

Scholarship Guidance and At-A-Glance: May 15, 2025 to March 1, 2026

Welcome! The OEC offers scholarship assistance to eligible staff to pay for education goals: the CDA Credential, associate and bachelor's degrees in early childhood education (ECE), and specific coursework. Use this guide to identify your education goal, eligibility for OEC scholarship to fund that goal, and steps to apply through your OEC Registry account (www.OECregistry.org). The more you know, the more Connecticut's children grow!

Getting Started: Eligibility, Steps, Detail

The OEC supports early childhood education (ECE) degree attainment and degree progression. You may apply for support to achieve or renew a CDA Credential; to move from a CDA Credential to an ECE associate degree; to move from an associate degree to an ECE bachelor's degree.

Eligibility

1. **Be directly and currently working with children (birth to preschool)** located in one of the following Connecticut settings:
 - a. OEC licensed family child care homes / centers / group homes
 - b. OEC-funded license-exempt centers and school-based programs.

Note: School-age providers employed in licensed programs receiving OEC funds may be eligible.
2. **Have an up to date Registry account (www.OECregistry.org), with confirmed employment last updated within 60 days of application (check with your supervisor if unsure). To ensure education documents are up to date:** log in and go to your documents to see what is on file; upload anything missing / updated.
3. **Meet any required eligibility details in your education goal** (see pages 3+).

Scholarship Steps:

1. Read and review the sections of this document specific to your scholarship goal.
2. Make sure your Registry account is up to date; and that all required documents have been uploaded.
3. Log in to your Registry account, go to My Scholarships, and follow prompts to apply for scholarship based on your goal (see page 3+).
 - a. Note: The Registry will tell you if you are missing any eligibility criteria and what they are. Use those reasons to fix any issues you can.
4. Check email for related communications (copies of emails are also in your account under My Messages).
5. **If awarded**, you must then register for your course / fee / etc. at your college / vendor **within 60 days of the award**. Please note: Being awarded a scholarship is not guaranteed. If you are unable to use your award, you must let your Registry Education Advisor know as soon as possible.
6. Report back your success to your Registry Education Advisor!

When do I apply?

Please use the **TENTATIVE** schedule below to plan your applications. Allow plenty of time – up to 20 days for processing.

Terms /Timeframes (Check with your college)	Apply during this time
❖ Summer 2025 (includes courses starting May - July)	May 15, 2025 to June 30, 2025
❖ Fall 2025 (includes courses starting August – November)	May 15, 2025 to September 22, 2025
❖ Winter 2026 (includes courses starting December / January AND ending in January)	October 16, 2025 to January 13, 2026
❖ Spring 2026 (includes courses starting January-April)	October 16, 2025 to March 1, 2026

What expenses are not covered?

The following are not eligible at this time: a secondary setting CDA credential, a second associate degree, a second bachelor's degree, state educator/administrator endorsement (aka teacher certification) track and/or trainings, and work toward a Master's degree or higher.

What if my request is denied?

1. This document has information to avoid denials or delays, but sometimes denials happen. You will receive an email with the scholarship decision and any denial reason/s. Please watch the email you use for your Registry login for scholarship application emails (copies are also in your account My Messages).
2. If your scholarship request is denied (i.e. missing documents, wrong course) you **MUST** reapply for scholarship again for consideration once the reason is corrected.
3. You may appeal a denial under certain circumstances. Follow this link (click blue underlined wording to open up link) → [Scholarship Use Policy and Appeal](#).

What do I do if I don't use my award?

1. **If you are unable to use your award, you must report this immediately to your Registry Education Advisor** so the funds can be released.
 - a. If you purchased textbooks as part of your award, you must return the text/s immediately and within the return policy of the bookstore.

For questions after reviewing this document: Contact your [Registry Education Advisor](#). Information is located at the bottom of every Registry page ([Contact Us](#)).

Education Goals and Job / Setting

Use the table below to see what education goal you may be eligible for based on your job. Each goal has a follow up section with more detail.

