comprehensive Services (ECCS) via Ounce of Prevention Fund in partnership with IDHS, to secure a consultant to develop the Family Specialist Credential Content Areas, core knowledge, and competencies. Dr. Jeanette McCollum—Professor Emeritus Special Education Illinois at Urbana-Champaign—was hired as a consultant in May 2013. Her task was to draft Content Area descriptors, performance area descriptors, and knowledge, skills, and dispositions for the Family Specialist Credential (FSC) using the foundation developed by the Family Specialist Credential Committee (formerly the QPP Credential Committee). The descriptors for each of the seven Gateways Family Specialist Credential Content Areas (Appendix E) were based on current research and best practices developed under the guidance of the FSC Committee.

Gateways Credentials may have additional Content Areas. The FSC Committee considered adding Advocacy & Policy, Program & Agency Governance & Function, and Family Systems as potential areas. However, after in-depth review and further research, the FSC Committee decided that no additional Content Areas were needed. From the Gateways Family Specialist Credential Seven Content Area descriptors, corresponding performance areas, knowledge, skills, and dispositions including benchmarks or competencies were developed (Appendix F).

These benchmarks or competencies guide faculty at both two- and four-year higher education institutions with developing coursework that aligns with Credential requirements. Upon approval by the FSC Committee on September 19, 2013, the FSC Content Areas and Benchmarks/Competencies were reviewed and approved by the PDAC Qualifications and Credentials (QC) Committee on October 2, 2013 followed by the PDAC Steering Committee on October 16, 2013 to implement a pilot of the proposed Gateways Family Specialist Credential.

July 1, 2013 Illinois received a supplemental funding award for its Race to the Top (RTT) Early Learning Challenge Grant awarded in Round Two. The original RTT grant, awarded in December 2012, was for the timeframe of January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2016. The original grant application indicated four types of projects and programs including:

- Preparing students for college and career
- Building state capacity and support
- Building a workforce of highly effective teachers and leaders
- Building data systems that measure student success

This supplemental funding award, beginning July 2013, was a significant catalyst to the advancement of workforce Credentials in Illinois. The Governor's Office of Early Childhood (OECD) worked with the Illinois Early Learning Council (ELC) to gain approval to utilize a portion of the supplemental funding to support

the development, statewide piloting and implementation of three new Gateways Credentials for the early care and education workforce:

- Family Specialist Credential
- Family Child Care Credential
- Technical Assistance Credential

The Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development contracted with INCCRRA to develop and pilot these new Gateways Credentials. The RTT supplemental funding was a critical resource to advancing the Family Specialist Credential, including costs for the statewide pilot and implementation. The FSC Committee reviewed and adjusted the Credential development timeline in summer 2013 to ensure the state’s Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant outcomes would be attained.

From fall 2013 through spring 2014, the FSC Committee began developing the FSC Framework. The FSC Framework was designed using State and National certifications and other state’s Credentials as guidance and existing Gateways Credential Frameworks as proven models. The FSC Framework includes education and training in the FSC Content Areas, “family-related” work experience and professional contributions (Appendix G). A final draft of the FSC Framework was approved by the FSC Committee on May 22, 2014; reviewed and approved by the PDAC Qualifications and Credentials (QC) Committee on June 4, 2014 followed by approval from the PDAC Steering on June 13, 2014 for a FSC pilot.

## Gateways Credential Pilot Guidelines

Gateways Credential Pilots are conducted using these guidelines:

- Pilot must test both ways of achieving a Gateways Credential (Direct Route and Entitled Route as outlined in Administrative Rule—Section 50.730):
  - Direct Route: Gateways Credential pilots will include professionals working in the field who submit an application, college transcripts and portfolio which includes verified work experience and professional contributions.
  - Entitled Route: Gateways Credential pilots will include Higher Education Institutions who design programs/coursework to meet Credential requirements. Individuals who take these courses can apply to receive a Credential based on completion of this coursework.
- Pilot must be conducted “statewide” and ensure a geographically and ethnically diverse workforce sample.
- The pilot should “test” all levels of the Credential.
- Higher Education Institution “Entitlement” is awarded for three years.
  - Pilot institutions will have three years to modify program/coursework to meet any changes resulting from the pilot findings.

## Catalyst

The importance of the Gateways Family Specialist Credential is immense. After the development of Credentials that recognize the skill set of educators working in classroom settings with young children,

it was time for Illinois to develop a Credential that acknowledges the significant contributions of the professionals that work with their caregivers. In many cases, it is these professionals who initiate the relationships that link families to critical community support services including early childhood care and education.

Research recognizes the critical and integral role families have in positive child outcomes. The Administration for Children and Families states, “Families are children’s first, longest lasting, and most important teachers, advocates, and nurturers. Positive parenting and strong family engagement is central—not supplemental—to promoting children’s healthy development and wellness. This includes social-emotional and behavioral development; preparing children for school; seamlessly transitioning them to kindergarten; and supporting academic achievement in elementary school and beyond.”

The Illinois Gateways Family Specialist Credential acknowledges the expertise of individuals who have chosen to participate in the very important work of building relationships and supporting families at a time when the expectation on the federal level is that all federally funded programming should focus on reaching the most at risk. **These professionals, who work in many different sectors, are the key to reaching families and connecting them to appropriate services.** The Illinois Gateways Family Specialist Credential acknowledges the special skill set, experience, and education necessary for providing culturally and linguistically responsive relationship-based services to families regardless of their employment setting.

## Pilot Implementation

### Direct Route

In spring 2014, marketing messages were developed that were targeted toward current family workers to share information about the Gateways Family Specialist Credential (FSC) and roll out of the pilot.

The Gateways Family Specialist Credential is a symbol of professional achievement, using the approved Content Area descriptors, performance area descriptors, and knowledge, skills and dispositions as a guide, that validates those who work with families, have the education and knowledge required to:

- Build strength-based relationships with families
- Encourage families to identify and set achievable goals
- Support families in developing the knowledge and skills needed to access resources
- Assist families in becoming leaders within their communities
- Promote and strengthen bonds between parent and child

During June 2014, marketing for the Gateways Family Specialist Credential pilot began (Appendix H). Messaging included presentations from Gateways staff, Committee member announcements, flyers, and word of mouth. Over 350 Illinois professionals contacted Gateways staff for information regarding the FSC pilot. Once professionals applied for the FSC, welcome letters were sent with a packet of necessary documents detailing the Credential requirements for Levels 2-5 of the Gateways Family Specialist Credential (Appendix I). Each applicant was asked to submit official transcripts, training certificates and descriptions, professional contributions, and “family-related” work experience.

Between August 2014 and December 2015, 263 FSC direct route pilot applications were received.

Employers represented included but were not limited to:

- Baby TALK, Inc.
- Carole Robertson Center for Learning
- Chicago Commons
- Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&R)
- Children’s Home + Aid
- Illinois Department of Child and Family Services (IDCFS)
- Educare of West DuPage
- Healthy Families Chicago
- Head Start/Early Head Start
- Illinois Action for Children
- Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)
- Marillac Social Center
- Mary Crane Center
- Metropolitan Family Services
- Ounce of Prevention Fund
- Preschool for All (PFA)

In addition, several Illinois child care centers, higher education institutions, and family social service agencies were also represented within the FSC pilot.

Education and training is a critical requirement to attain the FSC Credential. Credential applicants are required to submit official transcripts verifying coursework as part of the Credential application process. Course descriptors and syllabi for each course were gathered and shared with the FSC Committee for in-depth review and analysis. To support the large number of courses that needed to be reviewed, a subcommittee comprised of Committee members and higher education faculty met bi-weekly to review course descriptions for every course an applicant completed. The Committee used the FSC Content Areas and benchmarks/competencies to analyze each course’s content from accredited colleges and universities from Illinois as well as other states. From February 2015 through February 2016, the Committee met monthly, sometimes weekly to review coursework and training descriptions. Over 2,700 courses were reviewed and categorized.

Work experience submitted for Committee review varied widely for each applicant. For the Family Specialist Credential, “family-related” work experience was defined as professionals (with family systems knowledge, skills, and competencies) working in direct relationships with families to promote optimal child and family outcomes. Job descriptions and titles that were found to be consistent with the “family-related” work experience requirement for the FSC were:

- Developmental Therapist
- Family Advisor
- Family Advocate
- Family Assessment Support Specialist
- Family Case Worker
- Family Case Coordinator
- Family and Community Consultant
- Family and Community Engagement Manager
- Family Educator
- Family Engagement Specialist
- Family Resource Advisor
- Family Specialist
- Family Service Assistant
- Family Service Coordinator
- Family Service Worker
- Family Support Advocate
- Family Support Specialist
- Family Support Worker
- Family Worker
- Head Start Family Support Specialist Coordinator
- Home Based Coordinator
- Home Visitor
- Home Visiting Supervisor

- Parent Educator
- Parent Engagement Coordinator
- Teen/Youth Worker

In May 2015, the Committee began reviewing the first completed Credential applications. Required documentation for the Credential included official transcripts that verified education and training or college coursework, “family-related” work experience and professional contributions. Each applicant was reviewed anonymously and given a unique identification number based on the order in which their application was received. An updated work and practical experience form was created and implemented for testing in January 2016. The goal in revising the form was to ensure greater transparency and increase understanding of what constituted “family-related” work experience (Appendix J).

Professional contributions are defined within administrative rule as ways that Credential applicants demonstrate leadership through active engagement in professional endeavors beyond the scope of their job descriptions. Effective January 12, 2015, it was decided that professional contributions would be required for the renewal of Gateways Credentials, but not to attain or earn an initial Credential. However, professional contributions should be “tested” during the pilot phase to ensure relevance.

Between May and October 2015, the Committee awarded a total of 43 Family Specialist Credentials to candidates who included professional contributions as part of their application. This allowed the Committee to “test” the professional contributions component with a wide range of applicants. As of October 31, 2015, 197 FSC total applications that included official transcripts from which 43 (22%) had been awarded a Credential that included a review and test of professional contributions. The Committee decided the professional contributions component was sufficiently tested and exceeded a 20% threshold. Effective November 1, 2015 the FSC Committee began approving FSC eligibility based on education, training and work experience with professional contributions no longer required for initial Credential attainment.

Between November 2015 and March 2016, 58 additional Gateways Family Specialist Credentials were awarded to professionals that applied before the December 31, 2015 deadline.

FSC Levels	Professional Contributions May 2015–October 2015	Without Professional Contributions November 2015–March 2016	Total
Level 2	3	3	6
Level 3	4	7	11
Level 4	1	3	4
Level 5	35	45	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>101</b>

During the Committee’s review of education and training, it was found that candidates with a Bachelor’s degree or Graduate degree in Social Work were generally found eligible for the FSC Level 5. Additional degrees with a high correspondence rate to FSC education and training requirements included—family and community counseling, family and consumer sciences, family development, family services, human development and family studies, human services, and psychology.

FSC pilot data showed that professionals with degrees in education, early childhood, child development, business, or general studies did not typically meet the amount of education and training required for higher levels of the FSC. The Content Area of Curriculum or Program Design (CPD) for the FSC was found to be a barrier for many. This data demonstrates a need for training development specific to CPD to support professionals working with families. Both Level 4 and 5 required one point in CPD. One point is 15 clock hours of Credential approved training. See additional statistics regarding CPD in the survey information section.

### Entitled Route

In March 2014, statewide messaging and Request for Proposals (RFP) were shared with all two- and four-year higher education institutions throughout Illinois requesting participation in the Gateways Family Specialist Credential pilot (Appendix K).

As part of the RFP, faculty completed a matrix demonstrating how their coursework would meet Credential competencies and requirements. The matrix submitted could include both coursework in existence, as well as new coursework that faculty designed specifically to be part of the pilot. From the RFP’s submitted and reviewed, the Committee selected these five institutions to participate in the entitled route Family Specialist Credential pilot:

Harry S. Truman College—Chicago

- Family Specialist Credential Levels 2-4

Lake Land Community College—Mattoon

- Family Specialist Credential Levels 2-4

Eastern Illinois University—Charleston

- Family Specialist Credential Level 5
- Bachelor’s degree—Family and Consumer Sciences

Rockford University—Rockford

- Family Specialist Credential Level 5
- Bachelor’s degree—Human Development

Southern Illinois University—Carbondale

- Family Specialist Credential Level 5
- Bachelor’s degree—Early Childhood–Child and Family Services Specialization

As of March 2016, 61 entitled route students applied for the Family Specialist Credential from which nine Credentials were awarded.

Entitled FSC	Awarded	Institution
Level 2	1	Lake Land College
Level 3	1	Lake Land College
Level 4	4	Lake Land College
Level 5	3	Southern Illinois University & Eastern Illinois University
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	

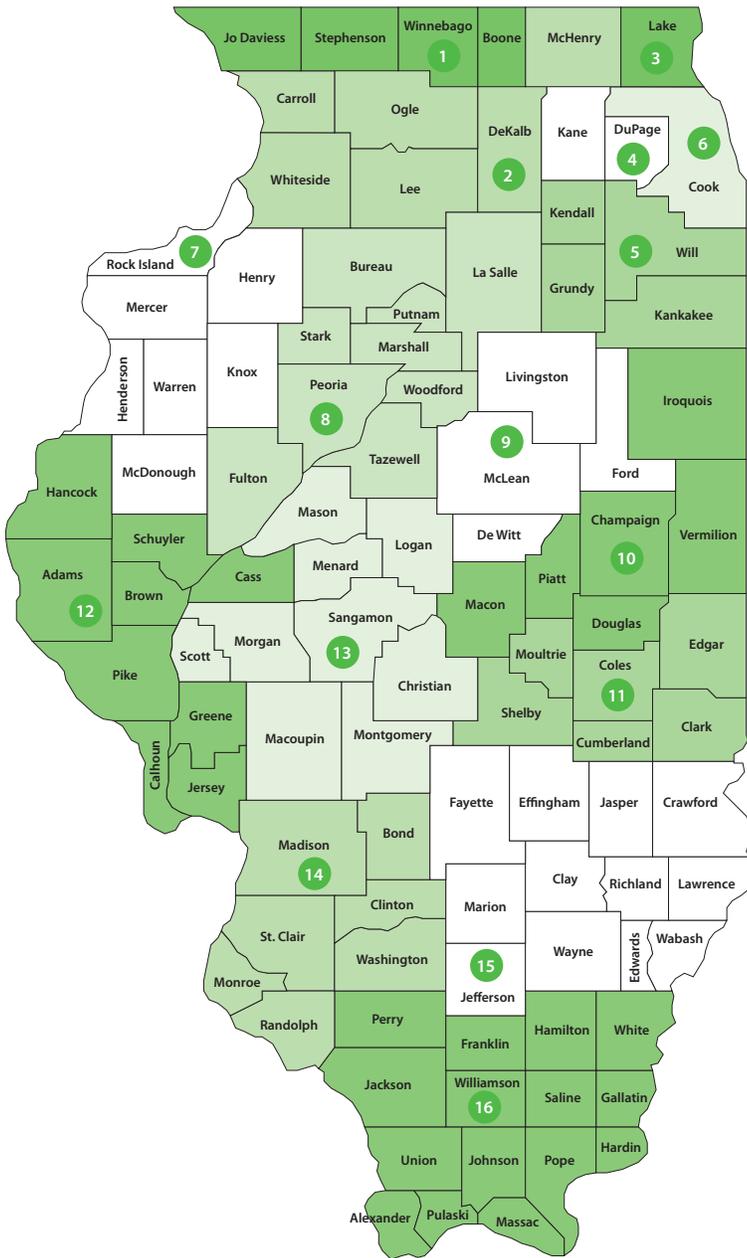
<b>Family Specialist Credential Entitled Applicants</b>	61
<b>Awarded Credential (see above)</b>	9
<b>Currently Awaiting Committee Approval</b>	1
<b>Currently Enrolled In/Taking Coursework</b>	45
<b>Currently Ineligible – Missing FSC internship/practicum or need to take additional coursework or training/not yet enrolled</b>	6
<b>Total</b>	61

Rockford University’s program will have additional graduates within the next one to two years. Harry S. Truman College began offering the Human Development and Family Studies program more recently as it was previously offered at Olive-Harvey College. Entitled route applications will continue to be received after the pilot closing date of December 31, 2015. Pilot institutions are entitled to offer the Family Specialist Credential through 2019.

## Diversity of FSC Pilot Applicants

### Geographic Diversity

The state of Illinois is comprised of Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Agencies. Each CCR&R represents a grouping of counties in the state, referred to as a service delivery area (SDA). Using the 16 SDAs as a geographic lens, the chart below shows that FSC pilot applicants had diverse statewide geographic representation.



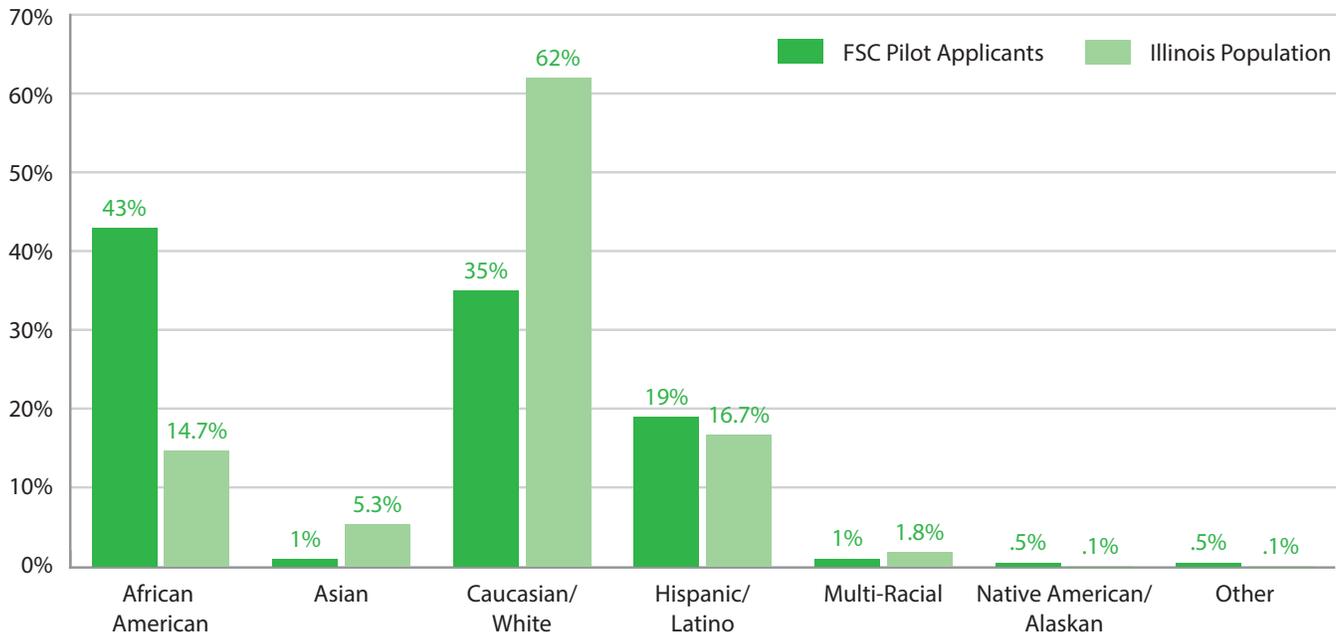
SDA	Total Applied	Awarded
1	9	1
2	6	0
3	1	1
4	7	5
5	6	3
6	178	58
7	6	1
8	3	1
9	7	5
10	15	6
11	20	8
12	5	1
13	9	3
14	12	5
15	18	7
16	6	5
N/A	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>110</b>

## Ethnic Diversity

Pilot applicants were also ethnically diverse. More than 60% of the professionals in Illinois who earned a FSC during the pilot were of ethnic minority. Compared to the state of Illinois, the minority population surpassed the majority in successfully attaining a Gateways Family Specialist Credential.

