

Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About the CDA® Assessment & Credentialing System for High School Students!

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Council for Professional Recognition
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Goals for Webinar

Learn the process for High Schoolers seeking the CDA®!

- ❖ What is the CDA®?
- ❖ Understand the benefits for students and faculty
- ❖ What are the requirements?
- ❖ The CDA® as a career pathway
- ❖ Tips for applying
 - Application materials
 - Navigating the credentialing process
 - Understand the assessment process and timeframe
 - Preparing to apply
 - Developing a portfolio
 - Understanding competency requirements



The CDA®

The Child Development Associate® Credential or CDA® is the most widely recognized credential in early childhood education.

It is a key stepping stone on the path to career advancement in early childhood education.

To be awarded the credential, candidates must complete an assessment process and demonstrate that they are able to put their knowledge of the CDA Competency Standards into practice in their daily work with children and families.

Being awarded the CDA means a candidate is qualified to be a lead teacher in the classroom.





COUNCIL
for
PROFESSIONAL
RECOGNITION



The Best 1st Step

Nationally Recognized
Transferable
Competency-Based



Child Development Associate® (CDA) Credential™



- ❖ Multi-Language credential designed to assess an early childhood educator's competency in the language of their daily work.
- ❖ 425,000+ early care educators in the United States and other countries.
- ❖ Articulates to Associates in Arts (AA) and Bachelors of the Arts (BA) degree programs.

Getting a CDA® in High School

Guided by the belief that all students should be college or career ready, in 2011 the Council began allowing high school students enrolled in Career & Technical Education Programs (CTE) to earn the CDA® credential.

Benefits for Students

- ❖ Graduate high school job-ready with nationally recognized CDA Credential -- as CDA credentialed staff are in high demand!
- ❖ Jump-start your higher education with core knowledge of child development
- ❖ Have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to work with young children
- ❖ Assessment available in the language of your work
- ❖ Gain valuable skills & competencies that early childhood employers want
- ❖ Earn college credit while still in high school
- ❖ Faculty support throughout the process