My education goal is:	I have an up-to-date Registry account with confirmed program employment. I'm a...		
	Teaching staff member or administrator in a licensed group home or licensed child care center	Teaching staff member in an OEC-funded license-exempt program	Licensed family home owner, or OEC approved substitute/assistant
1. CDA Credential – College credits toward 120 content hour requirement	✓		✓
2. CDA Credential – Instructor supported noncredit (training) 120 content hour requirement	✓		✓
3. CDA Credential – Application / Assessment fee	✓		✓
4. CDA Credential – One-time renewal fee	✓		✓
5. Completing up to 12 defined foundational early childhood credits	✓		✓
6. Associate's degree in early childhood education	✓		✓
7. Bachelor's degree in early childhood education	✓	✓	✓
8. Director 3-credit college course licensing requirement	✓		
9. Director credit college course competencies	✓		
10. Family child care: business college credit class			✓

Find the section below for more information about requirements for your education goal.

Education Goal Details: #1-4 (CDA Credential)

CDA®

Learn more about the renewable, entry-level CDA Credential administered by the Council for Professional Recognition [here](#).

Part of the CDA Credential requirements is 120 hours in specific early childhood education content. You can meet this requirement with either (1) three 3-credit college courses that are a planned CDA Credential track or (2) planned noncredit training. **Ask your [Registry Education Advisor](#) if you are not sure which route is best for you.**



1. CDA Credential – College credits toward 120 content hour requirement

- Upload transcripts for any college credits and degrees earned, and your high school diploma (non-US diploma: also upload the attestation).
- Identify what OEC partner college you will attend and which course, including which fees each term. You will apply for classes and fees; textbooks will be automatically added to your application. where available. Contact your Registry Education Advisor if you are unsure about which college; contact your college advisor if you are unsure about the classes or fees.
- Apply for scholarship: indicate the goal is the **CDA Credential: college credits toward 120 content hour requirement**.

2. CDA Credential – Instructor supported noncredit (training) 120 content hour requirement

- Upload transcripts for any college credits and degrees earned, and your high school diploma (non-US diploma: also upload the attestation).
- The OEC partners with CCEI (ChildCare Education Institute/Straightertline) for this online training. A CCEI trainer is assigned to support you throughout your planned training program after your application is approved.
- Apply for scholarship: indicate the goal is the **CDA Credential: instructor supported noncredit (training) 120 content hour requirement**.

3. CDA Credential Application / Assessment fee (online: one-time)

- Upload your final transcript of credits or training for the 120 content hours in the 8 topic areas and your high school diploma (non-US diploma: also upload the attestation)
- Have completed all CDA Credential requirements and have your Council Customer ID number.
- Apply for scholarship: indicate the goal **CDA Credential Application / Assessment fee**, then follow the prompts to select your setting and age group; attest to completion of all requirements; enter your Council Customer ID number.
- When approved: OEC staff inform the Council, and you get an email from the Council with next steps.

4. CDA Credential Renewal Fee (Online; one-time)

- a. Upload your current (non-expired) CDA Credential to your Registry account.
- b. Upload your final transcript for the 3-credit early childhood education course or final transcript for your 45 training hour program (no individual certificates please) to your Registry account.
- c. Have completed all CDA Credential renewal requirements and have your Council Customer ID number.
- d. Apply for scholarship: indicate the goal **CDA Credential Renewal fee**, then follow the prompts to attest to completion of all requirements and enter your Council Customer ID number.
- e. When approved: OEC staff inform the Council, and you get an email from the Council with next steps.

Education Goal Details: #5-10 (College Credit and Degree Options)

5. 12 defined foundational credits

OEC offers the opportunity for eligible providers to take up to 12 college credits in early childhood education (ECE) competencies. These competencies (4 classes, each worth 3 credits) are based on basic health, safety, and child development birth to age 5. The competencies are:

- a. Introduction to early childhood education
- b. Child growth and development
- c. Health, safety, and nutrition
- d. Child, family, school, and community

Eligibility is based on what you have earned to date. For example: if you have earned 6 credits in early childhood education to date, you may qualify to take up to 6 more credits from the OEC competencies; if you have a degree in early childhood education, you already have more than 12 ECE credits so would not qualify for this goal (congratulations!). Upload all earned credits and degrees then check your Education and Training Report to see what counts as ECE according to [OEC's policy](#).