FSC Applicants	African American	Asian	Caucasian/ White	Hispanic/ Latino	Multi-Racial	Native American/ Alaskan	Other	Total
<b>Total</b>	138	4	114	62	3	1	2	324
<b>Percent</b>	43%	1%	35%	19%	1%	.5%	.5%	100%

## Ethnic Diversity of Family Specialist Credential Pilot Applicants Compared to Illinois Population



Source: [www.infoplease.com/us/census/data/illinois/demographic.html](http://www.infoplease.com/us/census/data/illinois/demographic.html)

## Gender

Applicants for the Gateways Family Specialist Credential were 97% female. This is comparable to the teaching workforce; especially in early childhood settings. Increasing male involvement within family work would be beneficial for children, youth, and families in Illinois.

FSC Applicants	Female	Male	Total
Total	313	11	324
Percent	97%	3%	100%

## FSC Pilot Survey

In October 2015, a wide range of survey questions were developed by the FSC Committee. The survey was designed to validate different aspects of FSC requirements and to capture information from participants to inform adjustments that might be needed. It was designed to gather input from multiple perspectives: applicants who did (and did not) attain a Credential, and for applicants who applied via direct route or entitled. A variation of the survey was developed for the higher education faculty who implemented the pilot at their institutions. The survey was initially sent to FSC applicants and faculty on November 18, 2015. Follow-up notices were sent in early December with a “final notice” and completion date of January 15, 2016. Responses were categorized and analyzed as follows.

## Direct Route

When the survey launched, 44 Family Specialist Credentials had been awarded via direct route.

The response rate for this group was 82%; 36 of 44 completed the survey. Although the majority of respondents had received the highest level FSC (Level 5), there were responses for every Credential level tested during the pilot (see chart below).

**Have you been awarded a Gateways Family Specialist Credential?**

Response	Percentage	Count
Yes	100%	36
No	0%	0
Total		36

**At what level?**

Response	Percentage	Count
FSC Level 2	14.3%	5
FSC Level 3	5.7%	2
FSC Level 4	5.7%	2
FSC Level 5	74.3%	26
Total		35

Applicants who answered yes to having a Credential were then prompted to respond to the ease of Credential attainment. The overall experiences of applying for and obtaining the Credential were positive. Nearly 80% of applicants who attained a Credential thought it was an easy to neutral process.

**Please rate the direct route pilot Credential experience from easy to difficult.**

Response	Percentage	Count
Easy	25%	9
Somewhat Easy	27.8%	10
Neutral	27.8%	10
Somewhat Difficult	13.9%	5
Very Difficult	5.6%	2
Total		36

Education and training component requirement data was also collected during the survey. Applicants were asked to rate each level of the Family Specialist Credential from too high-too low. The FSC Level 4 and Level 5 requirements were found to be "just right" by 80-86% of credentialed applicants. With 78 out of 98 credentialed applicants attaining a FSC Level 5, which requires a minimum of a bachelor's degree, the data confirms degree completion with family-related coursework was a successful education and training requirement.

Applicants who had a bachelor's (BSW) or graduate degree (MSW) in social work were able to meet the education and training component requirement for the FSC Level 5. A total of 27% (22) of FSC Level 5

applicants had a BSW or MSW. All official transcripts submitted for review were from accredited colleges and universities. Additionally, 95% received their degree from a nationally accredited Social Work program ([www.cswe.org](http://www.cswe.org)).

Many Graduate FSC Level 5 recipients inquired about a Family Specialist Credential Level 6. This may be an area to investigate further based on workforce demand. The ECE Credential and Infant Toddler Credential do have a Level 6 requiring a graduate degree and the FSC Committee may wish to explore this option in the future.

**FSC Level 5—Bachelor’s Degree plus 30 semester hours in FSC Content Areas (6 points may come from Credential approved training)**

Response	Percentage	Count
Too high	8.6%	3
Too low	5.7%	2
Just right	85.7%	30
Total		35

FSC Direct Route - Awarded

As the chart above shows, approximately 86% of those who were awarded a Credential thought the number of education and training hours required at FSC Level 5 were “just right” as did a slightly smaller number (71%) from applicants who had not yet attained a Credential.

**FSC Level 4—Associate Degree or 60+ semester hours with 9 semester hours of credit bearing English, Math, & Social Science with 20 semester hours in FSC Content Areas (6 points may come from Credential approved training)**

Response	Percentage	Count
Too high	2.9%	1
Too low	17.1%	6
Just right	80%	28
Total		35

FSC Direct Route - Awarded

As the chart above shows, approximately 80% of those who were awarded a Credential thought the number of education and training hours required at FSC Level 4 were “just right” as did an even larger number, 86% of applicants who had not yet attained a Credential.

**FSC Level 3—High School Diploma or GED plus 6 semester hours of credit bearing English, Math, & Social Science with 9 semester hours in FSC Content Areas (6 points may come from Credential approved training)**

Response	Percentage	Count
Too high	0%	0
Too low	31.4%	11
Just right	68.6%	24
Total		35

FSC Direct Route - Awarded

As the chart above shows, 31% of those who were awarded a Credential thought the number of education and training hours required at FSC Level 3 was “too low” compared to 27% of applicants who had not yet attained a Credential.

### FSC Level 2—High School Diploma or GED plus 6 points in FSC Content Areas (all 6 points may come from Credential approved training)

Response	Percentage	Count
Too high	0%	0
Too low	22.9%	8
Just right	77.1%	27
Total		35

FSC Direct Route - Awarded

As the chart above shows, 77% of applicants who were awarded a Credential thought the number of education and training hours required at FSC Level 2 was “just right” compared to 65%.

In summary:

- Throughout the course of the FSC pilot, it was noted that the majority of applicants had completed a degree at some level.
- Survey results showed that the majority (80-86%) of both those who received, and did not receive, a Credential thought the FSC education requirements at Levels 4 and 5 were “just right.”
- Comparatively, survey results showed a larger percentage (23-31%) of both those who received, and did not receive a Credential, thought the FSC education requirements at Level 2 and 3 were “too low.”

The survey question below was designed to gauge Credential applicant knowledge of and relevance to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Family Engagement Framework. This framework brings together research, best practices, and legislative requirements and provides resources that integrate family engagement into the school improvement process. This tool is for school districts and schools to use in developing and expanding school-family partnerships to support student learning and healthy development. The Illinois State Board of Education developed Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice to provide guidance to educators, districts, schools, families, and communities as they plan, implement, and evaluate family engagement strategies (January 21, 2016. [www.isbe.net/family-engagement/html/framework.htm](http://www.isbe.net/family-engagement/html/framework.htm)).

## Do you think the Family Specialist Credential has applicability with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Family Engagement Framework?

Response	Percentage	Count
Yes	64.7%	22
No	2.9%	1
I am not familiar with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Family Engagement Framework.	32.4%	11
<b>Total</b>		<b>34</b>

FSC Direct Route - Awarded

In summary: 65% of professionals with the Family Specialist Credential agree with aligning to the ISBE Family Engagement Framework with the remaining respondents indicating they are not familiar with this framework.

Applicants were also asked to respond to the applicability of the Gateways Family Specialist Credential to the ExceleRate® Illinois Family and Community Engagement Award of Excellence. ExceleRate is a quality recognition and improvement system that gives centers a process for pursuing quality efforts that will help them learn more, do better and improve developmental skills among the children they impact.

ExceleRate also provides standards, guidelines, resources and supports to help you make sensible changes that lead to better quality outcomes (January 21, 2016. [www.excelerateillinoisproviders.com](http://www.excelerateillinoisproviders.com)). ExceleRate Illinois uses a consistent set of standards organized into four domains:

1. Teaching and Learning
2. Family and Community Engagement
3. Leadership and Management
4. Qualifications and Continuing Education

Programs achieve one of the Circles of Quality below based on meeting standards under each of the four domains.

- The **Licensed Circle of Quality** is the foundational circle of quality, and recognizes compliance with the licensing standards of the State of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.
- The **Bronze Circle of Quality** recognizes qualifications and professional development, with completion of a robust series of trainings. Bronze Circle trainings are aligned with the standards of ExceleRate, and prepare programs for success as they progress through the Circles of Quality.
- The **Silver Circle of Quality** recognizes completion of a rigorous self-assessment and implementation of a continuous quality improvement process, as verified by an independent assessor. Silver Circle programs meet or exceed specific quality



benchmarks/competencies on learning environment and instructional quality, along with selected administrative standards; qualifications; and professional development.

- The **Gold Circle of Quality** recognizes programs which have demonstrated quality on all standards, as validated by an independent assessor. Gold Circle programs meet or exceed specific quality benchmarks/competencies on learning environment, instructional quality, and all administrative standards; group size and ratios; qualifications; and professional development.

Once a program has achieved the Gold Circle of Quality designation they are able to begin work toward an Award of Excellence. These are based on what research says is required to help at-risk children be prepared for success in school and life, and include awards for:

- Preschool Teaching & Learning
- Infant & Toddler Services
- **Family and Community Engagement**
- Inclusion of Children with Special Needs
- Linguistically and Culturally Appropriate Practice

The standards articulated in the Family and Community Engagement Award of Excellence point to ECE program staff practices, attitudes, and knowledge related to working with families that research indicates are likely to positively impact family engagement and child development. When family and community partnerships are comprehensive, systemic and integrated across ECE program foundations and practices, family and community engagement impacts are achieved resulting in children who are healthy and ready for school.

- **Standard 1**—The ECE program leadership promote and implements system-wide family engagement policies and a family-friendly environment.
- **Standard 2**—The ECE program uses a relationship-based approach to engaging families and all staff members demonstrate respect for families’ culture, language, family composition, and circumstances.
- **Standard 3**—The ECE program uses a goal-oriented approach to working with families through creating opportunities for collaborative decision-making about goals for their children, their families, and the program.
- **Standard 4**—The ECE program initiates and promotes broad and active community partnerships on behalf of families, children, staff and community.
- **Standard 5**—The ECE program facilitates healthy transitions and adjustments for children and families. Smooth transitions for children and families are facilitated for children changing caregivers within an ECE setting, moving from one ECE setting to another, or from one ECE setting to elementary school (e.g. Early Head Start to Head Start, Child Care/HS/pre-K to public school) whether these are on a regular basis or a one-time transition. The ECE program helps children and families develop skills around managing these transitions.
- **Standard 6**—The ECE program has systems for collecting and using data related to family and community engagement for the purpose of improving program practices. The ECE program collects and shares relevant data with families.

- **Standard 7**—ECE program staff has knowledge and training in how to build strong family-program relationships. ECE program staff also has knowledge about the strengths, needs, and experiences of individual families as they relate to child and family well-being (March 24, 2016. [www.excelerateillinoisproviders.com/docman/resources/105-fce-flyer/file](http://www.excelerateillinoisproviders.com/docman/resources/105-fce-flyer/file)).

The Principles and Practices subcommittee for Family and Community Engagement Award of Excellence notes the development of the Gateways Family Specialist Credential and the approach of the pilot process align well with the Award of Excellence. The existence of this Credential will provide an additional tool and resource for practitioners to access as they strive to obtain this award for their organization. In addition, over 64% of professionals agreed that the Family Specialist Credential is applicable to the ExceleRate Family and Community Engagement Award of Excellence.

### As centers apply for ExceleRate and Awards of Excellence, do you think the Family Specialist Credential has applicability to the Family and Community Engagement Standards?

Response	Percentage	Count
Yes	64.7%	22
No	11.8%	4
I am unfamiliar with the Family and Community Engagement Award of Excellence	23.5%	8
<b>Total</b>		<b>34</b>

The total number of Family Specialist Credential applicants that did not receive a Credential when the survey was launched was 182. The direct route survey elicited a response rate of 31% (57) of those who indicated they have not attained a Family Specialist Credential. Nearly 90% of pilot participants indicate that they will complete the Credential requirements within the next 12 months. At the time the survey was launched, 40% of applicants indicated that time was the reason they have not yet completed the Credential requirements. In January 2016, after the survey was closed, an additional 40 Family Specialist Credentials were awarded.

### Have you been awarded a Gateways Family Specialist Credential?

Response	Percentage	Count
Yes	0%	0
No	100%	57
<b>Total</b>		<b>57</b>

## When do you plan to complete the Family Specialist Credential after the pilot closes?

Response	Percentage	Count
0–6 months	68.4%	39
7–12 months	21.1%	12
12 months or longer	1.8%	1
I do not plan on completing the Family Specialist Credential	8.8%	5
Total		57

## What has prevented you from earning the Family Specialist Credential?

Check all that apply.

Response	Percentage	Count
Time	40.4%	23
Lack of education and training to meet requirements	10.5%	6
Professional contributions	12.3%	7
Lack of family-related work experience	5.3%	3
I submitted my information for the Committee to review	40.4%	23
I don't know	17.5%	10
I have withdrawn from the pilot program	7%	4
Total		57

For those applicants whose education and training was not specific to working with families, many found the Content Area of Curriculum or Program Design (CPD) to be difficult to complete. The FSC pilot Levels 4 and 5 do require one point in this Content Area. Nearly 77% of applicants would complete a 15-hour training to complete the one point required in CPD. This survey data confirms applicant concerns regarding the need for additional training resources for working with families. More than half of the applicants requested a greater access to trainings specific to working with families.

**For many Family Specialist Credential applicants, the Content Area of Curriculum or Program Design has been challenging to fulfill through coursework or trainings. If available, would you be likely to participate in a 15–hour training to meet the minimum requirement in the Family Specialist Credential Content Area of Curriculum or Program Design?**

Response	Percentage	Count
Yes	76.5%	39
No	23.5%	12
Total		51

**What resources would have helped you complete the Family Specialist Credential?  
Please check all that apply.**

Response	Percentage	Count
Greater availability of trainings	58%	29
Informational webinars/telenets	48%	24
Credential presentations	50%	25
Other, please specify...	16%	8
<b>Total</b>		<b>50</b>

The amount of work experience required for the Family Specialist Credential increased with each level. Applicants who did not attain a Credential often found it difficult to document work experience with families. There were many work experience forms submitted for review that did not indicate direct “family-related” work experiences. In these cases, the Committee requested job statements or descriptions, case notes, home visiting logs, etc. to verify direct work experiences with families. Many teachers, family child care providers, and site directors had difficulty meeting the “family-related” work experience component defined by the Committee. For those who had not yet attained the Family Specialist Credential agreed with over 94% that the “family-related” work experience definition was accurate.

“Just right” work experience survey data	Awarded	Not Awarded
FSC Level 5 – 1200 hours of documented family-related work experience	85.3%	70.6%
FSC Level 4 – 500 hours of documented family-related work experience	82.4%	74.5%
FSC Level 3 – 300 hours of documented family-related work experience	85.3%	78.4%
FSC Level 2 – 200 hours of documented family-related work experience	88.2%	75.5%

**For the Family Specialist Credential, “family-related” work experience is defined as professionals (with family systems knowledge, skills, and competencies) working in direct relationships with families to promote optimal child and family outcomes. Is the way in which we defined it applicable to those in the field?**

Response	Percentage	Count
Agree	94.1%	48
Disagree	5.9%	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>51</b>

### Entitled Route–Student Responses

Higher education institutions who align their coursework to meet Content Areas, benchmarks/competencies and framework requirements are entitled. Students who apply for a Credential based on having completed this coursework apply via entitled route. Five colleges and universities in Illinois agreed to implement the Family Specialist Credential pilot between June 2014 and December 2015 (18 months). Both two- and four- year higher education institutions were represented in the pilot:

Harry S. Truman College, Lake Land Community College, Eastern Illinois University, Rockford University, and Southern Illinois University—Carbondale.

Students attending these entitled institutions who earned a Credential, as well as students still in the process of completing coursework to earn a Credential were invited to complete the survey.

Although the amount of entitled route Family Specialist Credentials awarded during the pilot was low, the interest and desire to complete the Credential is high. With a relatively short timeline of 18 months, students and faculty both found completing the entire Credential pilot program a challenge. The current applicants indicated they will complete the Credential requirements within the next 12 months.

**When do you plan to complete the Family Specialist Credential after the pilot closes?**

Response	Percentage
0–6 months	50%
7–12 months	33.3%
12 months or longer	16.7%
I do not plan on completing the Credential	0%
Total	

Overall, 100% of the entitled student survey responses confirmed that the “family-related” work experience for the Family Specialist Credential will prepare them to work with families.

**Entitled Route–Faculty Responses**

To participate in the pilot, faculty submitted a Request for Proposal (RFP) which included a matrix, program layout and grid to align coursework to the Family Specialist Credential requirements. Faculty support was crucial to the success of the pilot.

- Harry S. Truman College—Kate Connor
- Lake Land Community College—Teresa Lang
- Eastern Illinois University—Dr. Michelle Sherwood
- Rockford Illinois University—Belinda Wholeben, Ed.D., Elaine Sharpe, M.S., and Joel E. Lynch, Ph.D.
- Southern Illinois University Carbondale—Stacy Thompson, Ph.D.

Faculty participated in webinars, telenets and face-to-face meetings to share progress, raise concerns, and ensure the success of the pilot. Faculty also completed a survey (results below).

**Please review the FSC Framework. Are the Credential requirements easy to understand?**

Response	Percentage	Count
Yes	100%	5
No	0%	0
Total		5

Internship placements for the Family Specialist Credential varied. Although faculty thought the work experience hours with families was appropriate, finding “family-related” internships and practicums sometimes posed a challenge. This was primarily the case for pilot institutions whose coursework overlapped into the early childhood department where student internships and practicums are most often in classroom settings and have less direct interaction/provide less direct support to families. Placements for students that were successful in completing internships working directly with families included:

- Developmental Therapists
- Early Head Start Family Advocates
- Pregnancy Crisis Center
- Parent Engagement Coordinator
- School Social Worker

The Illinois FY16 budget impasse also negatively impacted internship placement. Many social service and family support agencies lacked funding; a few even closed or reduced services. This made internships challenging to find.

### Is the amount of internship/practicum experience required for each level of the Family Specialist Credential relevant to working with families?

