



**GATEWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY**  
Illinois Professional Development System

## **Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC) New Member Orientation Acronym and Definition List**

The Access and Outreach Committee of PDAC assembled the following list of acronyms and definitions in the early care and education and school-age and youth development fields in Illinois to acquaint new PDAC members with some commonly used terms. The following list explains acronyms that are frequently referenced in PDAC discussions. This list is not comprehensive, nor does it provide complete definitions of terms. For a more complete listing of acronyms and definitions, see <http://www.ilgateways.com/Glossary/a.aspx>.

### **A**

**AAT-ECE** Associates of Arts in Teaching–Early Childhood Education: This two-year degree specific to the early childhood field transfers all credits earned to a four-year college or university. Students with the AAT-ECE enter a bachelor’s program as a junior.

### **B**

**BAS** Business Administration Scale: The Business Administration Scale measures leadership and management practices in family child care.

### **C**

**Career Lattice** The Gateways to Opportunity Early Childhood Educator Career Lattice incorporates the Gateways Credentials, credential levels, and education levels for the early childhood practitioner.

**CCAP** Child Care Assistance Program: This program assists low-income families in paying for child care. It is funded through the Illinois Department of Human Services and administered by the local child care resource and referral agencies.

**CCDBG** Child Care Development Block Grant: The Child Care Development Block Grant is designed to support families by increasing the availability, affordability, and quality of child care in the United States.

**CCNC** Child Care Nurse Consultant: Child Care Nurse Consultants (registered nurses) are experts in child health, child care, and child safety. They work with child care and early education programs.

CDA	Child Development Associate Credential: This entry-level early childhood development credential is awarded by the National Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition.
CCR&R	Child Care Resource and Referral: These community organizations track child care supply and demand; provide training, technical assistance, grants, and resources to early childhood practitioners; recruit new providers; and administer the Child Care Assistance Program.
Credential	A credential is evidence or certification of attainment and/or demonstration of defined knowledge, skills, and other professional requirements.
CEU	Continuing Education Unit: This nationally recognized measurement quantifies the time spent in the classroom during professional development and training activities. Ten hours of instruction = 1.0 CEU. One hour of instruction = 0.1 CEU.
CFC	Child and Family Connections: These privately contracted agencies work as a part of a statewide system responsible for ensuring that all referrals of children under the age of 3 to the Early Intervention Services System receive a timely response.
CPDU	Continuing Professional Development Unit: This measurement quantifies the time spent in the classroom during professional development and training for education practitioners. One hour of instruction = 1.0 CPDU.
<b>D</b>	
DMH	Division of Mental Health: This division of the Illinois Department of Human Services provides a wide variety of services at all levels for adults and children throughout the state.
<b>E</b>	
ECBG	Early Childhood Block Grant: ECBG provides funding for establishing early childhood education programs including preschool education for at-risk children ages 3 years old to kindergarten and prevention initiatives for at-risk children from birth to age 3 and their families.
ECE	Early childhood education or early care and education: ECE usually refers to the care and education of children ages birth to age 8.
ECERS	Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale: This tool was designed to assess group programs for children of preschool through kindergarten age, 2½ through 5.

EI	Early Intervention: The Illinois Early Intervention Service System serves children less than 36 months of age with disabilities or developmental delays, or who are at risk of substantial delays.
ELC	Early Learning Council: The Early Learning Council is committed to developing a high-quality early learning system that will be available to all children birth to age 5 throughout the state by enhancing, coordinating, and expanding programs and services for young children—including prekindergarten, child care, Head Start, health care, and parental support programs.
ELC: PSQ	Early Learning Council: Quality Committee charge is to increase the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of early childhood services in supporting the healthy growth and development of all young children birth to age five, especially those with the highest needs; ensure early care and education professionals have the knowledge and skills to effectively nurture and support the development and learning of all children in Illinois, and ensure children are ready for school by providing a solid foundation for appropriate child development strategies in workforce preparation across all settings.
ELI	Early Learning Illinois: The goal of this statewide effort is to improve and expand early learning opportunities in Illinois. Three agencies lead the policy and advocacy efforts—Ounce of Prevention, Voices for Illinois Children, and Illinois Action for Children.
ELS	Early Learning Standards: These standards, developed by the Illinois State Board of Education with the assistance of hundreds of educators, were first introduced in draft form in June 2000. The goal of the standards is to provide teachers and caregivers useful information that is directly needed as part of their daily classroom work.
ExceleRate Illinois, Quality Rating and Improvement System	The Quality Rating and Improvement System gives providers a process for pursuing quality efforts that will help them learn more, do better, and improve developmental skills among the children they impact. ExceleRate Illinois also provides standards, guidelines, resources and supports to help providers make sensible changes that lead to better quality outcomes. It is a comprehensive system that will include, licensed child care centers, Preschool for All programs, Head Start programs, and licensed child care homes.
<b>F</b>	
FCC	Family Child Care: Family Child Care refers to child care provided in a person’s residence, either licensed or license-exempt, with children ages birth–12 years.
FCCERS	Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale: This tool was designed to assess family child care programs conducted in a provider's home for children from infancy through school-age.