Here are the courses from some of our partner colleges (check with your Registry Education Advisor if you don't see your college):

OEC Scholarship Partner College	Competency			
	Introduction to Early Childhood Education	Child Growth and Development	Health, Safety and Nutrition	Child, Family, School, and Community
Charter Oak State College (online only)	ECE 101: Introduction to Early Childhood Education	ECE 247: Child Development: Birth – Age 8	ECE 176: Health, Safety, and Nutrition: Birth – Age 8	EDU: 360: Family, Teacher, Community Partners
CT State (community college campuses)	ECED 1001: Introduction to Early Childhood Care and Education	ECED 1002: Foundations of Child Development	ECED 1376: Health and Wellness	ECED 2875: Children, Families, and Communities
Post University	CHS 111 : Foundations of Early Childhood Education	PSY 201: Child Development	CHS 254: Health, Safety, and Nutrition	CHS 336: Home School and Community Relations
InterAmerican University of Puerto Rico (Spanish; online)	EDUC 3126: Influencias Psicofilosóficas en los Modelos Curriculares para la Niñez Temprana	EDUC 2031: Psicología del Desarrollo	EDUC 2020: Salud, Nutrición y Primeros Auxilios	EDUC 3170: Los Padres y las Madres como Educadores

To apply for this goal (12 defined foundational credits):

- a. Upload transcripts for any college credits and degrees earned (non-US degrees require a [NACES member](#) equivalency report first).
- b. Identify what OEC partner college you will attend and which course, including which fees each term. You will apply for classes and fees; textbooks will be automatically added to your application where available. Contact your Registry Education Advisor if you are unsure about which college; contact your college advisor if you are unsure about the classes or fees.
- c. Apply for scholarship: indicate the goal **12 defined foundational credits** and follow the prompts to choose the competency, the partner college, exact course and any fees (see fees section below). When approved, textbooks are typically added to the award.

Note: you do not need a plan of study or to apply for financial aid for this goal.

Degree Goals

6. Associate degree in early childhood education

Note: To apply for this goal, you will need to have decided on a college and met with your advisor before applying for scholarship.

- a. Upload transcripts for any college credits and degrees earned (non-US degrees require a [NACES member](#) equivalency report first).
- b. Upload your current plan of study from your academic advisor (this must be updated at least annually).
- c. Upload evidence of application for the current academic year FAFSA as well as your college's financial aid (this statement typically shows where you accept or decline offers; please decline loans!)
 - i. Classes for summer 2025 require 24-25 financial aid evidence
 - ii. Classes for fall, winter and spring require 25-26 financial aid evidence
- d. Apply for scholarship: indicate the goal **Associate degree in early childhood education** and follow the prompts to choose the course/s and any fees (see fees section below) from the partner college. When approved, textbooks are typically added to the award.

Remember to apply for scholarship for each course. Come back each term to apply for the next courses.

7. Bachelor's degree in early childhood education

Note: To apply for this goal, you will need to have decided on a college and met with your advisor before applying for scholarship.

- a. Upload transcripts for any college credits and degrees earned (non-US degrees require a [NACES member](#) equivalency report first).
- b. Upload your current plan of study from your academic advisor (this must be updated at least annually).
- c. Upload evidence of application for the current academic year FAFSA as well as your college's financial aid (this statement typically shows where you accept or decline offers; please decline loans!)
 - i. Classes for summer 2025 require 24-25 financial aid evidence
 - ii. Classes for fall, winter and spring require 25-26 financial aid evidence
- d. Apply for scholarship: indicate the goal **Bachelor's degree in early childhood education** and follow the prompts to choose the course/s and any fees (see fees section below) from the partner college. When approved, textbooks are typically added to the award.

Remember to apply for scholarship for each course. Come back each term to apply for the next courses.

Leadership Coursework Goals

8. **Director 3-credit college course licensing requirement** (aka Administration and supervision of programs for young children; **This is a prerequisite for goal #9**)
Note: to apply for this goal, you must be listed as an administrator of the program in the Registry; **if listed in another role: you must upload both a completed Administrative Scholarship for Non-Administrators form and the Scholarship Terms of Agreement Form.**

- a. Upload transcripts for any college credits and degrees earned (non-US degrees require a [NACES member](#) equivalency report first).
- b. Apply for scholarship: indicate the goal **Director 3-credit college course licensing requirement** and follow the prompts to choose the course/s and any fees (see fees section below) from the partner college. When approved, textbooks are typically added to the award.

Note: you do not need a plan of study or to apply for financial aid for this goal.