	Too high	Too Low	Just Right	My institution does not participate in this FSC Level	Total
FSC Level 5 – 200 hours of family-related supervised experience	1 (20%)	0 (0%)	3 (60%)	1 (20%)	5
FSC Level 4 – 75 hours of family-related supervised experience	0 (0%)	2 (40%)	2 (40%)	1 (20%)	5
FSC Level 3 – 10 hours of family-related observation and 10 hours of family-related supervised experience	0 (0%)	2 (40%)	2 (40%)	1 (20%)	5
FSC Level 2 – 10 hours of family-related observation	0 (0%)	1 (20%)	3 (60%)	1 (20%)	5

### Do you think the education in these Content Areas adequately prepare students to work with families?

	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Total
Human Growth & Development	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	5
Health, Safety, & Well-Being	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (20%)	4 (80%)	5
Observation & Assessment	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	5

<b>Curriculum or Program Design</b>	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (60%)	2 (40%)	5
<b>Interactions, Relationships, &amp; Environments</b>	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (20%)	4 (80%)	5
<b>Family &amp; Community Relationships</b>	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (20%)	4 (80%)	5
<b>Personal &amp; Professional Development</b>	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (100%)	5

**Do you think there are any missing components that should be added to the Family Specialist Credential requirements?**

Response	Percentage	Count
Yes	0%	0
No	100%	5
<b>Total</b>		5

**Will your institution continue to market and offer the Family Specialist Credential after the pilot ends?**

Response	Percentage	Count
Yes	100%	5
No	0%	0
<b>Total</b>		5

The faculty met on January 25, 2016 to discuss survey data. Recommendations from faculty were made for the Committee to consider for the final Family Specialist Credential requirements (Appendix L).

The Committee was able to review the faculty recommendations on March 4, 2016. The results of their review included the following:

- Updating the general education requirement for FSC level 3—“6 semester hours of credit bearing English, Social Science, and Math or Science.”
- Increasing the work and practical experience requirement for the FSC Level 3 to “20 hours of family-related supervised experience.”
- Updating the general education requirement FSC level 4—“9 semester hours of credit bearing English, Social Science and Math or Science.”
- Increasing the work and practical experience requirement for the FSC Level 4 to “100 hours of family-related supervised experience.”

The faculty suggested these slight changes to the general education requirements to remove as many barriers as possible for future students. The faculty felt comfortable with increasing the work experience requirements to further prepare students to work with families. The Committee agreed with these changes.

Faculty also indicated the need for the Committee to review the Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE) program through the National Council on Family Relations. Certified Family Life Education,

“Focuses on healthy family functioning within a family systems perspective and provides a primarily preventive approach. The skills and knowledge needed for healthy functioning are widely known: strong communication skills, knowledge of typical human development, good decision-making skills, positive self-esteem, and healthy interpersonal relationships. The goal of family life education is to teach and foster this knowledge and these skills to enable individuals and families to function optimally. Family life education professionals consider societal issues—economics, education, work-family issues, parenting, sexuality, gender and more—within the context of the family. They believe that societal problems like substance abuse, domestic violence, unemployment, debt, and child abuse can be more effectively addressed from a perspective that considers the individual and family as part of larger systems. Knowledge about healthy family functioning can be applied to prevent or minimize many of these problems” (February 5, 2016. [www.ncfr.org/cfle-certification](http://www.ncfr.org/cfle-certification)).

Similar to Gateways Credentials, colleges and universities can become accredited for the CFLE program. Family Science degree programs align coursework with these 10 CFLE Content Areas:

- Families and Individuals in Societal Contexts
- Internal Dynamics of Families
- Human Growth and Development across the Lifespan
- Human Sexuality
- Interpersonal Relationships
- Family Resource Management
- Parent Education and Guidance
- Family Law and Public Policy
- Professional Ethics and Practice
- Family Life Education Methodology

Programs approved in Illinois with CFLE include:

Eastern Illinois University

- School of Family & Consumer Sciences
- Charleston, IL

Northern Illinois University

- School of Family, Consumer & Nutrition Sciences
- DeKalb, IL

University of Illinois

- Department of Human Development & Family Studies
- Urbana, IL

While the Committee agrees the CFLE accreditation is extremely beneficial, more discussion is needed to ensure alignment of these requirements with the Gateways Family Specialist Credential.

## Summary: Overall Pilot Credential Process

The Gateways Family Specialist Credential pilot was conducted with a broad range of professionals currently working in the field, and with two- and four-year higher education institutions supported by faculty across Illinois in order to validate Credential requirements. During the Gateways Family Specialist Credential pilot, 110 Credentials were awarded which allowed the testing of all levels. Faculty and professionals working in the field, as well as Committee members provided robust input via survey and through anecdotal comments during the pilot which were captured in this report. The original Quality Practice Partnership, which transitioned into the Professional Development Advisory Council structure as the Family Specialist Credential Committee, volunteered countless hours to persevere through its development. The Family Specialist Credential Committee has developed a Credential specific to family workers which will influence current professionals, students, faculty, and institutions to prepare the family specialist workforce of the future. Final recommendations from the Committee are attached (Appendix M). The Committee members and organizations that supported the development—through time and resources—of the Gateways Family Specialist Credential are included (Appendix N). The final Framework is also attached (Appendix O).

### Illinois Family Support Landscape

There is increased federal and state focus on the need for greater support for families. Research recognizes the critical and integral role families have in positive child outcomes. Additionally, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Preschool Development Block Grant currently requires a Parent Educator/Family Support Worker on staff for the full day, four year old preschool programs. ISBE's purpose for the parent educator is to, "work collaboratively with families, education staff and community partners to ensure that the program meets the needs of the whole child and supports parents/guardians in addressing family needs and setting and achieving ambitious family goals" (March 21, 2016. [www.isbe.net/earlychi/preschool/pdg-eg-parent-fam-support-job-desc-sample.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/preschool/pdg-eg-parent-fam-support-job-desc-sample.pdf)). ISBE is utilizing the Gateways Family Specialist Credential as an educational qualification marker for staff hired as a Parent Educator or Family Support Worker in Preschool for All programs.

Head Start, as a two-generational program, is designed with the expectation that each grantee will have dedicated staff to work with families. These dedicated staff—often called Family Support Workers—are responsible for developing strong, meaningful, and authentic relationships with families—vital to an effective family partnership process. The Illinois Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) provided initial resources and ongoing support for the development of the Illinois Gateways Family Specialist Credential because it acknowledges the skill set and expertise necessary for the professionals who will initiate and maintain successful Family Partnerships in Head Start programs and other early childhood programs throughout the state. The Administration for Children and Families has developed staff teams on the federal level comprised of Head Start, Child Care, and at times the Department of Education staff in order to work to create efficiencies but more importantly to determine how to implement best practices in all federally funded programs working with children and families. One of the outcomes of this streamlining is that the work of the Office of Head Start (OHS) National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) is now available for all sectors in early childhood, providing tools, training, and resources so all programs can strive toward best practice in family engagement. One specific tool created by the National Center is the PFCE Framework to guide programs in their

critical work with parents and families and recognizes that professional development as a part of the foundation. The Illinois Gateways Family Specialist Credential identifies the core competencies for professionals in the field and celebrates their intimate work with families on a day-to-day basis, aligning to what has been recognized by this national center, “When you work hand-in-hand with families to build trusting relationships, you help families support their children to reach their fullest potential.”

## Conclusion

The Gateways to Opportunity Family Specialist Credential is a symbol of professional achievement that validates individuals working with families to have the requisite knowledge, skills, dispositions and experience to successfully engage with and strengthen families. Awarded by the Illinois Department of Human Services Bureau of Child Care & Development (IDHS), the Gateways Family Specialist Credential is embedded in state legislation. The development of this Credential highlights the importance state agencies and the Illinois Early Learning Council placed on the family support workforce in Illinois. Both at state and national levels, there is widespread recognition that support for children and their families are fundamental to our societal and economic success. The future of family specialists and their continued professionalism will help to support and strengthen Illinois families.

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# Appendix A

## Legislation and Administrative Rule

### Public Act 096-0864

HB0806 Enrolled LRB096 07449 NHT 17541 b

AN ACT concerning education.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 3. The Department of Human Services Act is amended by adding Section 10–65 as follows:

(20 ILCS 1305/10-65 new)

Sec. 10-65. Gateways to Opportunity.

- (a) Subject to the availability of funds, the Department of Human Services shall operate a Gateways to Opportunity program, a comprehensive professional development system. The goal of Gateways to Opportunity is to support a diverse, stable, and quality workforce for settings serving children and youth, specifically to:
  - (1) Enhance the quality of services;
  - (2) Increase positive outcomes for children and youth; and
  - (3) Advance the availability of coursework and training related to quality services for children and youth.
  
- (b) The Department shall award Gateways to Opportunity Credentials to early care and education, school-age, and youth development practitioners. The Credentials shall validate an individual's qualifications and shall be issued based on a variety of professional achievements in field experience, knowledge and skills, educational attainment, and training accomplishments. The Department shall adopt rules outlining the framework for awarding Credentials.
  
- (c) The Gateways to Opportunity program shall identify professional knowledge guidelines for practitioners serving children and youth. The professional knowledge guidelines shall define what all adults who work with children and youth need to know, understand, and be able to demonstrate to support children's and youth's development, school readiness, and school success. The Department shall adopt rules to identify Content Areas, alignment with other professional standards, and competency levels.

# **ADMINISTRATIVE CODE**

**TITLE 89: SOCIAL SERVICES**

**CHAPTER IV: DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

**SUBCHAPTER a: GENERAL PROGRAM PROVISIONS**

**PART 50 CHILD CARE**

**SECTION 50.710 GATEWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY, THE ILLINOIS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM**

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**Section 50.710 Gateways to Opportunity, the Illinois Professional Development System**

- a) Subject to the availability of funds, the Department, through its agents, shall administer Gateways to Opportunity.
- b) Gateways to Opportunity is a professional development system designed to support a diverse, stable and quality workforce for settings serving children, youth and families specifically to:
  - 1) Enhance the quality of services for children, youth and families;
  - 2) Increase positive outcomes for children, youth and families;
  - 3) Advance the availability of coursework and training related to quality services for children, youth and families; and
  - 4) Identify Core Professional Knowledge for practitioners in settings serving children, youth and families.
- c) The Department shall award Gateways to Opportunity Credentials to early care and education, school-age, youth development, and family support practitioners through two application routes, as outlined in Section 50.730.

(Source: Added at 36 Ill. Reg. 16085, effective October 29, 2012)

# **ADMINISTRATIVE CODE**

**TITLE 89: SOCIAL SERVICES  
CHAPTER IV: DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
SUBCHAPTER a: GENERAL PROGRAM PROVISIONS  
PART 50 CHILD CARE  
SECTION 50.720 GATEWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY CREDENTIALS**

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## **Section 50.720 Gateways to Opportunity Credentials**

Credentialing, as set forth by this Part, is only for the purpose of validating an individual's qualifications. Credentials are awarded based on a variety of professional achievements in field experience, knowledge and skills, educational attainment and/or training accomplishments.

a) Gateways to Opportunity Early Care and Education (ECE) Credential

The ECE Credential is designed to identify and validate skills necessary to work in high quality early care and education programs. It is awarded based on educational and professional achievement in services for young children ages birth to eight years. The ECE Credential shall have six levels and each will be awarded for increasing acquisition of education and skills, including college coursework specifically related to the early development and learning of children ages birth to eight years.

b) Gateways to Opportunity Illinois Director Credential

The Illinois Director Credential is designed to identify and validate the skills necessary to administer high quality early childhood and/or school age care programs. It is awarded based on educational and professional achievement in the administration of early childhood and school age programs. The Illinois Director Credential shall have three levels and each will be awarded for increasing complexity of education and skills, including college coursework specifically related to the development of children ages birth to 12 years and program management.

c) Gateways to Opportunity Infant/Toddler Credential

The Infant/Toddler Credential is designed to identify and validate the skills necessary to work in high quality programs serving infants and toddlers ages birth to three years. It is awarded based on educational and professional achievement in infant/toddler services. The Infant/Toddler Credential shall have five levels and each will be awarded for increasing acquisition of education and skills, including college coursework specifically related to the care and development of children ages birth to three years.

d) Gateways to Opportunity School-Age/Youth Development Credentials

The School-Age/Youth Development Credentials are designed to identify and validate the skills necessary to work in high quality programs serving school-age children and youth ages five to 20

years. It is awarded based on educational and professional achievement in services for school-age children and youth. The School-Age/Youth Development Credentials shall have at least three levels, each being awarded for increasing acquisition of education and skill, including college coursework specifically related to the development of children and youth ages five to 20 years.

e) Gateways to Opportunity Family Specialist Credential

The Family Specialist Credential is designed to identify and validate the skills necessary to work in high quality family support service programs. It is awarded based on educational and professional achievement in services for families. The Family Specialist Credential shall have at least three levels, each being awarded for increasing acquisition of education and skill, including college coursework specifically related to services for families.

f) Gateways to Opportunity Family Child Care Credential

The Family Child Care Credential is designed to identify and validate the skills necessary to work in high quality family child care homes. The Credential is awarded based on educational and professional achievement in family child care. The Family Child Care Credential shall have at least three levels, each being awarded for increasing acquisition of education and skill, including college coursework specifically related to family child care.

(Source: Added at 36 Ill. Reg. 16085, effective October 29, 2012)

# **ADMINISTRATIVE CODE**

**TITLE 89: SOCIAL SERVICES  
CHAPTER IV: DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
SUBCHAPTER a: GENERAL PROGRAM PROVISIONS  
PART 50 CHILD CARE  
SECTION 50.730 APPLICATION FOR CREDENTIALS**

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## **Section 50.730 Application for Credentials**

- a) The Gateways to Opportunity Credentials shall be available through two application routes:
- 1) The Direct Route Application Process  
The applicant submits an application, college transcripts, and a portfolio verifying experience and professional contributions to the Gateways to Opportunity Credential Office.
  - 2) The Entitled Route Program  
The applicant successfully completes approved college coursework that covers the Core Professional Knowledge for each specific Credential at the entitled education institution. An entitled education institution is a college or university that has aligned its coursework with specific Credential benchmarks based on State and national standards identified in Section 50.750(c) and meets additional Credential requirements through coursework. Applicants can find additional information about entitled education institutions at:  
[www.ilgateways.com/en/gateways-credential-entitlement-information](http://www.ilgateways.com/en/gateways-credential-entitlement-information).
- b) The applicant shall be responsible for providing all information and documentation required to demonstrate his or her qualifications for a particular Credential to the Gateways to Opportunity Credential Office, specifically:
- 1) A Credential Application, available from the Gateways to Opportunity Credential Office, 1226 Towanda Plaza, Bloomington, Illinois 61701;
  - 2) Official college transcripts from the higher education institutions; and
  - 3) A portfolio verifying experience and professional contributions.
- c) The Gateways to Opportunity Credential Application can be accessed at:  
[www.ilgateways.com/en/participant-application](http://www.ilgateways.com/en/participant-application).
- d) The information and documentation identified in Section 50.730(b) is reviewed according to the appropriate Credential Framework (see Section 50.740) that can be found at  
[www.ilgateways.com/en/gateways-to-opportunity-credentials](http://www.ilgateways.com/en/gateways-to-opportunity-credentials).
- e) The Department or its agents will notify applicants, in writing, of eligibility for a Credential within 60 days after receipt of all required documentation. Applicants that disagree with the Credential

determination may request reconsideration by writing to the IDHS Bureau of Child Care and Development (BCCD), 400 W. Lawrence, Springfield, Illinois 62762, within 60 days after notification of the original determination. The final decision on eligibility for Credentials will be made by the Child Care Professional Development Manager in consultation with the BCCD Bureau Chief. The criteria used during reconsideration by DHS' Bureau of Child Care and Development will be the same Credential Framework used to determine eligibility. The Credential Framework is located in Section 50.740 and on the GTO website at [www.ilgateways.com/en/gateways-to-opportunity-credentials](http://www.ilgateways.com/en/gateways-to-opportunity-credentials).

(Source: Added at 36 Ill. Reg. 16085, effective October 29, 2012)

# Appendix B

## Gateways Family Specialist Credential Pilot Timeline

Timeline	
Identify Leadership Team	October 2010 – March 2011
Develop Content Areas	November 2012 – October 2013
Shared	QC – 10/4/13 Steering – 10/16/13
Obtain Consultant	May 2013
Develop Benchmarks/Competencies	May 2013 – September 2013
Shared	QC – 10/2/13 Steering – 10/16/13
Develop Framework	October 2013 – March 2014
Shared	QC – 6/4/14 Steering – 6/13/14
Partner with Higher Education	March 2014 – September 2014
Marketing Plan	January 2014 – May 2014
Pilot	June 2014 – December 2015
Revisions	January 2016 – June 2016
Final Approval	QC – 3/17/16 Steering – 3/23/16 PDAC* IDHS*
State-wide Roll-out	July 2016

Estimated dates for approval:

Qualifications & Credentials – March 17, 2016

PDAC Steering – March 23, 2016

PDAC – April 29, 2016

Illinois Department of Human Service (IDHS) – June 2016

# Appendix C

## Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Letter



Pat Quinn, Governor

Illinois Department of Human Services

Michelle R. B. Saddler, Secretary

100 South Grand Avenue, East ! Springfield, Illinois 62762  
401 South Clinton Street • Chicago, Illinois 60607

July 12, 2011

Ms. Jamilah R. Jor'dan and Ms. Joanne Kelly  
Quality Practice Partnership (QPP) Leadership Team Co-Chairs

Dear Jamilah and Joanne:

I am in receipt of your letter dated June 22, 2011 requesting approval to include an Illinois Family Worker credential, presumably developed by your team under the auspices of the Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC), in the Gateways to Opportunity Professional Development System. I applaud the QPP Leadership Team's drive in embarking on this extensive and time-consuming endeavor. I agree that it is a need in our Illinois system.

It was a little difficult for me to get a sense of exactly where the QPP Team is in this process from the letter, but I appreciate your follow up in sending me your vision and plan whenever they are ready to be shared. Even so, I do approve of the development of the credential and its inclusion in Gateways, with some specific reminders to the QPP Team about the parameters of our system as outlined below, which I hope you will communicate clearly back to the Team.

**The role of the Cornell University or other credentials developed and owned by another entity.** I see the Cornell FDC or the University of IL at Springfield FCD credentials fitting into the Family Worker credential process in a manner like the Child Development Associate (CDA) or Montessori credentials fit into our ECE credential. The Department of Human Services, as the funder of Gateways, effectively owns the credentialing system and is the official credentialing entity. As such, any credential in this system must be developed within the Gateways framework.

**The Gateways model for groups joining the structure.** This model, available from INCCRRA, outlines the process for new credential development and how it, starting out as a separate process, becomes integrated within the Gateways and PDAC structure as it develops. Of particular note are the general timeframes, based on the experience of other new credentials, for when the Leadership Team would be somewhat "stand-alone" and when it would begin to integrate into the credentialing and professional development structure. The other points to pay attention to are the general parameters for how INCCRRA could support the process. Staff at INCCRRA is quite stretched right now with the current volume of credential work, so any fundraising efforts the QPP Leadership Team makes should include staff support at INCCRRA to ensure coordination with the larger system and use of INCCRRA's expertise in

this area. As you may know, at this point FY12 contracts are flat funded, so the most INCCRRA staff could provide on current funding would be possibly support setting up meetings via meeting wizard, conference calls, or using other tools, and meeting space. If it would help you target and create a realistic fund raising plan, Joni Scritchlow, INCCRRA, has spread sheets on the costs of credential development during the first 5 years.

I fully support and approve the development of an Illinois Family Worker credential and its inclusion in the Gateways system, provided it is done within the parameters outlined in this letter and the referenced documents and with ongoing, clear communication with PDAC and INCCRRA. Please let me know if you have questions or would like to discuss any part of this letter.

Thank you again for your commitment to family support work and its professionalization.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gina Ruther".