## G

**Great START** Great START (Strategy to Attract and Retain Teachers): This wage supplement program rewards eligible early care and education practitioners in DCFS-licensed child care centers and family/group family child care providers for receiving higher education and for remaining at their current place of employment

**Gateways to Opportunity Scholarship Program** This individual-based scholarship opportunity is for practitioners working in the field of early care and education. This program is administered through the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies.

## H

**HCCI** Healthy Child Care Illinois: This network of registered nurses helps child care workers provide high-quality care for the well-being of Illinois children.

**HFI** Healthy Families Illinois: This voluntary home visitation program works with expectant and new parents who may be at risk for problems in parenting, including child abuse/neglect.

**HS/EHS** Head Start/Early Head Start: This comprehensive, federally funded, community-based program provides developmental and educational services to pregnant mothers, babies, toddlers, preschoolers, and their families who live in poverty and struggle to meet the basic needs of life.

## I

**IAEYC** Illinois Association for the Education of Young Children: This statewide nonprofit affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children supports early childhood practitioners.

**IAN** Illinois Afterschool Network: IAN promotes excellence in leadership and provides professional development and advocacy opportunities for providers of after-school programs for children and youth.

**IDC** Illinois Director Credential: The Illinois Network of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies administers this credential for center-based early childhood directors.

**I-DEC** Illinois Division for Early Childhood: I-DEC is a professional organization that promotes evidence-based practice and supports growth and development of young children with special needs.

IDCFS	Illinois Department of Children and Family Services: This state agency oversees the regulation of child care programs as required by the Child Care Act of 1969, as revised.
IDHS	Illinois Department of Human Services: This state agency administers a range of early childhood and school-age and youth programs, including the Child Care Assistance Program, the statewide child care resource and referral system, the Early Intervention System, and Teen Reach.
IHSA	Illinois Head Start Association: IHSA is a nonprofit membership organization committed to enhancing the development of children, empowering families, and strengthening communities.
INCCRRA	Illinois Network of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies: INCCRRA, in partnership with the 16 child care resource and referral agencies, is a recognized leader, catalyst, and resource for making high-quality, affordable early care and education options available for children and families in Illinois.
ISBE	Illinois State Board of Education: This state agency administers prekindergarten programs and professional development and certification for PreK teachers. ISBE administers the Preschool for All program, early childhood special education programs, Teen Reach, and others.
IRC	Illinois Resource Center: IRC is funded by ISBE to provide a broad range of professional development services and instructional resources for school communities throughout the state.
ITC	Infant Toddler Credential: This credential defines the core competencies for Illinois professionals and paraprofessionals who work with infants and toddlers and serves as a symbol of professional recognition.
ITERS	Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale: This tool was designed to assess group programs for children from birth to age 2½.
ITN	Illinois Trainers Network: Trainers throughout the state focus on enhancing professional development and providing high-quality training and materials for center and family child care providers. This program is administered through the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies
<b>J</b>	
<b>K</b>	
Kith and Kin	Kith and kin are individuals who routinely care for children but who do not consider early care and education as a professional calling. Kith and kin arrangements are usually informal and license-exempt and involve relatives, family friends, and neighbors.

## **L**

**LIC** Local Interagency Council: The LICs were mandated by the Early Intervention System for the provision of local services to increase public awareness, perform community assessments, and identify service gaps for young children.