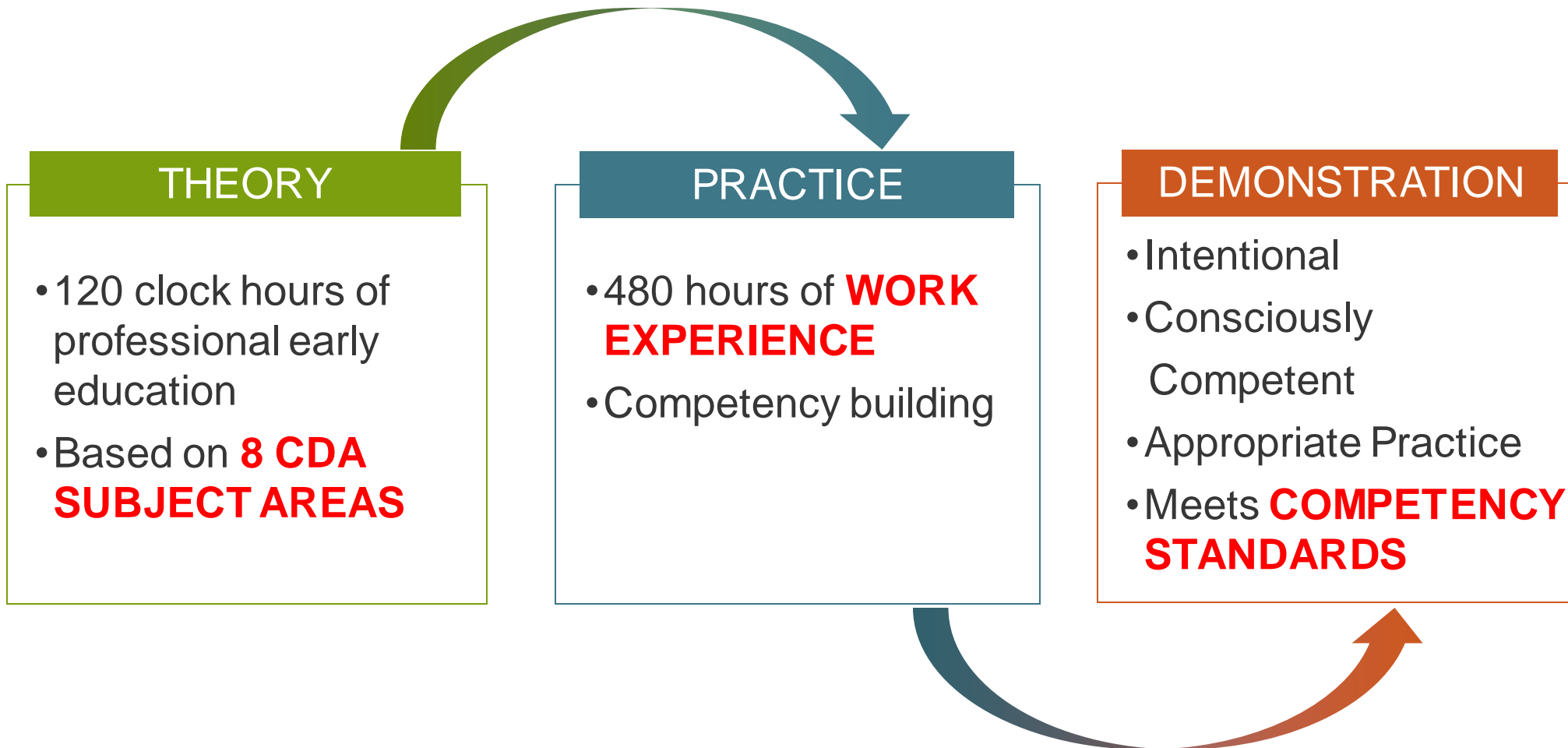
Benefits for Faculty

- ❖ Empower students with explicit, measurable, and transferable learning competencies recognized in all 50 states and the U.S. military
- ❖ Serve as a Professional Development (PD) Specialist™ & further your own training and expertise if desired
- ❖ Prepare your students for success in college & careers
- ❖ Receive recognition for your contributions

The CDA® Supports Career Pathways

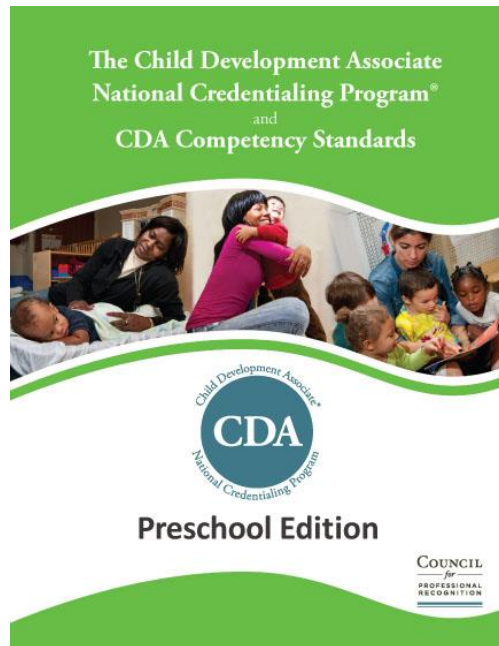
- ❖ Prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of postsecondary education options
- ❖ Can include counseling to support an individual in achieving education & career goals
- ❖ Includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently or in the same cycle as workforce preparation activities & training
- ❖ Enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma and at least one recognized industry-based credential (IBC)
- ❖ Helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster

CDA® Credential



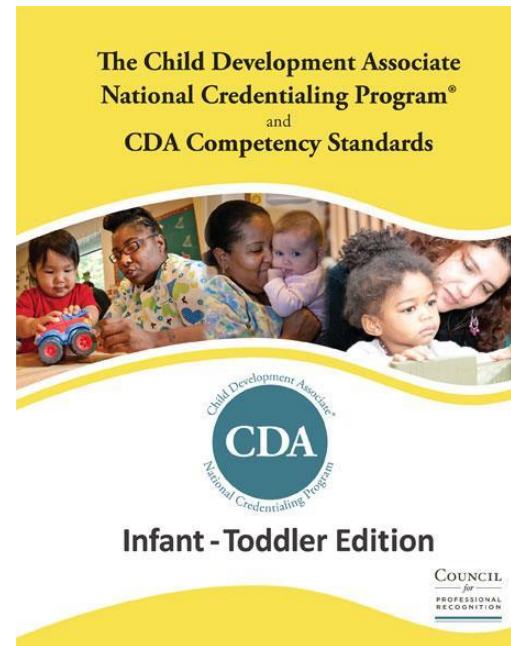
CDA® Credential Setting Types

CENTER-BASED SETTINGS

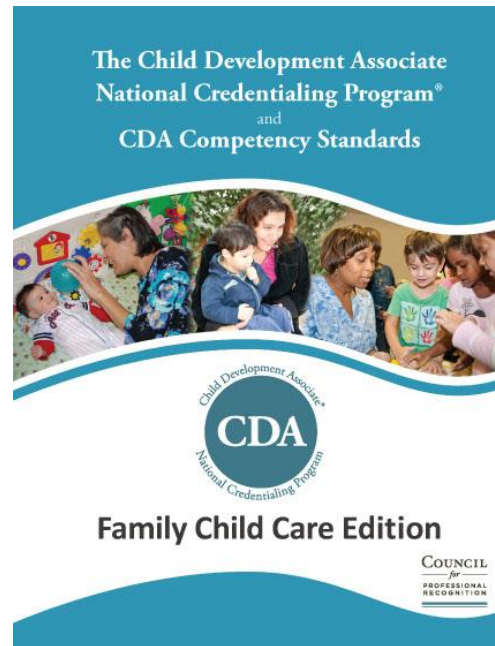


3-5 Years

FAMILY CHILD CARE

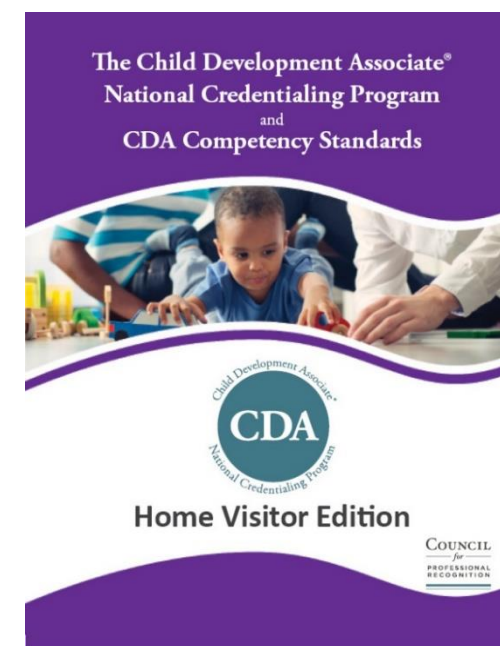


Birth - 36 Months



Birth - 5 Years

HOME VISITOR



Birth - 5 Years

CDA® Credentialing Process



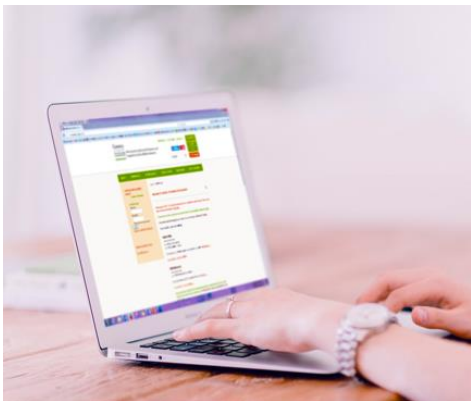
Literacy and
Education



Experience



Documentation



Application



CDA Verification
Visit®



CDA® Exam

Prepare

Apply

Demonstrate

Preparing to Apply for the CDA® Assessment

Literacy

- ❖ Be able to speak, read, and write in the language of the assessment well enough to fulfill the responsibilities of a CDA candidate.
- ❖ The language of the assessment is the language in which the candidate is required to conduct his or her daily work with children and families.



**Literacy and
Education**

Education

- ❖ **To apply** for a CDA credential, candidates **MUST** have:
- ❖ **High School Education** - High School diploma/GED **or** be a junior or senior enrolled in a high school career and technical education program (training/classes can start as a freshman or sophomore).
- and
- ❖ **Professional Education** - 120 clock hours of education (instruction) in the 8 CDA Subject Areas (at least 10 hours in each area) specific to the credential type they are applying for.

All education must be obtained under the auspices of an agency, organization or institution with expertise in early childhood teacher preparation.