9. **Director credit college course competencies**

Note: to apply for this goal, you must be listed as an administrator of the program in the Registry; **if listed in another role: you must upload both a completed Administrative Scholarship for Non-Administrators form and the Scholarship Terms of Agreement Form**

Director competencies include:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| i. Leadership in early childhood programs | iv. Family and community partnerships |
| ii. Finance in early childhood programs | v. Adult learning theory |
| iii. Human resources | |
- a. Upload transcripts for any college credits and degrees earned (non-US degrees require a [NACES member](#) equivalency report first); **must include transcript for successful completion of an early childhood administration and supervision class (see goal #8).**
 - b. Identify what OEC partner college you will attend and which course, including which fees each term. You will apply for classes and fees; textbooks will be automatically added to your application where available. Contact your Registry Education Advisor if you are unsure about which college; contact your college advisor if you are unsure about the classes or fees.
 - c. Apply for scholarship: indicate the goal **Director credit college course competencies** and follow the prompts to choose the competency, the partner college, exact course and any fees (see fees section below). When approved, textbooks are typically added to the award.

Note: you do not need a plan of study or to apply for financial aid for this goal.

10. **Family child care: business college credit class**

Note: you must be a licensed family child care owner to apply for this goal of coursework related to running a family child care business, including ESL and technology classes.

- a. Upload transcripts for any college credits and degrees earned (non-US degrees require a [NACES member](#) equivalency report first).
- b. Apply for scholarship: indicate the goal **Family child care: business college credit class** and follow the prompts to choose the course/s and any fees (see fees section below) from the partner college. When approved, textbooks are typically added to the award.

Note: you do not need a plan of study or to apply for financial aid for this goal.

About college fees

OEC Scholarship may cover course related fees in addition to tuition. **Students are responsible for requesting related fees at the time of tuition scholarship application to avoid potential out-of-pocket expenses.**

- a. Each college charges different fees. For example: **Post University** requires “Technology Fees” for *EACH* module (1-6). **Charter Oak State College** requires “Student Services Fees & Technology Fees” *PER* semester (semesters include Term 1 and Term 2). **CT State** (community college) often bundles fees with tuition. **Please inquire with your institution’s Bursar/Business Office or advisor for correct fees prior to applying.**

- b. Only select the fees as required by your institution. Do not request all fee types.

Fee types may include:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Student Activities Fee | <input type="radio"/> Student Services Fee | <input type="radio"/> Transportation Fee |
| <input type="radio"/> Degree Application Fee | <input type="radio"/> Technology Fee | <input type="radio"/> Registration Fee |
| <input type="radio"/> Lab Fee | <input type="radio"/> College Fee | <input type="radio"/> Other Fee* |

*Please Note: If selecting “Other Fee”, contact your Registry Education Advisor to discuss the fee type and amount.

About partner colleges

OEC has existing scholarship relationships with the following colleges, subject to change:

1. Charter Oak State College (online only)
2. Connecticut State University System:
 - a. CT State (community college campuses statewide)
 - b. Central Connecticut State University
 - c. Southern Connecticut State University
3. InterAmerican University of Puerto Rico (Spanish only; online only)
4. Post University
5. University of Connecticut

Glossary of Terms/Definitions:

- **“Academic Advisor” or “College Advisor”** refers to college personnel that will help you set and achieve your educational goals by working closely with you to select courses, identify strengths, choose a major and act as resource until you graduate.
- **“Administrator”** refers to a leadership-level staff member tagged as such within the program’s OEC Registry Staff Confirmation details.
- **“College Transcript” (also called an academic transcript or academic record)** is your school's documentation of your academic performance. Your transcript must **reflect the name of the college/university as well as your name** and list all courses taken semester-by-semester, and grades received (regardless of whether or not the grade is included in the GPA computation), credit hours, major(s), minor(s), and other academic information, depending on your institution. The OEC requires a complete transcript including the **“transcript key”**. **The transcript key is the data on the back of a transcript**, also called a legend, which communicates grading types, course numbering schemes, accreditation of institution, and other useful information.
- **“Confirmed Employment”** refers to your status at your worksite noted in the OEC Registry (see Registry instructions for participants). Confirmed employment is required to request OEC scholarship.
- **“FAFSA”** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is a form completed annually by current and prospective college students in the United States to determine their eligibility for student financial aid. **Preferred proof of FAFSA application is page 1 of the FAFSA Submission Summary and may be submitted as evidence.** Alternate evidence: confirmation email (must include to, from, date, subject and body of email). OEC scholarship is applied **AFTER** any other grants but **BEFORE** any student loans. If student loans are offered, the individual does NOT have to accept them. We hope you will decline loans. **For degree seekers only**
- **“Institution’s Financial Aid”** refers to a funding award that is available exclusively to students through the financial aid office. By applying for financial aid, you can find out about other funding opportunities that may save OEC scholarship funds for others. **Please upload a copy of your institution’s aid evidence that indicates either the acceptance or denial of your financial aid package.** **For degree seekers only**
- **“OEC-Funded program”** refers to a program receiving the following funds: School Readiness, Child Day Care contract, State Head Start, Smart Start, Early Start CT.
- **“Plan of Study” (also called a Degree Evaluation or Advising Worksheet)** refers to a document from your college or university that outlines the classes that must be completed in order to graduate in your planned Early Childhood Education/Child Studies major. This plan is developed with your college advisor. It is required to ensure that scholarship funds are used to help you attain your early childhood education goals. When uploading your plan of study, your document should contain what classes you have successfully completed so far and what term you plan on taking future courses. **(The course you are looking to have covered by scholarship must be listed on your plan of study).** You will need to update your plan of study each school year or whenever any changes to your plan of study take place. **For degree seekers only**
- **“Teacher”** refers to an individual with primary responsibility for a group of children. This person should be designated as a Teacher on the Staff Confirmation page and should be designated as a Teacher to a specific classroom under Building / Managing Staff within the OEC Registry.
- **“Teaching staff members”** refers to all direct teaching roles including Staff Confirmation page roles: lead teacher, classroom teacher, assistant teacher. These individuals should show as assigned to either Teacher or Assistant Teacher / Aide in the OEC Registry’s program profile under Building / Managing Rooms and Staff.
- **“Voucher”** refers to the payment commitment document emailed directly from OEC Scholarship to the vendor’s relevant office (and related bookstore for OEC participating vendors ONLY). Note that vouchers are good for 60 days. Vouchers have no cash value / may not be reimbursed to the student.