## **M**

**MHC** Mental Health Consultant: Full-time mental health consultants are employed and housed in a local mental health or social service agency and work in partnership with local CCR&R staff. Mental health consultants conduct training, provide consultations, and supply referrals for child care providers and the families they serve.

## **N**

**NACCRRRA** National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies: This organization promotes national policies and partnerships to advance the development and learning of all children and to provide vision, leadership, and support to community child care resource and referral agencies.

**NAEYC** National Association for the Education of Young Children: The National Association for the Education of Young Children is dedicated to improving the well-being of all young children, with particular focus on the quality of educational and developmental services for children from birth through age 8.

**NAFCC** National Association for Family Child Care: The National Association for Family Child Care is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting high-quality child care by strengthening the profession of family child care.

**NHSA** National Head Start Association: The National Head Start Association is a private not-for-profit membership organization dedicated exclusively to meeting the needs of Head Start children and their families.

## **O**

**OPF** Ounce of Prevention Fund: Founded in 1982 in Chicago, as a partnership between private donors and the state of Illinois, the Ounce of Prevention Fund strives to give children who are born into poverty a chance for success in school and in life.

## **P**

PAS	Program Administration Scale: The Program Administration Scale measures leadership and management practices in center settings.
PDAC	Professional Development Advisory Council: The strategy of this collaboration of professional organizations is to improve the quality and stability of the early care and education, school-age and youth development, and family support workforce through increased professional development and improved opportunities for career advancement.
PDF	Professional Development Funds: Administered through the child care resource and referral system, these funds are awarded to early childhood practitioners for tuition, training, and on-site consultations.
PFA	Preschool for All: Preschool for All is a free program of the Illinois State Board of Education committed to serving at-risk children and families in Illinois, with the goal of serving all 3- to 5-year-old children whose families choose to participate, and to provide child development and family support to the most at-risk infants and toddlers.
PDR	Professional Development Record: A PDR documents a Registry member's professional development activities and achievements in the following areas: formal college education, current valid credentials and certificates, and trainings attended. Registry-approved trainings are automatically added to an individual's PDR upon submission by the trainer.
<b>Q</b>	
QRIS: ExceleRate Illinois	The Quality Rating and Improvement System gives providers a process for pursuing quality efforts that will help them learn more, do better, and improve developmental skills among the children they impact. ExceleRate Illinois also provides standards, guidelines, resources and supports to help providers make sensible changes that lead to better quality outcomes. It is a comprehensive system that will include, licensed child care centers, Preschool for All programs, Head Start programs, and licensed child care homes.
QRS	Quality Rating System: The Quality Counts: Quality Rating System assists Illinois child care programs in providing high-quality care for children and their families. Funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services, this voluntary system is available to license-exempt family child care providers.
<b>R</b>	
Registry	The Registry is a central tracking system that lists professional development opportunities and maintains records of practitioners' professional development.

## S

SACERS	School Age Care Environment Rating Scale: This tool was designed to assess group-care programs for children of school age, 5 to 12 years.
SAM	Statewide Accreditation Mentoring: Administered through the Illinois Association for the Education of Young Children, SAM is designed to support programs through the process of accreditation. Services include technical assistance, co-horts, training, and scholarships.
SDA	Service Delivery Area: An SDA is a region served by a child care resource and referral agency.
SEIU	Service Employees International Union: SEIU is an organization of 2 million members united by the belief in the dignity and worth of workers and the services they provide and dedicated to improving the lives of workers and their families and creating a more just and humane society.
STARNET	Support and Technical Assistance Network: Funded by ISBE, STARNET provides training, consultation, and resources to the early childhood community statewide.

## T

TA	Technical Assistance: TA refers to advice, assistance, and training on a particular topic.
Teen REACH	The Teen REACH program (Responsibility, Education, Achievement, Caring, and Hope) provides positive youth activities during nonschool hours. Through prevention-focused activities, Teen REACH programs seek to expand the range of choices and opportunities that enable, empower, and encourage youth from ages 6 through 17 to achieve positive growth and development, improve expectations and capacities for future success, and avoid and/or reduce risk-taking behavior.
Tiered Reimbursement	Increased payment rates based on quality in a state's child care subsidy system are referred to as tiered reimbursement.
21st CCLC	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers is a federally funded after-school program of the U.S. Department of Education that supports the creation of community learning centers to provide academic enrichment opportunities during nonschool hours for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools.

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