**Literacy and
Education**

Education: The 8 CDA Subject Areas

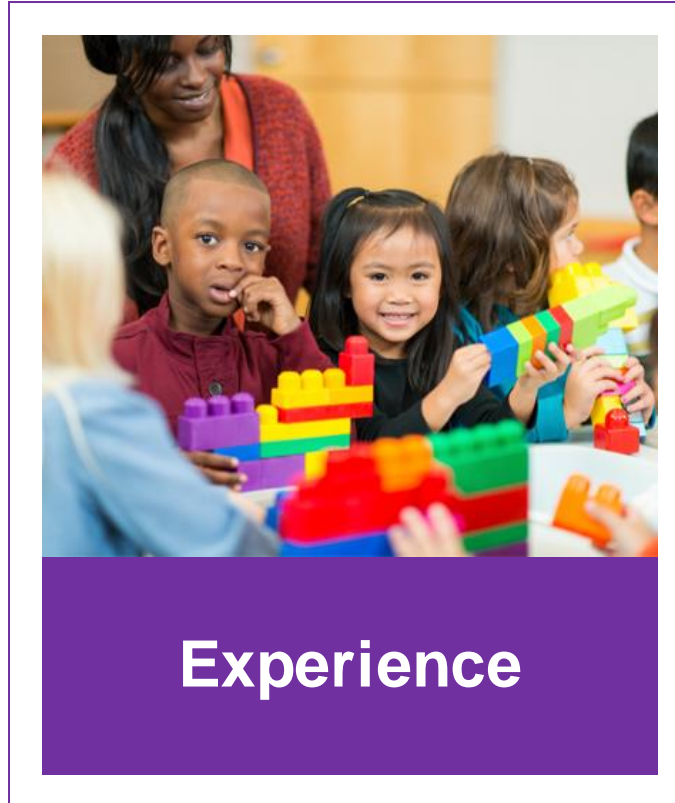
CDA Subject Areas		Examples
1	Planning a safe, healthy learning environment.	Safety, first aid, health, nutrition, space planning, materials and equipment, play
2	Advancing children's physical and intellectual development.	Large and small muscle, language and literacy, discovery, art, music, math, social studies, brain development, science, technology, dual language learning
3	Supporting children's social and emotional development.	Self-esteem, independence, self-regulation, socialization, cultural identity
4	Building productive relationships with families.	Parent involvement, home visits, conferences, referrals
5	Managing an effective program.	Planning, record keeping, reporting
6	Maintaining a commitment to professionalism.	Advocacy, ethical practices, workforce issues, professional associations
7	Observing and recording children's behavior.	Tools and strategies for objective information and assessment
8	Understanding principles of child development and learning.	Child development from birth through age 5, individual variations, cultural influences

Experience

To apply for a CDA credential, high school candidates **MUST** have at least:

- ❖ 480 hours of work experience working in the same type of program/setting as the one they are applying for assessment.
- ❖ Some training programs help candidates locate programs where candidates may volunteer to meet this requirement. Volunteer hours are accepted.

(Within 3 Years of Applying)



Documentation: Develop a Professional Portfolio

Professional Portfolio

COVER SHEETS

- ❖ *My Professional Portfolio Cover Sheet*
- ❖ *Summary of Education Cover Sheet + documentation*
- ❖ *Family Questionnaire Cover Sheet + completed family questionnaires*
- ❖ *Reflective Dialogue Worksheet*

Resource Collection

Reflective Statements of Competence

Professional Philosophy Statement



Documentation

Family Questionnaires

- ❖ For high school students to apply for a CDA credential, candidates **MUST** complete a *Family Questionnaire Summary Sheet*.
- ❖ The student must work with Center staff to distribute a *Family Questionnaire (FQ)* to each family in their group and collect the “majority” (more than half)

(Within **6 Months** of Applying.)



Family Questionnaires (FQ)

Candidate: Copy as needed



Family Questionnaire

Introduction

_____ is preparing to earn the nationally-renowned Child Development Associate® (CDA) Credential™. In order to be awarded the CDA®, he/she has taken on a significant professional challenge: He/she must have experience working with young children, must have a required amount of early childhood education, must prepare a Professional Portfolio, must be observed working by a skilled professional (a CDA Professional Development Specialist™) and must pass the national CDA® evaluation.

The process of getting a CDA® is also a professional development experience in which Candidates reflect on areas of strength and areas for future professional growth. In addition to self-reflection, Candidates are provided feedback to consider by the CDA Professional Development Specialist™ and by you, if you so choose. So, we invite you to complete the questionnaire, below, in order to provide feedback that may help the Candidate continue to grow as a professional.

Please know that:

- Completing this questionnaire is optional. If you choose to complete it, your feedback will only be read by the Candidate in order to contribute important information that may assist him/her in setting professional goals for the coming year. **The answers you provide on this questionnaire will have no impact on whether the Candidate will be awarded the CDA® Credential.**
- You may provide your feedback anonymously, if you so choose.

If you choose to complete the questionnaire, you must return it to the Candidate by _____.

Family Questionnaire

Each of the following topics relates to key areas of quality early childhood professional practice as outlined by the Council for Professional Recognition. For each area, please rate the Candidate on a scale of 1 – 3 in which 1 = *Needs improvement/Area for professional growth*, 2 = *Capable/Competent* and 3 = *Very capable/Area of strength*.

The Candidate:

- Helps me to provide a safe, clean environment for my child and teaches me and the members of my family to follow general hygiene practices

1	2	3
---	---	---
- Provides me with information to help me identify community resources that provide services and support to families

1	2	3
---	---	---

- Encourages me to use my family daily routines as opportunities for my child/children's learning.