Gina Ruther

Acting Child Care Bureau Chief

cc: Linda Saterfield, DHS HCD Director  
Cass Wolfe, PDAC Co-Chair  
Candace Lewis, PDAC Co-Chair  
Anne Wharff, DHS BCCD  
Joni Scritchlow, INCCRRA

# Appendix D

## 2012 Employer Survey

### Family Support Workforce Survey Highlights

- 56 individuals have started a survey (10 have fully completed it)
  - 23 from Head Start
  - Three from DHS
  - Three from Family Advocacy Center
  - Seven from Community Action
  - 15 from other places
    - Two from 211
    - Lincoln Prairie Behavioral Health Center
    - Housing Authority
    - Life Center for Independent Living
    - Childcare Network of Evanston
    - Chestnut Health Systems
    - Western Ave. Community Center
    - Two from Heartland Community College–Adult Education
    - Unit 5 School District
    - Child and Family Connections
    - Three unspecified
- 95% (37) have staff that work directly with families
  - Respondents indicated they had between 0–751 staff in these positions
  - Mean is 35
  - Mode is 12

Job Title	Number of organizations with position	Minimum education level (most frequently cited)	Status of position
Family Advocate	6 (19%)	AA degree in related field (2-33%)	75% Full time
Family Resource Specialist/Advisor	2 (6%)	AA or Bachelor's degree	100% Full time
Family Support	4 (12%)	Bachelor's degree in related field (3-75%)	100% Full time
Family Worker	4 (12%)	Bachelor's degree in related field (2-50%)	100% Full time
Home Visitor	9 (28%)	Bachelor's degree in related field (4-50%)	86% Full time
Family Case Manager	8 (25%)	Bachelor's degree in related field (5-56%)	83% Full time
Parent Educator	5 (16%)	Bachelor's degree in related field (2-40%)	75% Full time

- 84% (21) indicated they had other job titles being utilized at their agency but only 4 indicated any specifics as to what those were about.
- 96% felt they were able to hire staff with the knowledge, education and experience required to effectively work with families.
- 85% said they have a set of mandatory training topics or curriculum required for staff working directly with families.

Home visiting training models used: Parents as Teachers for 0-3 High Scope Curriculum for 3-5, PAT, EHS, Parents as Teachers, Born to Learn

- 81% (22) indicated there are training topics or professional development opportunities that are available (but not required) to staff who directly serve families.
- 75% (18) feel there is a need for development of a competency based family support/family development training for staff.
- 67% (16) feel there is a need to develop statewide agreement regarding the skills, knowledge and dispositions required for staff who works directly with families.
- 67% (16) would be willing to share agency job descriptions and/or salary ranges for each job title of staff who works directly with families.
- 38% (9) would be interested in serving on a statewide Committee to develop the competencies for a Family Specialist Credential in Illinois. 8 others have provided contact information for someone else they believe may be interested.

# Appendix E

## Gateways Family Specialist Credential Content Areas

### Gateways to Opportunity

#### Illinois Professional Development System

#### Family Specialist Credential: Content Areas

##### **Content Area A: HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

Family specialists use current and emerging principles, theories, and knowledge of individual and family development, family functioning and the family system as a foundation for all aspects of their work with families. They understand how interactions among family members as well as between family and the contexts within which they live influence their functioning and development as a family. They view family systems knowledge and human development across the lifespan as the core of their professional practice. They engage in ongoing learning and reflection about family knowledge and theory, and understand typical and atypical functioning and development within the context of family, culture and society. They use their understanding to plan and implement assessment and services. Knowledge of family functioning and human development inform collaboration with families and other team members on behalf of the whole family and individual family members, including children from the prenatal stage through age 21.

##### **Content Area B: HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELL-BEING**

Family specialists understand that physical health, mental health, and safety are the foundations of individual and family functioning, development and well-being. They acknowledge the critical importance of the family environment to the health, safety and well-being of all family members, including children, from the prenatal stage through age 21. They collaborate with families and other professionals to facilitate safe, healthy environments. They adapt supports and interventions to families' individual strengths, assets, needs, concerns, priorities and goals within cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic contexts. They facilitate multiple opportunities for family members to strengthen protective factors, fulfill family functions, and gain knowledge and skills to support current and future well-being of the family and each of its members, including those of their children, beginning in the prenatal stage through age 21.

##### **Content Area C: OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT**

Knowledge of families and human development provides the framework for family services. Family specialists understand the purposes of formal and informal observation and assessment in family service settings and employ a strength-based approach to assessment of family strengths, assets, concerns, priorities and goals. They view observation and assessment as a way to understand each family and its members (e.g., single-parent families, multi-generational families) and the family context (e.g., risk and protective factors), as frameworks for engaging and collaborating with families and other service providers, and as a means for program evaluation and accountability. They take responsibility for using a variety of developmentally, culturally, linguistically, and individually appropriate formal and informal observations and assessments to gather and share information on family strengths and assets as well as family concerns, priorities and goals. They obtain research-based assessment information using

repeated, multiple measures and sources. They interpret information holistically and use it to inform services, to monitor service provision and progress toward shared goals based on family priorities, and to reflect on and modify their own roles and practices.

#### **Content Area D: CURRICULUM AND PROGRAM DESIGN**

Family specialists have broad knowledge of human development, human services, and approaches for supporting and enhancing family functioning and development, including evidence-based and recommended practices. They value families and family functioning and recognize the interdependence among family members as well as between families and individual family members and their multiple environments. They view curriculum and program design as a collaborative, dynamic, and evolving professional endeavor that encompasses and interacts with multiple areas of functioning, relationships, and environments. They collaborate with families to use assessment results to plan and provide comprehensive, cohesive programs that are family-driven, build on family strengths, and are individualized to the family, its structure, and its members, including services for children beginning in the prenatal stage through age 21.

#### **Content Area E: INTERACTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS AND ENVIRONMENTS**

Family specialists use their understanding of culturally, linguistically and individually appropriate interactions, relationships, and environments to ensure that family services are responsive to and respectful of each family and its individual members, and reflect appreciation of family and community strengths and assets. They use interpersonal interactions that engage, support and guide each family and family member toward strength-based outcomes. They recognize the important roles of the physical, psychological and social environments in which families live and function, and strive to provide and support programmatic and home environments that are safe, nurturing, and supportive of growth toward healthy, autonomous family functioning within the contexts of natural, inclusive environments. Environments, relationships, and interactions reflect strength-based values about families and family services. They work with families and other providers to integrate services into meaningful, typical family settings and events in home and community.

#### **Content Area F: FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS**

Family specialists understand and value the critical role of positive, collaborative partnerships with families, colleagues, and community service agencies. They respect diverse perspectives, including those reflecting cultural and linguistic diversity, and demonstrate integrity in conveying their own professional perspectives and values. They use their knowledge of family and social systems to create reciprocal interpersonal relationships that recognize, support, and promote the contributions of family, program, and community participants to the development, learning, and well-being of families and family members. They use their knowledge of community capacity, assets and dynamics to access and ensure a comprehensive, cohesive system of service delivery for each family and its individual members, including children from the prenatal stage through age 21.

#### **Content Area G: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Family specialists identify themselves as professionals and conduct themselves as members of a vital, expanding, and changing profession. Their professional attitudes evolve with experience, reflection, professional development, and advances in the profession. They value and honor diversity in cultures,

languages, beliefs, abilities, and practices. They know and value the history and contributions of their profession and its related fields. They are committed to ongoing personal and professional development, and continually reflect on and take responsibility for their own values, choices and actions. They advocate for strong families and communities and exemplify the ethical standards of the profession in their personal and professional interactions and activities.

# Appendix F

## Gateways Family Specialist Credential Benchmarks/Competencies

### Family Specialist Content Areas and Benchmarks/Competencies

#### Content Area A: HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Family specialists use current and emerging principles, theories, and knowledge of individual and family development, family functioning and the family system as a foundation for all aspects of their work with families. They understand how interactions among family members as well as between family and the contexts within which they live influence their functioning and development as a family. They view family systems knowledge and human development across the lifespan as the core of their professional practice. They engage in ongoing learning and reflection about family knowledge and theory, and understand typical and atypical functioning and development within the context of family, culture and society. They use their understanding to plan and implement assessment and services. Knowledge of family functioning and human development inform collaboration with families and other team members on behalf of the whole family and individual family members, including children from the prenatal stage through age 21.

#### Performance Area A1

*Employs understanding of theory and research on human development and functioning to plan and provide a comprehensive, cohesive system of family supports that builds on and enhances family strengths and assets to address family needs, concerns, priorities and goals.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<b>A1.1</b> Concepts and principles of human development and of major theories and theorists that guide study and practice in human services, including holistic, lifespan perspectives on human development	Analysis	(A1) Compares and contrasts how historic and current human service practices were/are influenced by the concepts and principles of major theories of human development
<b>A1.2</b> Concepts and principles of family functioning and development, family systems, and major theories and theorists that guide study and practice in family services, including ecological and cultural perspectives on family functioning (e.g., diverse family structures; risk, protective and promotional factors) and development (e.g., family transitions)	Analysis	(A2) Compares and contrasts how historic and current human service practices were/are influenced by concepts and principles of family functioning and family services

<p><b>A1.3</b> Characteristics of social and physical environments that influence individual and family development and learning and family systems, including those related to family (e.g., multi-generational families), neighborhood (e.g., crime), and community (e.g., resources), and cultural and linguistic diversity</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(A3) Compares and contrasts how characteristics of family, neighborhood, cultural and linguistic environments influence individual and family development, learning, and functioning, including implications for family services</p>
<p><b>A1.4</b> Characteristics and processes of typical and atypical human development, including individual differences and continuity of development of children, prenatally - age 21 (e.g., early environmental and relationship effects on brain development, influences of differing abilities on development and learning)</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(A4) Illustrates influences of early environmental and individual characteristics and processes on typical and atypical human development</p>

## Performance Area A2

*Employs understanding of theory and research on family functioning, family development, and family systems to plan and provide a comprehensive, cohesive system of family supports that builds on and enhances family strengths to address family needs, concerns, priorities and goals.*

<p><b>Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions</b></p>	<p><b>Achievement Expectation</b></p>	<p><b>Benchmarks/Competencies</b></p>
<p><b>A2.1</b> Current and historical views of families and family functions, including parenting children, prenatally - age 21</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(A5) Compares and contrasts family service practices and approaches, based on current and historical views of families, family development, and family systems</p>
<p><b>A2.2</b> Family systems perspective, including family composition (e.g., one-parent families, multi-generational families), roles, dynamics, and relationships within cultural and linguistic context</p>	<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>(A6) Critiques a family service system, based on case study or actual site, from perspective of a family systems approach</p>

<p><b>A2.3</b> Developmental systems perspectives, including biology of human behavior, normative and atypical family and individual development, stressors and supports, and family events (e.g., transitions, crises, traumatic events)</p>	<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>(A7) Critiques a family service system, based on case study or actual site, using a developmental systems perspective on normative and atypical family functioning</p>
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## Performance Area A3

*Observes for and recognizes indicators of family, neighborhood and community conditions that may influence family functioning and development, and works with family to enhance supports for family functioning and development, including meeting developmental needs of children, prenatal through age 21.*

<p><b>Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions</b></p>	<p><b>Achievement Expectation</b></p>	<p><b>Benchmarks/Competencies</b></p>
<p><b>A3.1</b> Risk, protective and promotional relationship factors within the nuclear and extended family environment that influence family functioning and development (e.g., family dynamics, quality of relationships, individual characteristics such as temperament, disability, health, and mental health, ability to fulfill family functions, including parenting children prenatal - age 21)</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(A8) Compares and contrasts risk, protective and promotional relationship factors within the nuclear and extended family environment in relation to their potential implications for family functioning and development.</p>
<p><b>A3.2</b> Risk, protective and promotional factors within the nuclear and extended family environments (e.g., socioeconomic and related conditions such as substance abuse) that influence family's access to resources (e.g., educational, recreational, supports for parenting)</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(A9) Compares and contrasts risk, protective and promotional relationship factors within the nuclear and extended family environment in relation to their potential implications for families' access to resources.</p>
<p><b>A3.3</b> Risk, protective and promotional factors in neighborhood and community environments (e.g., socioeconomic and related conditions such as poverty, trauma, crime) that influence family's access to resources (e.g., educational, recreational, social, emotional)</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(A10) Compares and contrasts risk, protective and promotional relationship factors in neighborhood and community environments in relation to their potential implications for families' access to resources.</p>

## Content Area B: HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELL-BEING

Family specialists understand that physical health, mental health, and safety are the foundations of individual and family functioning, development and well-being. They acknowledge the critical importance of the family environment to the health, safety and well-being of all family members, including children, from the prenatal stage through age 21. They collaborate with families and other professionals to facilitate safe, healthy environments. They adapt supports and interventions to families' individual strengths, assets, needs, concerns, priorities and goals within cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic contexts. They facilitate multiple opportunities for family members to strengthen protective factors, fulfill family functions, and gain knowledge and skills to support current and future well-being of the family and each of its members, including those of their children, beginning in the prenatal stage through age 21.

### Performance Area B1

*Employs an understanding of family characteristics, ecologies, dynamics, and beliefs related to individual differences in families based on culture, language, education, family functioning, and socioeconomic conditions, as a basis for collaborating with families in planning and providing services related to physical and mental health, safety and well-being.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<b>B1.1</b> Characteristics of family, neighborhood and community environments that support or impede health, safety and well-being of the family and its individual members	Analysis	(B1) Distinguishes among family, neighborhood and community environments that support or impede health, safety and well-being of the family and its individual members, using case descriptions of specific environments
<b>B1.2</b> Potential influences of diversity (e.g., family culture, individual knowledge and approaches to problem solving) on beliefs about physical and mental health, safety and well-being (child rearing and family functioning)	Analysis	(B2) Analyzes potential influences of diversity on beliefs about physical and mental health, safety and well being
<b>B1.3</b> Potential influences of diversity (e.g., family culture, individual knowledge and approaches to problem solving) on family beliefs about services related to physical and mental health, safety, and well-being	Analysis	(B3) Analyzes potential influences of diversity on beliefs about services related to physical and mental health, safety, and well being

## Performance Area B2

*Employs knowledge of basic health needs and interrelationships among physical and mental health, physical well-being, and emotional well-being to promote a physically and emotionally healthy approach to family living.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<p><b>B2.1</b> Standards and procedures for ensuring cleanliness and sanitation, including health care monitoring and universal precautions related to care of children, prenatally - age 21</p>	<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>(B4) Critiques policies and practices in place in case study or actual service program from perspective of standards and required procedures for ensuring cleanliness and sanitation, including health care monitoring and universal precautions</p>
<p><b>B2.2</b> Procedures for monitoring physical and emotional well-being and health, including signs of communicable diseases, emotional distress, or addiction</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(B5) Distinguishes among monitoring procedures and indicators that represent physical well-being (such as health status and communicable diseases) and emotional well-being (such as emotional distress and addiction)</p>
<p><b>B2.3</b> Approaches to teaching family members about disease prevention, required immunizations, nutrition, fitness, and first aid, including sharing resources and providing direct modeling within the context of daily routines</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(B6) Develops and defends plan for teaching family members about health and wellness, identifies appropriate, supportive family resources, and identify procedures for modeling related skills and strategies within context of daily routines</p>
<p><b>B2.4</b> Approaches to teaching family members about social and emotional development and mental health, including requirements for mandated reporting</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(B7) Develops and defends plan for teaching family members about social and emotional development and mental health, including requirements for mandated reporting</p>
<p><b>B2.5</b> Community services available to address physical and mental health, safety, and mental health concerns, priorities, and goals of families and individual members, including health, education, and social services</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(B8) Designs and defends an array of appropriate community services, based on case study of an individual family within a specific neighborhood, addressing specified goals related to health, education, and social services</p>

<b>B2.6</b> Roles of family specialists and other disciplines within different types of programs that address family well-being, including child-focused programs, prenatally - age 21	Analysis	(B9) Compares and contrasts roles of family specialists and other disciplines in family- and child-focused programs that include family well-being as a program goal, using case studies
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### Performance Area B3

*Observes for and recognizes indicators of optimal and less than optimal functioning and development in family systems, including parenting of children, prenatal through age 21, to inform assessment and service planning.*

<b>Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions</b>	<b>Achievement Expectation</b>	<b>Benchmarks/Competencies</b>
<b>B3.1</b> Indicators of physically healthy conditions in family and child environments (e.g., nutrition, sanitation, safety)	Synthesis	(B10) Completes analysis of physically healthy conditions in family or child environment, including nutrition, sanitation, and safety, and critiques results based on standards of practice for that setting
<b>B3.2</b> Indicators of mental and emotional health and of healthy emotional environments (e.g., quality of relationships, addictive behavior, trauma, crime), including indicators of family coping and adaptations to adverse environmental conditions	Analysis	(B11) Distinguishes among positive and negative indicators of mental and emotional health and healthy emotional environments, including family coping and adaptations to adverse environmental conditions
<b>B3.3</b> Indicators of environmental and relational conditions related to children's development and learning (e.g., parent-child attachment, parent-child interaction, language environment, child abuse or neglect)	Synthesis	(B12) Completes case study of individual family (case study or practicum/work site) using indicators of environmental and relational conditions related to children's development and learning, and state hypotheses to inform assessment and service planning

## Performance Area B4

*Observes for and recognizes indicators of optimal and less than optimal development and learning in children, prenatal through age 21, to inform assessment and service planning.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<b>B4.1</b> Indicators of health and well-being, including intact physical and sensory systems	Analysis	(B13) Distinguishes between positive and negative indicators of children's health and well-being, including intact physical and sensory systems
<b>B4.2</b> Indicators of attachment and positive parent-child interaction	Synthesis	(B14) Completes case study assessment of parent-child relationship (videotaped or live interaction) using indicators of attachment and positive parent-child interaction, and state hypotheses to inform assessment and service planning
<b>B4.3</b> Indicators of optimal development and learning as well as indicators of delay, difference or disability in children's physical, social, emotional, language, and cognitive development	Analysis	(B15) Distinguishes among indicators that represent optimal development and learning and those that may reflect delay, difference or disability

### Content Area C: OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

Knowledge of families and human development provides the framework for family services. Family specialists understand the purposes of formal and informal observation and assessment in family service settings and employ a strength-based approach to assessment of family strengths, assets, concerns, priorities and goals. They view observation and assessment as a way to understand each family and its members (e.g., single-parent families, multi-generational families) and the family context (e.g., risk and protective factors), as frameworks for engaging and collaborating with families and other service providers, and as a means for program evaluation and accountability. They take responsibility for using a variety of developmentally, culturally, linguistically, and individually appropriate formal and informal observations and assessments to gather and share information on family strengths and assets as well as family concerns, priorities and goals. They obtain research-based assessment information using repeated, multiple measures and sources. They interpret information holistically and use it to inform services, to monitor service provision and progress toward shared goals based on family priorities, and to reflect on and modify their own roles and practices.