**Terms of Agreement for the OEC Scholarship Assistance Fund
(Accessible in and agreed to in your online application)**

Scholarship applicants must agree to the following to request and receive Scholarship Assistance from the Office of Early Childhood:

1. I agree to **keep my Registry account up to date**, including mailing address, email address, phone number, employment, and transcripts for credits and degrees earned.
2. I agree to **check email for communication about scholarship applications and follow up as required**; that all communication will go to the email address I assigned to my Registry account.
3. I agree to **accurately portray my eligibility**; that approval of application is **based on eligibility, availability of funds, and agency priorities**, any of which may change.
4. I agree to **use my voucher within 60 days** of award.
5. I agree **not to attempt to transfer an award** to another term, course / fee, vendor, student, and that there is **no on-going guarantee of funds**.
6. For degree-based college credit coursework: I agree to **maintain a current plan of study** with my college academic advisor and upload it to my account.
7. For degree-based college credit coursework: I agree that **I will accept grant funds before using OEC funds, including Pell Grant**. OEC scholarship funds are to be used **AFTER** any grants and **before** student loans. I understand I am strongly discouraged from accepting loans (which require repayment).
8. I agree not to try to collect funds; that **funds are paid to the vendor** after the OEC is invoiced; no funds will be paid to me by the OEC or the vendor.
9. I agree to **notify my OEC regional education advisor** by email (for info go to www.oecregistry.org - Contact Us) of any changes to my scholarship award, including but not limited to: inability to use a commitment voucher; dropping an activity or course; not registering for or canceling an activity or course.
10. I agree to **return textbooks** purchased using OEC scholarship if I do not attend the course/training.
11. I agree that **if I do not successfully complete the coursework or activity for which I was awarded scholarship**, I will not be eligible to receive further scholarship assistance without a review, and may lose eligibility ([Scholarship Use Policy and Appeal Process](#)).
12. **I agree to the terms of the OEC FERPA policy as stated below:**
One of the mandates of the Office of Early Childhood ("OEC") is to "develop and implement...a coordinated and comprehensive state-wide early childhood care and education system of professional development for providers and staff of early childhood care and education programs, including child day care centers, group day care homes and family day care homes that provide child day care services, that makes available to such providers and their staff, within available appropriations, scholarship assistance, career counseling and training and advancement in career ladders...." Conn. Gen. Stat. § 17b-733. Pursuant to that mandate, the OEC has created the Early Childhood Professional Registry ("Registry").

In order to determine whether a particular scholarship fund applicant qualifies for funds, staff members of the Registry may request information from the applicant's institutions of higher education. Such requests are made pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) which allows schools to disclose records, without consent, to appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student. In return, in accordance with OEC's scholarship use policy, the OEC may also share information regarding the scholarship fund applicant's scholarship status with the institution of higher education.