## Performance Area C1

*Applies a holistic perspective on observation and assessment that rely on multiple measures, multiple sources of data, and frequent data collection in typical, everyday family and community environments.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<b>C1.1</b> Recommended practices in observation and assessment, including characteristics and importance of a holistic approach to observation and assessment, using multiple measures and frequent data collection across multiple family and individual environments	Evaluation	(C1) Critiques programmatic practices in observation and assessment in comparison to recommended practices in observation and assessment, based on case study or actual practice
<b>C1.2</b> Importance of multiple sources of data, including families and intra- and inter-agency service providers in health, social service, and education	Synthesis	(C2) Incorporates and summarizes data from multiple sources, based on case study or actual practice, and reflects on importance of multiple perspectives for understanding families and for service planning

## Performance Area C2

*Establishes collaborative partnerships and dialogue with diverse families as a basis for assessing and understanding family strengths, assets, concerns, priorities and goals, including those related to parenting their children, beginning in the prenatal stage through age 21.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<b>C2.1</b> Strategies for engaging families in identifying family strengths, assets, concerns, priorities, and goals (e.g., co-implemented instruments such as genograms, family histories)	Synthesis	(C3) Demonstrates and reflects on, or designs and defends, program and personal strategies used to engage families in identifying strengths, assets, concerns, priorities and goals, including those related to their parenting roles
<b>C2.2</b> Strategies for engaging families in age-appropriate developmental screening of children, as an avenue for assessing children's development	Synthesis	(C4) Demonstrates and reflects on, or designs and defends, use of age-appropriate developmental screening of child as an avenue for assessing child's development

<p><b>C2.3</b> Strategies for engaging families in age-appropriate developmental screening of children as an approach to understanding family perceptions of their children and family knowledge of normative child development</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(C5) Demonstrates and reflects on, or designs and defends, use of age-appropriate developmental screening of child as an avenue for assessing family perceptions of their child's development and knowledge of normative child development</p>
<p><b>C2.4</b> Strategies to engage families with diverse knowledge, abilities, and problem solving abilities in the assessment process</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(C6) Demonstrates and reflects on, or designs and defends, strategies used to engage families with diverse knowledge, skills, and problem solving abilities in the assessment process</p>

### Performance Area C3

*Applies knowledge of purposes, characteristics and evidence base of different formal and informal approaches and tools for gathering information relevant to family service planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating.*

<p><b>Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions</b></p>	<p><b>Achievement Expectation</b></p>	<p><b>Benchmarks/Competencies</b></p>
<p><b>C3.1</b> Purposes and characteristics of different types of data collection tools (e.g., interview, guided observation, rating scale, survey, asset scan, genogram, standardized child assessments)</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(C7) Distinguishes purposes and characteristics of different types of data collection tools</p>
<p><b>C3.2</b> Advantages and disadvantages of different types of data collection tools in relation to purpose of assessment (e.g., determining eligibility, setting priorities for services) and focus (e.g., nuclear and extended family relationships, community resources and assets, children's development, parent-child relationship)</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(C8) States advantages and disadvantages of different types of data collection tools and of specific assessments, in relation to purpose and focus of assessment, and distinguishes among uses of different types of tools for addressing specific questions and information needs</p>

<p><b>C3.3</b> Advantages, disadvantages and characteristics of evidence-based and other commonly used data collection tools, including both formal and informal tools used for different purposes</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(C9) States advantages and disadvantages of selected, commonly used data collection tools, including both formal and informal tools, and selects appropriate tools to address specific questions and information needs</p>
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## Performance Area C4

*Applies measurement concepts and principles to evaluate and select observation and assessment approaches related to family characteristics and functioning, including child characteristics and functioning within context of the family system.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<p><b>C4.1</b> Measurement concepts (e.g., validity, reliability, usefulness) and application to evaluating and using a variety of types of instruments</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(C10) Employs concepts of validity, reliability, and usefulness to defend the selection of specific assessment instruments</p>
<p><b>C4.2</b> Measurement principles (e.g., family-centered practice, environmental relevance) and application to evaluating and using different types of instruments</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(C11) Employs principles of family-centered practice and environmental relevance to evaluate the selection of specific assessment instruments</p>
<p><b>C4.3</b> Standards of practice (e.g., ethical data collection, confidentiality, right to privacy) in gathering information from and about families, their members, and their environments</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(C12) Demonstrates understanding of specific standards of practice such as ethical data collection, confidentiality, and right of privacy, based on case study or actual practice</p>
<p><b>C4.4</b> Approaches to evaluating and selecting different types of measurement tools based on measurement principles, evidence base, and standards of practice in assessment and measurement</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(C13) Given a case study description of a family, chooses and defends selection of specific tools to gather information on child, family, and environment, based on measurement principles, evidence base, and standards of practice in assessment and measurement</p>

## Performance Area C5

*Objectively administers, interprets, and summarizes information from informal and formal assessment tools to inform decisions about service goals and approaches, to support communication with others, and to inform program implementation, monitoring and evaluation.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<p><b>C5.1</b> Objective, reliable administration of specific, common tools of different types (e.g., interview, checklists, rating scales, surveys, asset scans, genograms, kinship maps, standardized assessments) used to gather information for different purposes and in different areas of family functioning</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(C14) Demonstrates objective, reliable administration of a variety of common assessment tools used to gather different kinds of information in human service programs and draws conclusions about advantages and disadvantages of tools for developing a family service plan</p>
<p><b>C5.2</b> Objective, descriptive observation of verbal and non-verbal behaviors as a primary data-gathering approach and as a context for interpreting other assessment information</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(C15) Demonstrates objective, descriptive observation of verbal and non-verbal behaviors and draws conclusions for interpreting other assessment information</p>
<p><b>C5.3</b> Approaches to integrating information across various types of tools into a holistic, family-centered summary of family characteristics, functioning, and ecology for use in initial and ongoing planning</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(C16) Develops a summary of family characteristics, functioning, and ecology from perspective of implications for developing and reviewing a comprehensive family service plan, given case study or actual practice results</p>
<p><b>C5.4</b> Formats for sharing results from observations and assessment in written language that is respectful, family-centered (e.g., culturally, linguistically sensitive), and understandable to families and other providers, including emphasis on family strengths and use of supportive graphical information</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(C17) Analyzes different written formats for sharing assessment and observation information with families and other providers, from the perspective of demonstrating respect for family understandings, abilities, values, and strengths</p>

<p><b>C5.5</b> Formats for verbally sharing results from observations and assessment with family and with other providers using respectful, understandable, family-centered language (e.g., sensitive to family culture, language, abilities, linguistically; emphasis on family strengths and assets)</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(C18) Compares and contrasts formats for sharing from observations and assessments with family and other providers using respectful, understandable, family-centered language</p>
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## Performance Area C6

*Maintains records of service delivery for use in implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and reflection.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<p><b>C6.1</b> Legal and ethical standards and requirements for confidentiality of assessment information, including standards and requirements related to own and others' roles in collecting information on families and children</p>	<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>(C19) Critiques written standards and requirements of an operating family service program in comparison to legal and ethical standards required by funders and recommended by a relevant professional organization</p>
<p><b>C6.2</b> Common approaches to organizing and maintaining paper, product (e.g., photos), and technology-based documentation of service provision and of individual and family progress in relation to service goals</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(C20) Organizes and maintains documentation of services provided to two different families, including data on individual and family progress on service goals</p>
<p><b>C6.3</b> Common approaches to summarizing data collected across services and families to identify patterns (e.g., common responses to specific services or approaches) to inform future service delivery</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(C21) Organizes and analyzes results from initial and ongoing data collected across services and families, and makes recommendations for future approaches to service delivery within a specific human service agency</p>

### **Content Area D: CURRICULUM OR PROGRAM DESIGN**

Family specialists have broad knowledge of human development, human services, and approaches for supporting and enhancing family functioning and development, including evidence-based and recommended practices. They value families and family functioning and recognize the interdependence among family members as well as between families and individual family members and their multiple environments. They view curriculum and program design as a collaborative, dynamic, and evolving professional endeavor that encompasses and interacts with multiple areas of functioning,

relationships, and environments. They collaborate with families to use assessment results to plan and provide comprehensive, cohesive programs that are family-driven, build on family strengths, and are individualized to the family, its structure, and its members, including services for children beginning in the prenatal stage through age 21.

## Performance Area D1

*Employs knowledge of the broad range of human and family service system goals and approaches, as well as specific in-depth knowledge of the family specialist role within different service systems, to develop and provide a comprehensive, cohesive system of family services that support family resilience and well-being within the context of typical, everyday environments.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<b>D1.1</b> Philosophy, concepts and approaches of a range of family- and child-focused prevention and intervention services (e.g., family support, parent education, early intervention)	Analysis	(D1) Compares and contrasts the philosophies, major concepts, and approaches to intervention of a range of family- and child-focused prevention and intervention services
<b>D1.2</b> Legal and policy frameworks (federal, state, local) of human service systems, including family (e.g., protective services) and child services (e.g., early intervention, child welfare, Early Head Start, Head Start, home visiting, and school programs)	Analysis	(D2) Distinguishes among the legal and policy frameworks that underlie different family and child service systems
<b>D1.3</b> Broad purposes and goals addressed by family services in a variety of community-based programs including family goals (e.g., health, safety, education, housing, employment, financial literacy and stability, safety, parenting) and children's development and learning	Analysis	(D3) Distinguishes and categorizes broad purposes and goals of a range of community-based child and family programs
<b>D1.4</b> Evidence-based and values-based standards and practices in family and child services, including connections and differences between evidence and values-based standards	Synthesis	(D4) Compares evidence-based and values-based standards and practices within each of family services and child services, and contrasts evidence and values underlying family-service and child-service practices

## Performance Area D2

*Collaborates with families and other providers, within a practicum, worksite and/or case study, to develop an integrated, individualized family service plan that is based on information from a comprehensive assessment, reflects family priorities, concerns, and needs, respects individual differences related to culture, language, education, and abilities as well as social and socioeconomic conditions, and builds on family and community strengths.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<p><b>D2.1</b> Principles of adult learning relevant to family engagement and collaboration, including principles related to strengthening and promoting family competence, confidence and resilience</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(D5) Identifies standards for family engagement and collaboration from perspective of adult learning, including principles related to strengthening and promoting family competence, confidence and resilience, as reflected in family service plan</p>
<p><b>D2.2</b> Strategies to ensure partnerships with families in developing the family service plan (e.g., sharing information to ensure that families have the knowledge needed to make informed decisions)</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(D6) Compares and contrasts strategies that support culturally and linguistically responsive partnerships with families in developing family service plans</p>
<p><b>D2.3</b> Components of family service plans including short- and long-term service goals, planned services and activities, responsibilities and timelines for both direct and coordinated services, based on family priorities, program and community resources, and family member participation in other programs, including early childhood and school-based programs</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(D7) Designs, compares, and defends, in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner, characteristics and components of family service plans developed in parent/family-focused and child-focused programs, using case study of child, family, program, and neighborhood</p>
<p><b>D2.4</b> Goals and activities that explicitly recognize family strengths and identify approaches and resources to support family autonomy in relation to family functions and development, including normative transitions and resources to address them, as identified through a collaborative assessment process</p>	<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>(D8) Assesses a family service plan format and development process in relation to approaches and resources that support family autonomy and addresses family's diversity, strengths, functions, development, and transitions, using information from case study of a collaborative assessment process</p>

<p><b>D2.5</b> Services and activities that explicitly address service coordination across neighborhood, community, and programmatic strengths, resources, and services, including meaningful involvement of the family in child-focused services (e.g., IFSP or IEP services to children with special needs and their families)</p>	<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>(D9) Assesses service coordination plans and activities from a best practice perspective of practices that emphasize family strengths, considering neighborhood, community, and programmatic strengths, resources, and services</p>
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### Performance Area D3

*Plans and provides home visits that integrate knowledge from multiple sources into ongoing interactions and experiences that reflect identified and changing strengths, priorities, concerns and goals of families within the context of natural, inclusive environments, including visits focused on parenting children, prenatal through age 21.*

<p><b>Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions</b></p>	<p><b>Achievement Expectation</b></p>	<p><b>Benchmarks/Competencies</b></p>
<p><b>D3.1</b> History, legislation, policy and research on home visiting designed to provide supports (e.g., emotional, informational, instrumental, spiritual) to families</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(D10) Distinguishes among and compare the legal, policy and research frameworks that underlie different perspectives on home visiting</p>
<p><b>D3.2</b> Purposes of home visiting programs in different types of community-based family-, parent-, parent-child, and parent-focused programs (e.g., support, education, parent-child interaction, carry-over from child-focused services)</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(D11) Distinguishes and categorizes broad purposes and goals of home visits in a range of community-based child, family and parent-child programs</p>
<p><b>D3.3</b> Common structures, events, and processes used in home visits designed for different purposes</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(D12) Distinguishes among the structures, events, and processes used to support a range of purposes of home visiting</p>

<p><b>D3.4</b> Common curricula used in home visiting, including a broad range of current home visiting curricula, in relation to purposes, formats, strengths and weaknesses, and adherence to family-centered and strength-based values (e.g., natural, inclusive environments, cultural and linguistic appropriateness)</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(D13) Compares and contrasts a selection of common home visiting curricula in relation to purposes, formats, strengths, weaknesses, and adherence to family-centered and strength-based values</p>
<p><b>D3.5</b> Strategies used in home visiting, including strategies for establishing partnerships with families and maintaining family engagement, problem solving approaches for engaging families in reflection and autonomous decision-making, collaborative strategies (e.g., using child developmental screening to convey information about child development), and skill-focused approaches that engage families in practicing and learning specific skills, including skills</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(D14) Designs and defends series of home visit plans that incorporate a range of home visiting strategies to establish partnerships with families, maintain family engagement, engage families in reflection and autonomous decision making, ensure collaboration around specific purposes, and engages families in skill-focused strategies to address specific outcomes</p>
<p><b>D3.6</b> Strategies to ensure that home visiting plans and activities are consistent with purposes of agency and family service goals, including goals related to family functioning and development and to parenting children, prenatally - age 21</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(D15) Designs and defends home visiting plans and activities from perspective of consistency with purposes of different agencies and family service goals</p>
<p><b>D3.7</b> Common dilemmas faced in home visiting, including relational boundaries, safety, maintaining a strength-based approach with families with multiple challenges and individual abilities, recognizing own areas of expertise in relation to family priorities and needs (e.g., role as first responder in family crises, recognizing and responding to family stress)</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(D16) Produces and defends appropriate professional responses to case studies of common dilemmas in home visiting</p>

## Performance Area D4

*Plans and provides group sessions that address common concerns, priorities and goals of specific types of group services for parents and families, including groups designed to provide social and emotional support (e.g., cafes), share information (e.g., influence of risk and protective factors on children's development and learning), and teach knowledge and skills (e.g., financial literacy, parenting).*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<p><b>D4.1</b> History, legislation, policy and research on parent groups designed to provide supports (e.g., social, emotional, informational, instrumental, spiritual) to families, using various types of groups (e.g., self-help, cafes, parent training)</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(D17) Distinguishes among and compares the legal, policy and research frameworks that underlie different perspectives on various types of parent group interventions</p>
<p><b>D4.2</b> Purposes of short- and long-term parent groups and activities in different types of community-based family, parent, parent-child, and child focused programs (e.g., parent support, parent education, carry-over from child-focused services)</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(D18) Distinguishes and categorizes broad purposes and goals of different types of parent groups in a range of community-based child, family and parent-child programs</p>
<p><b>D4.3</b> Common structures, events and processes used in parent groups designed for different purposes</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(D19) Distinguishes among the structures, events, and processes used in parent groups designed to address different purposes</p>
<p><b>D4.4</b> Curricula used for planning and leading parent groups, including a broad range of current parent group curricula, including purposes, formats, strengths and weaknesses, and adherence to family-centered and strength-based values (e.g., responsiveness to family priorities)</p>	<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>(D20) Contrasts and assesses the purposes, formats, strengths, weaknesses of a range of common parent group curricula, including analysis for adherence to family-centered and strength-based values</p>

<p><b>D4.5</b> Strategies used in leading parent groups of different types, including strategies for establishing partnerships with families and maintaining family engagement, problem solving approaches for engaging families in reflection and autonomous decision-making, approaches for conveying knowledge and understanding (e.g., knowledge of child development), and skill-focused approaches that engage families in practicing and learning specific skills (e.g., parent-child interaction, financial literacy)</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(D21) Designs and defends parent group sessions that incorporate a range of strategies used in leading parent groups of different types to establish partnerships with families, maintain family engagement, engage families in problem solving, reflection and autonomous decision making, ensure collaboration around specific purposes, including strategies that address specific skill-focused outcomes</p>
<p><b>D4.6</b> Strategies for planning and implementing parent-child groups that focus on the parent-child relationship, including strategies for recognizing and building competence, confidence and resilience in parenting (e.g., recognizing parent competence, sharing knowledge of child, enjoying child together), strategies that strengthen assets (e.g., protective factors), and strategies that strengthen carry-over of early intervention and school-based learning to home and other everyday environments</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(D22) Designs and defends parent-child group sessions that focus on the parent-child relationship, from perspective of recognizing and building competence, confidence, and resilience in parenting and facilitate carry-over and consistency among different types of intervention programs</p>
<p><b>D4.7</b> Common dilemmas in planning and leading parent and parent-child groups, including planning for a range of parent characteristics (e.g., interest, abilities, level of prior knowledge, beliefs; conditions such as family violence), maintaining engagement and promoting and facilitating problem solving in stressful group situations</p>	<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>(D23) Recommends appropriate professional responses to case studies of common dilemmas in planning and leading parent and parent-child group groups</p>

## Performance Area D5

*Accesses and uses a broad range of technologies to support communication with families, share information and resources with families, coordinate across services, and monitor service delivery in relation to program standards and stated goals.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<b>D5.1</b> Range of current and emerging technologies available to support the different purposes and activities of human service programs	Analysis	(D24) Distinguishes among different purposes for using technology in human service programs, and classifies current technologies appropriate to each purpose
<b>D5.2</b> Current technologies commonly used by family specialists for different professional purposes	Analysis	(D25) Compares and contrasts common technologies used by family specialists in different types of human service programs, and critiques from perspective of program standards and goals of a specific service program
<b>D5.3</b> Ethical dilemmas posed by use of technologies for family support, engagement, and collaboration (e.g., appropriate information to post on open-access web-sites such as Facebook; boundaries between personal and professional roles)	Evaluation	(D26) Recommends appropriate professional responses to case studies of common dilemmas in using technology for different purposes in human service programs

## Content Area E: INTERACTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, AND ENVIRONMENTS

Family specialists use their understanding of culturally, linguistically and individually appropriate interactions, relationships, and environments to ensure that family services are responsive to and respectful of each family and its individual members, and reflect appreciation of family and community strengths and assets. They use interpersonal interactions that engage, support and guide each family and family member toward strength-based outcomes. They recognize the important roles of the physical, psychological and social environments in which families live and function, and strive to provide and support programmatic and home environments that are safe, nurturing, and supportive of growth toward healthy, autonomous family functioning within the contexts of natural, inclusive environments. Environments, relationships, and interactions reflect strength-based, culturally and linguistically responsive values about families and family services. They work with families and other providers to integrate services into meaningful, typical family settings and events in home and community.

## Performance Area E1

*Employs communication approaches and skills that form the basis of collaborative relationships with families, other service providers working with the family, and others in the community, on behalf of families and their children, prenatally through age 21.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<p><b>E1.1</b> Communication skills such as active listening, questioning, and summarizing to facilitate perceptions of family and of self as competent and productive</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(E1) Demonstrates communication skills such as active listening, questioning, and summarizing, and appraises own skills from perspective of facilitating perceptions of family and self as competent and productive</p>
<p><b>E1.2</b> Strategies to solicit, listen to and demonstrate values related to multiple views and perspectives</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(E2) Demonstrates communication strategies to solicit, listen to, and demonstrate values, and appraises own strategies from perspective of honoring multiple perspectives</p>
<p><b>E1.3</b> Strategies to convey own professional values and perspectives in an open, respectful, and transparent manner</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(E3) Demonstrates and defends communication strategies for conveying own professional values and perspectives in an open, respectful, and transparent manner</p>
<p><b>E1.4</b> Collaborative approaches such as problem-solving and conflict resolution to support families' understanding of and responsibility for priorities, goals, and actions</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(E4) Demonstrates collaborative approaches to problem-solving and conflict resolution and appraises own strategies from perspective of supporting family understanding and autonomy</p>
<p><b>E1.5</b> Strategies to evaluate and adapt own interactions and relationships in response to individual differences in family preferences, including family preferences related to cultural beliefs, linguistic preferences, and potential perceptions of bias</p>	<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>(E5) Assesses approaches to gathering information on family preferences, including those related to culture, language, and potential perceptions of bias, and designs personal standards for evaluating and adapting own interactions and relationships in response to individual differences</p>

## Performance Area E2

*Creates culturally, linguistically and individually appropriate opportunities for families and family members to participate and become engaged in the program, to acquire knowledge, skills, and dispositions that foster healthy interactions and relationships within the family and enable families to take ownership for accessing and using a broad range of resources to support their own functioning and development, including those related to child development and parenting children, beginning in the prenatal stage through age 21.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<p><b>E2.1</b> Function of helping relationships as providing families with the resources they need (knowledge, skill, relationships, resources) to become self-sustaining in fulfilling their functions as a family and as advocates for their family and communities</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(E6) Compares and contrasts program practices to support helping relationships conducive to providing families with the resources they need to be self-sustaining in fulfilling family functions</p>
<p><b>E2.2</b> Strategies that support and seek to enhance positive family engagement and interactions, family and parenting networks, and supports within extended family, neighborhood, and community environments</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(E7) Recognizes and defend strategies that foster positive family engagement, interactions, and natural supports</p>
<p><b>E2.3</b> Strategies to support family and child transitions to new learning environments and programs</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(E8) Compares and contrasts program practices that support family and child transitions to new environments and programs</p>
<p><b>E2.4</b> Strategies to ensure consistency across child learning and developmental environments and providers, including collaboration among family and child-based programs, and among providers (e.g., teachers, family members, therapists)</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(E9) Compares and contrasts program practices that support consistency across child learning and developmental environments and programs, and between and among providers and families</p>

## Performance Area E3

*Uses relationships with parents and other caregivers as an avenue for enhancing family competence, confidence and resilience in parenting children beginning in the prenatal stage through age 21.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<b>E3.1</b> Strategies to gain family trust (e.g., respecting family communication, acknowledging family strengths and assets, maintaining confidentiality)	Synthesis	(E10) Demonstrates and reflects on, and/or designs and defends, program and personal strategies used to gain family trust, respect family communication, acknowledge strengths and assets, and maintain confidentiality
<b>E3.2</b> Strategies to establish bi-directional partnerships and to demonstrate respect for family competence and resilience (e.g., recognizing and acknowledging strengths in specific areas of family functioning, working toward family priorities and goals set by families)	Synthesis	(E11) Demonstrates and reflects on, and/or designs and defends, program and personal strategies to establish bi-directional partnerships with families and to demonstrate respect for family competence and resilience
<b>E3.3</b> Strategies to support family engagement in children's development and learning, including promoting and guiding everyday learning at home and in community environments	Evaluation	(E12) Assesses program standards and approaches from perspective of supporting family engagement in children's development and learning, based on case study or practicum/work site
<b>E3.4</b> Strategies for effective use of cultural and linguistic liaisons while maintaining focus on collaborative process and on own relationship with family and individual family members	Analysis	(E13) Distinguishes between own roles and those of cultural and linguistic liaisons during interactions with families, and state implications for family visits and other services

### Content Area F: FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Family specialists understand and value the critical role of positive, collaborative partnerships with families, colleagues, and community service agencies. They respect diverse perspectives, including those reflecting cultural and linguistic diversity, and demonstrate integrity in conveying their own professional perspectives and values. They use their knowledge of family and social systems to create reciprocal interpersonal relationships that recognize, support, and promote the contributions of family, program, and community participants to the development, learning, and well-being of families and family members. They use their knowledge of community capacity, assets and dynamics to access and ensure a comprehensive, cohesive system of service delivery for each family and its individual members, including children from the prenatal stage through age 21.

## Performance Area F1

*Incorporates understanding of family and ecological systems theory, including the influence of culture, language, social, and economic environments, and individual differences in knowledge and problem solving ability into all work with families and other providers.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<b>F1.1</b> Role of relationships as a foundation of family service systems and as an influence on trust and security, sharing of information, and family use of services	Synthesis	(F1) Distinguishes policies and practices that reflect family and ecological systems theories as a foundation of family services, and compares possible influences of specific policies and practices on trust and security, sharing information, and family use of services
<b>F1.2</b> Role of collaboration and partnerships as a foundation for family service systems, influencing trust and security, sharing of information, and family use of services	Synthesis	(F2) Distinguishes policies and practices that support collaboration and partnerships as a foundation of family service systems, and compares possible outcomes of specific policies and practices
<b>F1.3</b> Influence of culture and other sources of diversity (e.g., primary language, family structure, socioeconomic conditions, individual abilities) on beliefs about appropriate interactions and relationships among and between families and providers	Analysis	(F3) Compares and contrasts potential influences of different forms of diversity on beliefs about appropriate interactions and relationships among and between families and providers
<b>F1.4</b> Approaches to demonstrate respect for diverse beliefs and preferences, and to respond to and respect diversity in all interactions with families and other providers	Synthesis	(F4) Demonstrates and reflects on, or designs and defends, program and personal approaches that demonstrate responsiveness to and respect for diverse beliefs and preferences

## Performance Area F2

*Employs approaches that recognize, support, and strengthen family strengths, assets and preferences, including those reflecting and grounded in culture and language.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<p><b>F2.1</b> Strategies to demonstrate respect for family's preferred language and modes of communication by seeking to incorporate family preferences into verbal, non-verbal and print communication with families (e.g., Braille, sign-language interpreter, primary language interpreter)</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(F5) Designs and defends program policies and practices that demonstrate respect for family's preferred language and modes of communication</p>
<p><b>F2.2</b> Strategies to facilitate family collaboration in all aspects of service development and delivery (e.g., assessment, planning) by providing access to information and welcoming families into program environments</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(F6) Designs and defends program policies and practices that provide access to information and welcome families into program environments</p>
<p><b>F2.3</b> Strategies to facilitate family collaboration and partnership in services for their children, prenatally through age 21 (e.g., family involvement in children's learning, school-based strategies to engage families)</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(F7) Designs and defends program policies and practices that facilitate family collaboration and partnership in services for children</p>
<p><b>F2.4</b> Opportunities for families to participate in leadership and advocacy activities on behalf of their children and the program, and for knowledge and skill development to enhance participation and effectiveness</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(F8) Designs and defends program policies and practices that illustrate opportunities for families to participate in leadership and advocacy activities and to gain competence and confidence in those roles</p>
<p><b>F2.5</b> Strategies to overcome common dilemmas that arise in helping relationships and relationship-based programs (e.g., interpersonal boundaries)</p>	<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>(F9) Recommends appropriate program professional responses to case studies of common dilemmas that arise in helping relationships and relationship-based programs</p>

## Performance Area F3

*Establishes and maintains positive, continuous working relationships with other personnel within and outside of own program who work toward the development, learning and well-being of families and their children, prenatal through age 21, to enable ready access to services and to coordinate and integrate services among multiple providers, including services for children and families with special needs.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<p><b>F3.1</b> Formal and informal neighborhood and community assets appropriate to families and children at different levels of development and with different needs, and own organization and role as part of community system of services</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(F10) Completes map of neighborhood and community assets appropriate to families and children at different levels of development and with different needs, including own (or case study) organization and role as part of community system</p>
<p><b>F3.2</b> Strategies to facilitate family access to formal and informal neighborhood and community assets, in response to family priorities, needs, and characteristics, including referral and transition procedures</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(F11) Produces and defends program and professional strategies to facilitate family access to formal and informal neighborhood and community assets, in response to family priorities, needs, and characteristics, based on case study or family in practicum/work site</p>
<p><b>F3.3</b> Approaches to facilitate multiple opportunities for family collaboration and partnership with child-focused programs including school-based programs, home visiting programs, and those targeting individual children with specific, targeted learning and development needs</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(F12) Compares and contrasts program policies and practices that facilitate opportunities for family collaboration and partnership in different types of child-focused programs</p>
<p><b>F3.4</b> Approaches for collaborating across agency and community assets and resources to build relationships with the community, to assess and address community-wide issues and goals, and to share resources and generate new ideas</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(F13) Compares and contrasts program and community policies and practices that facilitate collaborative relationships among community programs in assessing and identifying community-wide needs and creating solutions to address community-wide goals, including coordinating and sharing resources</p>

<p><b>F3.5</b> Common dilemmas that arise in collaborative partnerships that cross personnel and agencies (e.g., different values, professional areas of expertise)</p>	<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>(F14) Recommends appropriate program and professional responses to case studies of common dilemmas that arise in ensuring collaborative partnerships that cross personnel and agencies</p>
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**Performance Area F4**

*Monitors, reviews, and revises, in partnership with family and other providers, an integrated, comprehensive service plan that strengthens the family's ability to fulfill family functions with respect to the family as a whole as well as to individual family members, including the family's role in parenting children from the prenatal stage through age 21.*

<p><b>Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions</b></p>	<p><b>Achievement Expectation</b></p>	<p><b>Benchmarks/Competencies</b></p>
<p><b>F4.1</b> Specific strategies and activities (e.g., service coordination, regular family/provider meetings, timelines to revisit and revise) to monitor service provision within and across providers and agencies</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(F15) Distinguishes and prioritizes program and professional strategies and activities for monitoring service provision within and across providers and agencies, using case study of community agencies</p>
<p><b>F4.2</b> Strategies to build team capacity and positive working relationships that enhance comprehensive, cohesive integration of family services within and across agencies (e.g., participation on local community interagency councils)</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(F16) Distinguishes and prioritizes strategies for building team capacity and positive working relationships that enhance comprehensive, cohesive integration of family services, using case study of community agencies</p>
<p><b>F4.3</b> Legal and ethical responsibilities related to confidentiality, cooperation, and collaboration within and across agencies and service providers, including service coordination and transitions between programs</p>	<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>(F17) Compares legal and ethical responsibilities related to confidentiality, cooperation, and collaboration, and recommends solutions for addressing potential dilemmas, using case study of community agencies</p>

**Content Area G: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Family specialists identify themselves as professionals and conduct themselves as members of a vital, expanding, and changing profession. Their professional attitudes evolve with experience, reflection, professional development, and advances in the profession. They value and honor diversity in cultures, languages, beliefs, abilities, and practices. They know and value the history and contributions of their

profession and its related fields. They are committed to ongoing personal and professional development, and continually reflect on and take responsibility for their own values, choices and actions. They advocate for strong families and communities and exemplify the ethical standards of the profession in their personal and professional interactions and activities.

## Performance Area G1

*Articulates, reflects on, and continually refines and puts into practice a personal philosophy and values about human diversity and human services.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<p><b>G1.1</b> Opportunities for personal growth, self-reflection, self-care, and personal safety</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(G1) Articulates personal philosophy about human service delivery and reflect on personal characteristics and values that influence participation in opportunities for personal growth, self-reflection, self-care, and personal safety</p>
<p><b>G1.2</b> Strategies to ensure programmatic conditions that promote personal safety, health, and mental health, including reflective supervision</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(G2) Distinguishes and critiques programmatic conditions that promote personal safety, health, and mental health, and suggest ways to strengthen them</p>
<p><b>G1.3</b> Opportunities to reflect on professional values and practices, including those honoring diverse perspectives related to cultural, linguistic, ability, and socioeconomic diversity. Strategies to recognize own experience and levels of expertise which results in shifting practice to reflect the value of human diversity</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(G3) Reflects on professional values and related practices, including those for honoring diverse perspectives, and for recognizing influence of own experience and levels of expertise on professional practice. Adjusts practices to address personal bias and to strengthen cultural and linguistic responsiveness</p>

## Performance Area G2

*Demonstrates professional conduct consistent with codes of ethics and standards (e.g., family support principles) outlined by legal entities, by the profession, and by family and child programs and services, including those related to dignity and right to privacy.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<p><b>G2.1</b> Codes and standards of legal entities, programs, and own profession, including codes and standards related to appropriate roles and interactions based on different levels of experience</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(G4) Demonstrates and reflects on own adherence to codes and standards of legal entities, programs, and own profession</p>
<p><b>G2.2</b> Strategies to grow as a professional through reflection on the effects of one's own choices and actions on families and their children, prenatal - age 21, on other team members, including reflection on own beliefs, knowledge, and skill, and on own professional goals</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(G5) Demonstrates and reflects on effects of own choices and actions on families and team members, including effects of own beliefs, knowledge, skill, and professional goals</p>
<p><b>G2.3</b> Strategies to advance the profession through participation in local, state and national professional organizations and activities</p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>(G6) Identifies and prioritizes personal strategies to participate in and advance the profession</p>
<p><b>G2.4</b> Ethical use of social media and other technologies for communicating with families and other providers, including recognizing and establishing professional boundaries for relationships with families</p>	<p>Synthesis</p>	<p>(G7) Distinguishes between appropriate and inappropriate use of different communication technologies, and develops program standards related to these technologies</p>

## Performance Area G3

*Advocates for and works toward changes in structural inequities in society and human service systems that mitigate against family cohesion and well-being.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<b>G3.1</b> Reliable, regularly up-dated sources of information on law, policy and professional practices and recommendations from respected professional organizations and policy groups concerned with family and child functioning, development and learning	Analysis	(G8) Compares and contrasts sources of reliable, timely professional information on law, policy and practices that guide and enhance family and child program policies and practices
<b>G3.2</b> Advocacy organizations and activities at local, state, and national levels with respect to strength-based, family-centered program standards and practices	Analysis	(G9) Critiques advocacy organization activities at local, state, and national levels for adherence to strength-based, family-centered standards and practices. Works to mitigate inequities
<b>G3.3</b> Programmatic opportunities and support for family members to participate in leadership and policy development within and outside of the organization	Analysis	(G10) Identifies and reflects on policies and programmatic opportunities for family members to participate in leadership and policy development within and outside of a specific family service program, based on case study or community program

## Performance Area G4

*Contributes to and advocates for evaluation to ensure that own program environment and activities reflect family and ecological systems theory and values.*

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions	Achievement Expectation	Benchmarks/Competencies
<b>G4.1</b> Programmatic opportunities and approaches to evaluating program and procedures from perspective of strength-based and ecological systems standards, including use of information gathered from families and other providers (e.g., family response to services, progress toward goals)	Analysis	(G11) Compares and contrasts program policies and practices that support evaluating program from perspective of strengths-based and ecological systems standards

<p><b>G4.2</b> Strategies and procedures that ensure family collaboration and partnerships in program evaluation, including family participation in evaluating program standards and accomplishments</p>	<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>(G12) Compares and recommends program policies and practices that ensure family collaboration in program evaluation</p>
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**Definitions**

**Family:** A social unit consisting of one or more adults together with the children they care for.

**Parent:** A mother, father, or any other adult, such as foster parent, grandparent, other relative, or guardian, who has primary and legal responsibility for providing a child with a physically, emotionally, and psychologically nurturing environment, and for making important decisions that have a permanent effect on the life and development of the child.

**Home Visiting:** Home visiting refers to a continuum of services offered through visits where families primarily reside, which may occur elsewhere.

# Appendix G

## Gateways Family Specialist Credential Pilot Framework

### Gateways to Opportunity® Family Specialist Credential Framework

FSC Levels	General Education Requirements	Content Area Specific Education	Work and Practical Experience	Professional Contributions
<b>Level 5</b>	Bachelor's Degree	30 points in FSC Content Areas <i>(minimum of 1 point in Health, Safety Well-being, Observation &amp; Assessment, Curriculum &amp; Program Design, Personal &amp; Professional Development and 2 points each in Human Growth &amp; Development, Interactions, Relationships &amp; Environment, and Family &amp; Community Relationships) of which a maximum of 6 points may also be from credential approved training</i>	Minimum of 200 hours of family related supervised experience <b>or</b> 1200 total hours of documented family related work experience	Four professional contributions in three different areas within the last five years
<b>Level 4</b>	Associate's Degree <b>or</b> 60 semester hours <i>(9 hours of transferable credit including Math, English, and Social Science)</i>	20 points in FSC Content Areas <i>(minimum of 1 point in Health, Safety Well-being, Observation &amp; Assessment, Curriculum &amp; Program Design, Personal &amp; Professional Development and 2 points each in Human Growth &amp; Development, Interactions, Relationships &amp; Environment, and Family &amp; Community Relationships) of which a maximum of 6 points may also be from credential approved training</i>	75 hours of family related supervised experience <b>or</b> 500 hours of documented family related work experience	Two professional contributions in two different areas within the last five years
<b>Level 3</b>	High School Diploma or GED and 6 semester hours <i>(in 2 of 3 areas - transferable Math, English, or Social Science)</i>	9 points in FSC Content Areas <i>(minimum 1 point in Health, Safety Well-being, Observation &amp; Assessment, and minimum of 2 points in Human Growth &amp; Development, Interactions, Relationships &amp; Environment) of which a maximum of 6 points may also be from credential approved training</i>	10 hours each of family related documented observation and family related supervised experience <b>or</b> 300 hours of documented family related work experience	One professional contribution in any area within the last five years
<b>Level 2</b>	High School Diploma or GED	6 points in FSC Content Areas <i>(must have a minimum of 2 points in IRE and HGD) of which a maximum of 6 points may also be from credential approved training</i>	10 hours of family related documented observation <b>or</b> 200 hours of documented family related work experience	1 documented service/ participation in a family related service <b>or</b> membership in a professional organization <b>or</b> self-assessment



Administered through  
**incorra**  
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# Appendix H

## Gateways Family Specialist Credential Pilot Marketing Handout

Join the  
Gateways to Opportunity®

### Family Specialist Credential Pilot



Participate in the Pilot of the Gateways to Opportunity® Family Specialist Credential designed for professionals directly serving families. Be the first in the state to receive this Credential. Participation is **free**. Contact us today – limited time opportunity.

The Family Specialist Credential is a symbol of professional achievement that validates those who work with families and have the education and knowledge required to:

- Build strength-based relationships with families
- Support families in developing the skills and knowledge needed to access resources
- Promote and strengthen bonds between parent and child
- Encourage families to identify and set achievable goals
- Assist families in becoming leaders within their communities

Gateways to Opportunity Credentials were signed into law, effective July 1, 2009. Gateways Credentials are awarded and recognized by the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Bureau of Child Care and Development.

For more information or to participate in the Gateways Family Specialist Credential, please email [familyspecialistcredential@incorra.org](mailto:familyspecialistcredential@incorra.org).



# Appendix I

## Portfolio Documents



### Gateways to Opportunity<sup>®</sup> **Family Specialist Credential Pilot**

 GATEWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY<sup>®</sup>  
Illinois Professional Development System

# General Information

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## Contact Information

### Gateways to Opportunity

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Bloomington, IL 61701  
Attention: SHellmer

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**Web site:** [www.ilgateways.com](http://www.ilgateways.com)

**Business Hours:** 8:30-4:30

# General Information

## Gateways to Opportunity and INCCRRA

Gateways to Opportunity is a comprehensive statewide system, designed to support practitioners in continuing their professional development. Gateways to Opportunity provides links to education and training resources, awards Gateways Credentials to qualified practitioners, connects early care and education and school-age care professionals to compensation opportunities, and the Gateways Scholarship program. Professional Development Advisors are available through Gateways to Opportunity to assist any ECE and/or school-age care practitioner in Illinois with career guidance and professional development. The Illinois Network of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (INCCRRA) administers Gateways to Opportunity.

## Credentials

Gateways to Opportunity Credentials are part of a comprehensive recognition system for early care and education, school-age, and youth development practitioners in Illinois. Gateways Credentials are awarded by the Illinois Department of Human Services Bureau of Child Care and Development. Gateways Credential requirements were developed by the statewide Professional Development Advisory Council which informs the development of Gateways to Opportunity. Some programs/agencies in Illinois utilize Gateways Credentials as meeting education qualifications for employment. Gateways to Opportunity Credentials were signed into law effective July 2009 and are awarded by the state of Illinois.

Each Credential within the Gateways to Opportunity Professional Development System has specific component requirements, including an education and training component. This component encompasses seven required Gateways content areas. Each Gateways Credential offers an interpretation of these content areas with descriptors that broaden these concepts and then relate those concepts to the specific age range or group served.

### Gateways Family Specialist Credential

The Gateways Family Specialist Credential validates practitioners' knowledge, skills, and experience needed to work with families. It is awarded based on demonstrated knowledge and skills across the seven Gateways content areas.

### Gateways to Opportunity Family Specialist Credential Content Areas

1. Human Growth and Development
2. Health, Safety, and Well-Being
3. Observation and Assessment
4. Curriculum or Program Design
5. Interactions, Relationships, and Environments
6. Family and Community Relationships
7. Personal and Professional Development

# Gateways Family Specialist Credential

## Family Specialist Content Areas

### **Human Growth and Development (HGD)**

Family specialists use current and emerging principles, theories, and knowledge of individual and family development, family functioning and the family system as a foundation for all aspects of their work with families. They understand how interactions among family members as well as between family and the contexts within which they live influence their functioning and development as a family. They view family systems knowledge and human development across the lifespan as the core of their professional practice. They engage in ongoing learning and reflection about family knowledge and theory, and understand typical and atypical functioning and development within the context of family, culture and society. They use their understanding to plan and implement assessment and services. Knowledge of family functioning and human development inform collaboration with families and other team members on behalf of the whole family and individual family members, including children from the prenatal stage through age 21.

### **Health, Safety, and Well-Being (HSW)**

Family specialists understand that physical health, mental health, and safety are the foundations of individual and family functioning, development and well-being. They acknowledge the critical importance of the family environment to the health, safety and well-being of all family members, including children, from the prenatal stage through age 21. They collaborate with families and other professionals to facilitate safe, healthy environments. They adapt supports and interventions to families' individual strengths, assets, needs, concerns, priorities and goals within cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic contexts. They facilitate multiple opportunities for family members to strengthen protective factors, fulfill family functions, and gain knowledge and skills to support current and future well-being of the family and each of its members, including those of their children, beginning in the prenatal stage through age 21.

### **Observation and Assessment (OA)**

Knowledge of families and human development provides the framework for family services. Family specialists understand the purposes of formal and informal observation and assessment in family service settings and employ a strength-based approach to assessment of family strengths, assets, concerns, priorities and goals. They view observation and assessment as a way to understand each family and its members (e.g., single-parent families, multi-generational families) and the family context (e.g., risk and protective factors), as frameworks for engaging and collaborating with families and other service providers, and as a means for program evaluation and accountability. They take responsibility for using a variety of developmentally, culturally, linguistically, and individually appropriate formal and informal observations and assessments to gather and share information on family strengths and assets as well as family concerns, priorities and goals. They obtain research-based assessment information using repeated, multiple measures and sources. They interpret information holistically and use it to inform services, to monitor service provision and progress toward shared goals based on family priorities, and to reflect on and modify their own roles and practices.

# Gateways Family Specialist Credential

## Family Specialist Content Areas *(con't)*

### **Curriculum or Program Design (CPD)**

Family specialists have broad knowledge of human development, human services, and approaches for supporting and enhancing family functioning and development, including evidence-based and recommended practices. They value families and family functioning and recognize the interdependence among family members as well as between families and individual family members and their multiple environments. They view curriculum and program design as a collaborative, dynamic, and evolving professional endeavor that encompasses and interacts with multiple areas of functioning, relationships, and environments. They collaborate with families to use assessment results to plan and provide comprehensive, cohesive programs that are family-driven, build on family strengths, and are individualized to the family, its structure, and its members, including services for children beginning in the prenatal stage through age 21.

### **Interactions, Relationships, and Environments (IRE)**

Family specialists use their understanding of culturally, linguistically and individually appropriate interactions, relationships, and environments to ensure that family services are responsive to and respectful of each family and its individual members, and reflect appreciation of family and community strengths and assets. They use interpersonal interactions that engage, support and guide each family and family member toward strength-based outcomes. They recognize the important roles of the physical, psychological and social environments in which families live and function, and strive to provide and support programmatic and home environments that are safe, nurturing, and supportive of growth toward healthy, autonomous family functioning within the contexts of natural, inclusive environments. Environments, relationships, and interactions reflect strength-based values about families and family services. They work with families and other providers to integrate services into meaningful, typical family settings and events in home and community.

### **Family and Community Relationships (FCR)**

Family specialists understand and value the critical role of positive, collaborative partnerships with families, colleagues, and community service agencies. They respect diverse perspectives, including those reflecting cultural and linguistic diversity, and demonstrate integrity in conveying their own professional perspectives and values. They use their knowledge of family and social systems to create reciprocal interpersonal relationships that recognize, support, and promote the contributions of family, program, and community participants to the development, learning, and well-being of families and family members. They use their knowledge of community capacity, assets and dynamics to access and ensure a comprehensive, cohesive system of service delivery for each family and its individual members, including children from the prenatal stage through age 21.

### **Personal and Professional Development (PPD)**

Family specialists identify themselves as professionals and conduct themselves as members of a vital, expanding, and changing profession. Their professional attitudes evolve with experience, reflection, professional development, and advances in the profession. They value and honor diversity in cultures, languages, beliefs, abilities, and practices. They know and value the history and contributions of their profession and its related fields. They are committed to ongoing personal and professional development, and continually reflect on and take responsibility for their own values, choices and actions. They advocate for strong families and communities and exemplify the ethical standards of the profession in their personal and professional interactions and activities.

# Gateways Family Specialist Credential

## Professional Contributions—Instructional Guidelines

A Professional Contribution is an activity and/or endeavor that goes beyond the scope of a position of job duty. Each participant must document a specified number of professional contributions related to children, youth, and families, dependent on Gateways Credential level. Contributions to the field of family support services can be no more than five years old from the date the portfolio is submitted to the Gateways to Opportunity office.

Professional Contribution examples and suggested documentation follow each area listed below. This list is not exclusive; other comparable activities may be considered. **Note: Professional Contributions can be no more than five years old.**

### 1. Program Improvement

#### Suggestions for students:

- Write a self-assessment
- Create a technology plan
- Write a Program Improvement Plan, including action plans, objectives and outcomes
- Create an original product or tool that demonstrates appropriate practice in the field of home visiting and family support, or early intervention
- Participate in writing a sample family service plan based on sound family support principles or parent/child interactions that can be shared

#### Suggestions for providers in the field:

- Provide evidence of bringing a family support program through model accreditation, Peer Review, or was in charge of some component leading to accreditation
- Reflect on participation in agency's self-assessment
- Create improvement plans including action plans, objectives and outcomes
- Serve as a consultant to other programs in the implementation of appropriate family support practices
- Create a tangible product or tool that exhibits originality of thought and execution that helps to improve the field of family support and home visiting
- Use videotaping and review in a home setting to record, observe, document and discuss positive parenting skills, following best practice observational guidelines
- Shadow several home visits or family/provider conferences and write a observational paper tying your observations to best practices in family support work
- Write an MOU to improve program services
- Support an organization using social media and other technology for the promotion of family and community work

# Gateways Family Specialist Credential

## Professional Contributions—Instructional Guidelines (con't)

### 2. Service in a Professional Organization

#### Suggestions for students:

- Serve as an active member of local Prevent Child Abuse
- Coordinate, serve on a committee, or help plan for an annual event such as Week of the Young Child, Child Abuse Prevention Month, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Walk, or Child Advocacy Center events
- Coordinate, serve on a committee, or plan part of a conference related to children and/or their families or early intervention
- Serve on a committee to promote early childhood or family issues
- Hold elected office in a college/university organization related to family work
- Volunteer at a statewide conference such as “Sharing A Vision”

#### Suggestions for providers in the field:

- Serve on a community board as a representative of family related work
- Serve on a local, state, or national advisory board for an early childhood, child abuse prevention, or family support organization
- Serve on a local, regional, or statewide committee to promote early childhood or family support issues or early intervention issues
- Hold an elected office in a local, state, or national early childhood, child abuse prevention or family support organization
- Serve on a committee for an early childhood or family related organization to organize a conference, community-wide advocacy event or other major event
- Coordinate or help plan for an annual event related to family support work

### 3. Presentations/Training

#### Suggestions for students:

- Present on a family focus topic at a conference or training in the community
- Present at a high school or technical school career fair
- Self-Critique/Evaluate a presentation done for a course
- Teach as a graduate assistant
- Develop sample form, tool, or instrument for assessing parent/child relationship or family functioning with regards to parenting

#### Suggestions for providers in the field:

- Serve as an adjunct instructor for a college course related to family work
- Present at staff meetings or to co-workers related to family work
- Present at a professional conference on a topic related to family work
- Serve as a paid consultant/trainer
- Serve as an accreditation evaluator or observer
- Serve as a Credential advisor, trainer or representative

# Gateways Family Specialist Credential

## Professional Contributions—Instructional Guidelines (con't)

### 4. Advocacy

#### Suggestions for students:

- Write an original letter to an elected official about infant-toddler or family support or early intervention issues
- Arrange a food, clothing, or toy drive for a shelter, children's home, or disaster relief effort
- Serve as a community coordinator for an advocacy agency or event
- Attend an advocacy day for home visiting or family related issues

#### Suggestions for providers in the field:

- Write an original letter to legislature or government officials
- Write an original letter on a family support issue that is printed in a local newspaper
- Provide testimony at a public hearing on infant-toddler or family support or early intervention issues
- Provide consultation to an elected official about infant-toddler or family support issues or about issues relating to children and their families
- Serve as a community coordinator, present or provide testimony for advocacy agency or event
- Advocate for appropriate family involved practices within programs, organizations, and the community

### 5. Writing and Publication

#### Suggestions for students:

- Develop a handbook or manual (potentially part of a Professional Practice/Internship, etc.)
- Write a letter on child abuse prevention, family support or early intervention issue that was printed in the school, or local newspaper
- Develop a parent resource manual of comprehensive services available to families

#### Suggestions for providers in the field:

- Write an article for program newsletter
- Write an article or book review that was published in an appropriate family related journal
- Serve as editor or regular contributor to a family issues newsletter that is distributed in the community
- Author a book promoting appropriate family support practice
- Develop a new college-level course or Credential approved training for the Family Specialist Credential
- Develop new materials (e.g. handbook, manuals, toolkits)

# Gateways Family Specialist Credential

## Professional Contributions—Instructional Guidelines (con't)

### 6. Research/Grant Writing

#### Suggestions for students:

- Write a grant proposal (even if grant is not actually applied for)
- Research a certain curriculum, provide written review of curriculum
- Conduct a research study on a topic related to family support, home visiting or early intervention
- Cross walk a variety of family related curricula
- Design a plan for hard to reach families

#### Suggestions for providers in the field:

- Write a proposal for a grant
- Research and evaluate a specific curriculum usage
- Conduct a research study on a topic regarding family support, child abuse prevention or early intervention
- Conduct a research study on children and families that is published in a peer-reviewed journal
- Serve as chair of a major fund-raiser for an infant-toddler or family related endeavor
- Review proposals or serve as a reader, for a foundation or other grant-making agency/organization
- Cross walk a variety of family related curricula
- Research family outreach strategies
- Sit on an institutional review board



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# **Family Specialist Credential Pilot Portfolio Forms**

PILOT

# Portfolio Forms

## Checklist

To obtain the Gateways Family Specialist Credential, all components listed below must be met and corresponding documentation submitted. Documentation includes official transcripts, completed experience verification forms, and/or completed Professional Contribution form.

### Level 5

- Bachelor's Degree
- 30 points (30 semester hours) in the Gateways Family Specialist Content Areas with at least two points in each:
  - Human Growth and Development
  - Interactions, Relationships, and Environments
  - Family and Community Relationshipsand at least one point in each:
  - Health, Safety, and Well-Being
  - Observation and Assessment
  - Curriculum or Program Design
  - Personal and Professional Development*Six of the 30 points may come from Gateways Credential approved training*
- 1200 total hours of documented family related Work and Practical Experience **OR** minimum of 200 hours of family related supervised experience
- Four Professional Contributions, in three different areas within the last five years

***Please do not send original documentation, as it will not be returned. (Exception: official college transcript(s) must be sent in a sealed envelope from the college or university or request official electronic transcript(s) to be sent from your college or university to transcripts@incrra.org.)***

# Portfolio Forms

## Checklist

To obtain the Gateways Family Specialist Credential, all components listed below must be met and corresponding documentation submitted. Documentation includes official transcripts, completed experience verification forms, and/or completed Professional Contribution form.

### Level 4

- Associate's Degree **OR** 60+ semester hours including three semester hours in each of the following:
  - Transferable Math,
  - Transferable English, and
  - Transferable Social Science
  
- 20 points (20 semester hours) in the Gateways Family Specialist Content Areas with at least two points in each:
  - Human Growth and Development
  - Interactions, Relationships, and Environments
  - Family and Community Relationshipsand at least one point in each:
  - Health, Safety, and Well-Being
  - Observation and Assessment
  - Curriculum or Program Design
  - Personal and Professional Development*Six of the 20 points may come from Gateways Credential approved training*
  
- 500 total hours of documented family related Work and Practical Experience **OR** 75 total hours of family related supervised experience
  
- Two Professional Contributions, in two different areas within the last five years

*Please do not send original documentation, as it will not be returned. (Exception: official college transcript(s) must be sent in a sealed envelope from the college or university or request official electronic transcript(s) to be sent from your college or university to [transcripts@inccrra.org](mailto:transcripts@inccrra.org).)*

# Portfolio Forms

## Checklist

To obtain the Gateways Family Specialist Credential, all components listed below must be met and corresponding documentation submitted. Documentation includes official transcripts, completed experience verification forms, and/or completed Professional Contribution form.

### Level 3

- High School Diploma or GED and six semester hours in two of three areas:
  - Transferable Math
  - Transferable English, and
  - Transferable Social Science elective
- Nine points (nine semester hours) in the Gateways Family Specialist Content Areas, with at least two points in both:
  - Human Growth and Development
  - Interactions, Relationships, and Environmentsand at least one point in both:
  - Health, Safety and Well-Being
  - Observation and Assessment*Six of the nine points may come from Gateways Credential approved training*
- 300 total hours of documented family related Work and Practical Experience **OR** 10 hours of documented observation **AND** 10 hours of family related supervised experience
- One Professional Contribution in any area within the last five years

### Level 2

- High School Diploma or GED
- Six points (six semester hours) in the Gateways Family Specialist Content Areas, with at least two points in both:
  - Human Growth and Development
  - Interactions, Relationships, and Environments*Six points may come from Gateways Credential approved training*
- 200 total hours of documented family related Work and Practical Experience **OR** 10 hours of family related documented observation
- One documented service/participation in a family related service or membership in a professional organization or self-assessment

***Please do not send original documentation, as it will not be returned. (Exception: official college transcript(s) must be sent in a sealed envelope from the college or university or request official electronic transcript(s) to be sent from your college or university to transcripts@incrra.org.)***

# Portfolio Forms

## Work & Practical Experience—Verification Form

Please complete and have this form signed by a supervisor, director, or the Human Resources department to validate your work experience providing direct service to families. **Use a separate form for each position.**

Please indicate which Gateways Credential you are applying for:

Family Specialist

### Personal Information

Participant Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Person ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Start Date (MO/YR): \_\_\_\_\_ End Date (MO/YR): \_\_\_\_\_

Hours per week: \_\_\_\_\_ x Weeks per year: \_\_\_\_\_ x # of years: \_\_\_\_\_ = Total Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

### Contact Information

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Signature and title of contact who can verify your work experience:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing the above, I verify that the information provided herein is accurate and correct to the best of my knowledge.

**Participant Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

By signing the above, I verify that the information provided herein is accurate and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand false or misleading statements or subsequent documentation may constitute grounds for denial of a Gateways to Opportunity Credential.

# Portfolio Forms

## Professional Contributions

For each contribution, please list activity, location, date, contact person, and contact phone number. Please also include a brief summary of each contribution that outlines the participants/audience and outcome for those impacted by the activity. Please limit comment to 150 words. This form must be completed and documentation for each contribution attached. Use additional forms, if needed.

### 1. Program Improvement

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Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone number or email: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Service in a Professional Organization

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Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone number or email: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Presentations/Trainings

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Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone number or email: \_\_\_\_\_

***Please send copies of this form and all other documentation. Please do not send original documentation, as it will not be returned.***

# Portfolio Forms

## Professional Contributions

### 4. Advocacy

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Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone number or email: \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. Writing and Publications

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Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone number or email: \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. Research/Grant Writing

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Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone number or email: \_\_\_\_\_

***Please send copies of this form and all other documentation. Please do not send original documentation, as it will not be returned.***

# Appendix J

## Revised Work Experience Form

# Gateways Family Specialist Credential

## Work & Practical Experience—Verification Form

Please complete this form to validate your work experience providing direct service to families.

**Use a separate form for each position.** Attach a job description from your employer and write 3 or 4 sentences that describes your **daily direct contact with families** that promote optimal child and family outcomes.

If you have a Bachelors or Graduate degree in Social Work with an internship of 200 hours or more, please complete **Step 1, sign** and **return**.

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### Step 1: Personal Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Registry Member ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

### Step 2: Work Experience:

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Total hours worked providing direct services to families: \_\_\_\_\_

(Hours Per Week x By Weeks Per Year x By Number Of Years)

### Step 3: Family Specialist Experience Verification

Please provide the name and contact information for someone that could verify your experience providing direct services to families that promote optimal child and family outcomes. (Examples include: director, professional colleagues or previous employers.) Please note: we may contact to verify.

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation to applicant (*How is this contact knowledgeable about your experience providing direct services to families?*):

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**Participant Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

By signing the above, I verify that the information provided herein is accurate and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand false or misleading statements or subsequent documentation may constitute grounds for denial of a Gateways to Opportunity Credential.

# Appendix K

## Entitled Route Pilot RFP Marketing Flyer

# Gateways to Opportunity® Family Specialist Credential Pilot



### Share Your Expertise

Gateways Family Specialist Credential Levels 2–5 are in the final stages of development. Piloting will begin Fall 2014.

**The Family Specialist Credential is a symbol of professional achievement that validates those who work with families and have the education and knowledge required to:**

- Build strength-based relationships with families
- Support families in developing the skills and knowledge needed to access resources
- Promote and strengthen bonds between parent and child
- Encourage families to identify and set achievable goals
- Assist families in becoming leaders within their communities

#### Gateways to Opportunity

Gateways to Opportunity is a statewide professional development system, developed by the Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC), that is designed to support Illinois early care and education, school-age, and youth development practitioners.

#### Gateways to Opportunities Credentials

Gateways to Opportunity Credentials are symbols of professional achievement that validate knowledge and skills, experience, and contributions to the field of early care and education, infants and toddlers, administration, school-age, and youth development. Gateways Credentials were signed into law, effective July 1, 2009. Gateways Credentials are awarded and recognized by the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Bureau of Child Care and Development.

#### Gateways to Opportunity Entitled Institutions

Gateways to Opportunity awards entitlement status to higher education institutions that align their coursework with Credential requirements. Students who complete required courses and have met Gateways Credential Component requirements have up to two years to apply to receive their Credential(s).

For more information contact **Stephanie Hellmer** at [shellmer@inccrra.org](mailto:shellmer@inccrra.org) or **(309) 829-5327, ext. 358**.

Become a Gateways Family Specialist  
Credential pilot institution.  
Your participation will:

- Provide your institution the opportunity to offer feedback that will shape the final Credential.
- Provide your institution leadership in the field. Your program will set the standard for other institutions.
- Provide your institution exclusivity. Only those in the pilot will be able to offer these Credentials.
- Provide your institution a competitive edge to attract students.
- Provide your institution a professional preparation program designed to meet family service employer needs.



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# Appendix L

## Faculty Recommendations

### Recommendations/Suggestions from Faculty to FSC Committee Family Specialist Credential Framework 1/29/16

#### General Education requirements:

- Recommend changes to general education requirements in relation to math (levels 3 and 4).
  - Suggest: Math or Science, English and Social Sciences
- Rationale: Allowing for Math or Science mirrors AAS state requirements with a greater application for this Credential and workforce.
  - Math not specifically required for this workforce and would gain greater knowledge from psychology, sociology etc. than math specifically. Requiring a credit bearing math courses places barriers for students and program design.

#### Education and Training Specific to Family Work:

- NOT leveling the Content Areas and Benchmarks/Competencies is beneficial between two- and four-year institutions.
- Recommend increasing point requirements at Level 4.
  - Suggest: Increasing point requirement from 20 to 21 as this is the equivalent of seven–three semester hour courses.
- Recommend revisions to strengthen specific content about truly understanding and being able to address/fully integrate diversity in all its richness (socioeconomic, racial etc.)
  - Suggest looking at Curriculum and Program Design benchmark D2.1 (page 12) to include more overt language on diversity, culture, ethnicity, poverty etc.
  - Suggest looking at Interactions, Relationships and Environment benchmark E (page 17) to include more overt language on recognition and implementation related to diversity, culture, ethnicity, poverty etc.
  - Suggest looking at Personal and Professional Development benchmark G1.3 (Page 24) and how the above is embedded. Language needs to be more reflective of “demonstrating” this knowledge versus awareness. More emphasis on multicultural and anti-bias.
  - Suggest looking at G3.2 (Page 25) and strengthen language to include critiques or acts on family advocacy.
- Rationale: Students preparing to work with families should be well aware and educated of the importance of multiculturalism, diversity, anti-bias and advocacy.

#### Work and Practical Experience requirements:

- Recommend increasing work experience hours required for practicum/internship:
  - Remove observation hours from Level 3 and require to 20 hours of family-related work experience
  - Increase Level 4 to 100 hours
- Rationale: A modest increase in practicum experience better prepares students.

# Appendix M

## Final Gateways Family Specialist Credential Recommendations

### Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC)

**DATE:** March 4, 2016

**COMMITTEE MAKING RECOMMENDATION:** Gateways Family Specialist Credential Committee  
This framework was approved for purposes of the pilot by QC on June 14, 2014.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee is recommending the approval of the attached Gateways Family Specialist Credential framework. Thorough testing of each level and survey data has led to the following changes:

**Level 2** – No changes.

**Level 3** – Revised General Education Requirements to “6 semester hours of English, Social Science and Math or Science. (These 6 hours must be credit bearing and non-developmental 100 level +)” to align with other Gateways Credential frameworks. Added “one additional point is required from general education or Content Area specific education” bar across general education or Content Area specific education columns. In Work and Practical Experience, increased to 20 hours of family-related supervised experience. Removed observation hours.

**Level 4** – In the Content Area Specific Education, increased to 21 points. Revised General Education Requirements to “9 semester hours of English, Social Science and Math or Science. (These 9 hours must be credit bearing and non-developmental 100 level +)” to align with other Gateways Credential frameworks. In Work and Practical Experience, increase from 75 to 100 hours of family-related supervised experience.

**Level 5** – In the Content Area Specific Education, increased to 33 points.

**ALL LEVELS:** Remove professional contributions from initial Credential attainment-required upon renewal.

### **RATIONALE:**

**Level 3** – Adding the one additional point at Level 3 helps meet program-specific, 16 semester hour Federal Financial Aid requirements.

**Level 3 and 4** – The general education requirements for Level 3 and 4 have been updated for Gateways Credential consistency. Including Math or Science mirrors AAS state requirements with a greater application for this Credential and workforce. Utilizing “any Math or Science” provides opportunities for both professionals working in the field and faculty in designing programs, to better meet the needs of this workforce.

**Level 4** – Increasing the Content Area Specific Education point requirements from 20 to 21 at Level 4 better aligns with the amount of coursework pilot applicants completed as well as Higher Education institution coursework (e.g. 21 points is the equivalent to seven–3 semester hour courses). Increasing the Work and Practical experience hours from 75 to 100 better prepares students to work with families.

**Level 5** – The pilot clearly showed a higher amount of coursework with an average of 50 points for FSC Level 5 during the pilot. Increasing the Content Area Specific Education point requirements from 30 to 33

at Level 5 also better aligns with Higher Education institution coursework (e.g. 33 points is the equivalent to 11–three semester hour courses).

**DISPOSITION:**

PDAC Ad-Hoc Family Specialist Credential Committee

Approved: X Date: 3/11/16

Disapproved: Date:

PDAC Qualifications and Credentials Committee

Approved: X Date: 3/17/16

Disapproved: Date:

**DISPOSITION:**

PDAC Steering Committee

Approved: X Date: 3/23/16

Disapproved: Date:

**DISPOSITION:**

PDAC

Approved: X Date: 4/29/16

Disapproved: Date:

**DISPOSITION:**

IDHS, Bureau of Child Care and Development

Approved: X Date: 6/30/16 *AWS*

Disapproved: Date:

**Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC)**

**RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL**

**DATE:** March 4, 2016

**COMMITTEE MAKING RECOMMENDATION:** Gateways Family Specialist Credential Committee

**RECOMMENDATION:** Include “Bachelor’s or Graduate degree in Social Work from a nationally accredited program at a college or university meets these requirements” across the General Education Requirements, Content Area Specific Education and Work and Practical Experience for the Gateways Family Specialist Credential Level 5 (e.g. Council on Social Work Education-CSWE).

**RATIONALE:** All pilot applicants with a Bachelor’s or Graduate degree in Social Work exceeded the General Education Requirements, Content Area Specific Education and Work and Practical Experience for the Gateways Family Specialist Credential Level 5. This is comparable to a Professional Educator License with endorsement in Early Childhood Education for the ECE Credential Level 5.

**DISPOSITION:**

PDAC Ad-Hoc Family Specialist Credential Committee

Approved: X Date: 3/11/16

Disapproved: Date:

PDAC Qualifications and Credentials Committee

Approved: X Date: 3/17/16

Disapproved: Date:

**DISPOSITION:**

PDAC Steering Committee

Approved: X Date: 3/23/16

Disapproved: Date:

**DISPOSITION:**

PDAC

Approved: X Date: 4/29/16

Disapproved: Date:

**DISPOSITION:**

IDHS, Bureau of Child Care and Development

Approved: X Date: 6/30/16 *AWS*

Disapproved: Date:



## Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC)

### RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL

**DATE:** March 4, 2016

**COMMITTEE MAKING RECOMMENDATION:** Gateways Family Specialist Credential Committee

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee is recommending approval of the attached Gateways Family Specialist Credential Content Area Specific Education (and training knowledge, skills, dispositions, and benchmarks/competencies).

**RATIONALE:** The Gateways Family Specialist Credential was piloted using a comprehensive set of performance area indicators and benchmarks/competencies. These were successfully tested at each level and validated with survey data from the pilot applicants and faculty. The guidance provided clear and consistent education and training requirements for all recipients of the Gateways Family Specialist Credential. A few edits can be found on pages 10, 11, 14, 20 and 21. These minor revisions strengthen inclusion of responsiveness of cultural and linguistic appropriate practices.

#### **DISPOSITION:**

PDAC Ad-Hoc Family Specialist Credential Committee

Approved: X Date: 3/11/16

Disapproved: Date:

PDAC Qualifications and Credentials Committee

Approved: X Date: 3/17/16

Disapproved: Date:

#### **DISPOSITION:**

PDAC Steering Committee

Approved: X Date: 3/23/16

Disapproved: Date:

#### **DISPOSITION:**

PDAC

Approved: X Date: 4/29/16

Disapproved: Date:

#### **DISPOSITION:**

IDHS, Bureau of Child Care and Development

Approved: X Date: 6/30/16 *AWS*

Disapproved: Date:

# Appendix N

## Gateways Family Specialist Credential Committee Members

Name	Organization/Agency	Title	Years of FSC
Anna Potere	Ounce of Prevention Fund	Policy Associate	2013–Current
Anne Wharff	Illinois Department of Human Services	Child Care Professional Development Manager	2010–Current
Beatrice Nichols	Department of Family Support Services	Assistant Director	2013–2015
Bill McKenzie	Ounce of Prevention Fund	Senior Training Manager	2010–Current
Christine Westerlund	Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies	Director of Professional Development	2010–Current
Cynthia Stringfellow	Educare Learning Network Quality Practice Partnership	Senior Vice President, Educare Learning Network	2009–2011
Diane Scruggs*	Healthy Families Chicago	Executive Director	2011–Current
Diana Rosenbrock	Collaboration for Early Childhood	Professional Development Coordinator	2016–Current
Donna Emmons	Illinois State Board of Education	Principal Consultant	2013–Current
George Davis	City of Rockford Human Services	Director	2011–2014
Granada Williams	Head Start State Collaboration Office IDHS (until 2015) Community and Economic Development Association of Cook County (2015 - Current)	Associate HSSCO Director (until 2014) Head Start Director - CEDA of Cook County (until 2015) Chief Program Officer - CEDA of Cook County (2015 - Current)	2011–Current
Heather Seitz	Baby TALK Early Head Start	Education Coordinator	2015–Current
Dr. Jamilah R. Jor'dan*	Chicago State University Strengthening Families Illinois Quality Practice Partnership	Associate Professor & Interim Associate Dean, College of Education, Chicago State University	2009–Current
Dr. Jeanette McCollum	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	Hired QPP Consultant	2013–2014
Joanne Kelly**	Illinois Department of Human Services Quality Practice Partnership	Healthy Child Care Illinois Coordinator	2009–2011

Kathy Goetz-Wolf	Strengthening Families Illinois Quality Practice Partnership	Project Director	2009–2012
Kenny Westbrook	Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Family and Community Services	Acting Bureau Chief Early Childhood Development	2011–Current
Kim Gaff	Heartland Community College	Parent & Child Development Specialist	2013–2014
Lauri Morrison-Frichtl	Illinois Head Start Association	Executive Director	2010–2012
Lynn Liston	Infant Mental Health Credential Endorsement Committee	President	2011–2012
Margie Perzynski	Family Focus Quality Practice Partnership	Training and Curriculum Design Manager	2009–2011
Marsha Hawley	Ounce of Prevention Fund	0-3 PDI Manager	2012–Current
Maureen Sollars	McLean County Health Department	Coordinator	2011–Current
Penelope Smith	Illinois State Board of Education	Principal Consultant	2013–Current
Samantha Aigner-Treworgy	Ounce of Prevention Fund	Coordinator	2011–2012
Sharita Webb	Chicago Department of Family & Support Services	Coordinator of Special Projects	2015–Current
Shauna Ejeh	Baby TALK Illinois Department of Human Services/Illinois Head Start Association (2015 - Current)	Early Head Start Director Associate Head Start State Collaboration Director (2015 - Current)	2013–Current
Teri Talan	McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership (National Louis University)	Director of Research & Public Policy	2014–Current

\*Current FSC co-chairs

\*\*Past FSC co-chair

INCCRRA staff provided support to the efforts of the Family Specialist Credential Committee from 2010–2016.

Name	Title	Years of FSC
Joni Scritchlow	Senior Program Director	2010–Current
Stephanie Hellmer	Coordinator and Program Specialist of Professional Opportunities and Development	2014–Current

Additional organizations gave support by time or resources to the development of the Gateways Family Specialist Credential:

- Be Strong Families
- Bounce Learning Network
- Chicago Department of Family and Support Services
- Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&R)
- Community Counseling Center
- Department of Mental Health–Child and Adolescent Services
- Early Childhood Coalition
- Illinois Children’s Mental Health Partnership (ICMHP)
- Illinois Department of Child and Family Services–Service Intervention (IDCFS)
- Illinois Department of Human Services–Wellness and Community (IDHS)
- Infant Welfare Society of Evanston
- Midwest Learning Center
- The Women’s Treatment Center
- Voices for Illinois Children
- Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA)

# Appendix O

## Final Gateways Family Specialist Credential Framework

### Gateways to Opportunity® Family Specialist Credential Framework

FSC Levels	Education Requirements	Content Area Specific Education	Work and Practical Experience	Professional Contributions
<b>Level 5</b>	Bachelor's Degree	33 points in FSC Content Areas <i>(minimum of 1 point in each: Health, Safety &amp; Well-being, Observation &amp; Assessment, Curriculum &amp; Program Design, Personal &amp; Professional Development and 2 points in each: Human Growth &amp; Environments, Interactions, Relationships &amp; Environments, and Family &amp; Community Relationships) of which a maximum of 6 points may be from credential approved training</i>	Minimum of 200 hours of family-related supervised experience <b>or</b> 1200 total hours of documented family-related work experience	Required at Renewal
<b>Level 4</b>	Bachelor's or Graduate in Social Work from a nationally accredited program meets these requirements  Associate's Degree <b>or</b> 60+ semester hours with (9 semester hours of English, Social Science, and <b>any</b> Math <b>or</b> Science) <i>(These 9 hours must be credit bearing and nondevelopmental 100 level +)</i>	21 points in FSC Content Areas <i>(minimum of 1 point in each: Health, Safety &amp; Well-being, Observation &amp; Assessment, Curriculum &amp; Program Design, Personal &amp; Professional Development and 2 points in each: Human Growth &amp; Environments, Interactions, Relationships &amp; Environments, and Family &amp; Community Relationships) of which a maximum of 6 points may be from credential approved training</i>	100 hours of family-related supervised experience <b>or</b> 500 hours of documented family-related work experience	Required at Renewal
<b>Level 3</b>	High School Diploma or GED and 6 semester hours <i>(in 2 areas - English, Social Science, <b>any</b> Math <b>or</b> Science)</i> <i>(These 6 hours must be credit bearing and nondevelopmental 100 level +)</i>  1 additional point is required from General or Content Area specific education	9 points in FSC Content Areas <i>(minimum 1 point in each: Health, Safety &amp; Well-being, and Observation &amp; Assessment, and a minimum of 2 points in each: Human Growth &amp; Environments, Interactions, Relationships &amp; Environments) of which a maximum of 6 points may be from credential approved training (3 of the 6 points may come from Home Visitor CDA)</i>	20 hours of family-related supervised experience <b>or</b> 300 hours of documented family-related work experience	Required at Renewal
<b>Level 2</b>	High School Diploma or GED	6 points in FSC Content Areas <i>(must have a minimum of 2 points in each: Interactions, Relationships &amp; Environments and Human Growth &amp; Development)</i> <b>or</b> 3 points from FSC Coursework or training and the Home Visitor CDA All 6 points may come from credential approved training	10 hours of family-related documented observation <b>or</b> 200 hours of documented family-related work experience	Required at Renewal

Guide: A point is equivalent to one semester hour of college credit.



Illinois Professional Development System

Revised 10/20/2016

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# Gateways Family Specialist Credential – Guidelines

## Vision Statement:

“The Family Specialist Credential validates family systems knowledge, skills, and competencies required for direct service staff who work in relationship with families to promote optimal child and family outcomes.”

## “Family-related” work experience:

A work and practical experience verification form must be completed and signed by a supervisor, director, or Human Resources department and also include a job description from your employer that validates your work experience providing direct service to families. Direct teaching experience with children is not required for the Gateways Family Specialist Credential.

## Content Area Education:

### FSC Level 2:

- A minimum of two points is required in both: Human Growth & Development and Interactions, Relationships, & Environments.
- 200 hours of documented “family related” work experience or 10 hours of “family related” observation may be utilized to meet the Work and Practical Experience component.
- A Home Visitor CDA meets half of the education and training and all of the work experience for FSC Level 2.

### FSC Level 3:

- In addition to the point requirements for Level 2, one point is required in both: Health, Safety, & Well-Being and Observation & Assessment.
- 300 hours of documented “family related” work experience or 20 hours of “family related” supervised experience may be utilized to meet the Work and Practical Experience component.
- One additional point is required from General or Content Area specific education.\*
- General Education requirements include 6 semester hours in two of the four different areas.
- A Home Visitor CDA can be used as 3 points of credential approved training and also meets the work and practical experience.

### FSC Level 4:

- In addition to the point requirements for Levels 2 & 3, one point is required in both: Curriculum or Program Design and Personal & Professional Development and two points are required in: Family & Community Relationships.
- 500 hours of documented “family related” work experience or 100 hours of “family related” supervised experience may be utilized to meet the Work and Practical Experience component.
- General Education requirements include 9 semester hours in three of the four different areas.

### FSC Level 5:

- You must meet the points listed in Level 2, 3, and 4 with a total of 33 points.
- A Bachelor’s or Graduate degree in Social Work from a nationally accredited college or university meets the General Education, Content Area Specific Education, and Work and Practical Experience requirements.
- For a directory of accredited programs, visit [www.cswe.org](http://www.cswe.org).

## General Credential Information:

- One point is equivalent to 1 semester hour of college coursework, 1.5 quarter hours of college coursework, and/or 15 consecutive contact hours of training.
- A training must be at least 7.5 consecutive contact hours in length, cover one Content Area, and contain an assessment component in order to be considered toward a Gateways Credential. Each 7.5 consecutive contact hour training may be worth ½ of a point.
- Gateways Credentials are valid for five years and need to be renewed. Renewal requirements for the Family Specialist Credential have not been determined.

\*The one additional point at Level 3 helps meet program-specific, 16-semester hour Federal Financial Aid requirements.



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