1	2	3
---	---	---
- Helps me understand the use of activities, materials and equipment that are age appropriate for my child to develop small muscle skills (like grasping or pouring) and large muscle skills (like climbing or balancing).

1	2	3
---	---	---
- Teaches me about the use of activities, materials and equipment that help my child learn how to think, reason and solve problems.

1	2	3
---	---	---
- Provides opportunities for me and my family members to take a lead role and share our skills during the visits.

1	2	3
---	---	---
- Respects my parenting methods while teaching me new ideas.

1	2	3
---	---	---
- Helps me value my own self-worth and to know, accept and appreciate each member of my family as an individual.

1	2	3
---	---	---
- Helps me understand the importance of positive interactions between family members and the impact of those interaction on my child.

1	2	3
---	---	---
- Shows me examples of adult/child interactions so I can learn new ways to interact with my own child (ex. Models reading, models guidance, etc.).

1	2	3
---	---	---
- Helps me understand the typical social behavior of my child/children at different stages so I can have realistic expectations

1	2	3
---	---	---
- Helps me recognize my strengths and helps me set parenting goals.

1	2	3
---	---	---
- Keeps her appointments with my family and is on time.

1	2	3
---	---	---
- (For Bilingual Specialization Candidates only) Respectfully communicates with my family in our preferred language.

1	2	3
---	---	---

Name (optional)

Thank you for taking the time to support the Candidate's professional growth. If you would like to provide additional feedback, please feel free to attach it to this questionnaire.

Resource Collection

Collect and organize early childhood resources that reflect the standards:

- ❖ First Aid and Pediatric or Infant/Child CPR
- ❖ Weekly Menu
- ❖ Weekly Plan
- ❖ 9 Learning Activities
- ❖ Bibliography of children's books
- ❖ Family Resource Guide
- ❖ Record keeping forms
- ❖ State regulations
- ❖ Early childhood associations
- ❖ Child abuse and neglect legal requirements

Reflective Statements of Competence

The candidate is required to write a *Reflective Statement of Competence* for each of the Competency Goals, a total of six (6). Each *Reflective Statement of Competence* should describe:

- ❖ How the candidates' practices meet the standard and;
- ❖ How an item in the candidate's *Resource Collection* reflects his or her philosophy

Competency Standards

#	Competency Goals	Functional Areas
Goal I	To establish and maintain a safe, healthy learning environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safe 2. Healthy 3. Learning Environment
Goal II	To advance physical and intellectual competence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Physical 5. Cognitive 6. Communication 7. Creative
Goal III	To support social and emotional development and to provide positive guidance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Self 9. Social 10. Guidance
Goal IV	To establish positive and productive relationships with families	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Families
Goal V	To ensure a well-run, purposeful program responsive to participant needs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Program Management
Goal VI	To maintain a commitment to professionalism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Professionalism

Reflective Statement (Example)

CSIII Competency Statement III (To provide social and emotional development and positive guidance)

I strongly believe that children's most important characteristics for success in life are developed in their early years. My work is dedicated to help children in my care develop curiosity and confidence. Intentionality, self-regulation, relatedness, communication capacity and cooperativeness are also essential characteristics I promote in my daily work. I work to implement the latest theories and research into my practice. This competency area is a vital part of my daily work with children.

Professional Philosophy Statement

The candidate writes a *Professional Philosophy Statement* that summarizes the candidate's professional beliefs and values about early childhood education:

- ❖ Final reflective task
- ❖ Write no more than 2 pages
- ❖ Write no more than 500 words per statement

Before Applying for a CDA® Assessment



Select a CDA Professional Development (PD) Specialist™

As part of the assessment process, candidates must complete a CDA Verification Visit® with a Council endorsed PD Specialist™

During the Verification Visit the PD Specialist :

- ❖ Reviews the candidate's *Professional Portfolio*
- ❖ Observes the candidate working with children
- ❖ Facilitates a reflective dialogue with the candidate.

Candidates must identify a PD Specialist prior to submitting their application. Once a PD Specialist agrees to conduct their visit they will provide the candidate with their **endorsement number**. Candidates are required to provide this endorsement number on their application

Select a CDA PD Specialist™

When locating a PD Specialist, candidates may do any of the following:

- ❖ Use the Find-A-PD Specialist Directory on the Council's website.
- ❖ Ask someone they know who is already a PD Specialist.
- ❖ Ask an early childhood education professional in their community, who meets the Council's requirements, to become a PD Specialist by applying and completing the Council's online training

NOTE: Candidates must select a PD Specialist that holds the same endorsement and language specialization as the credential type that they are applying for.

Apply for the CDA® Assessment

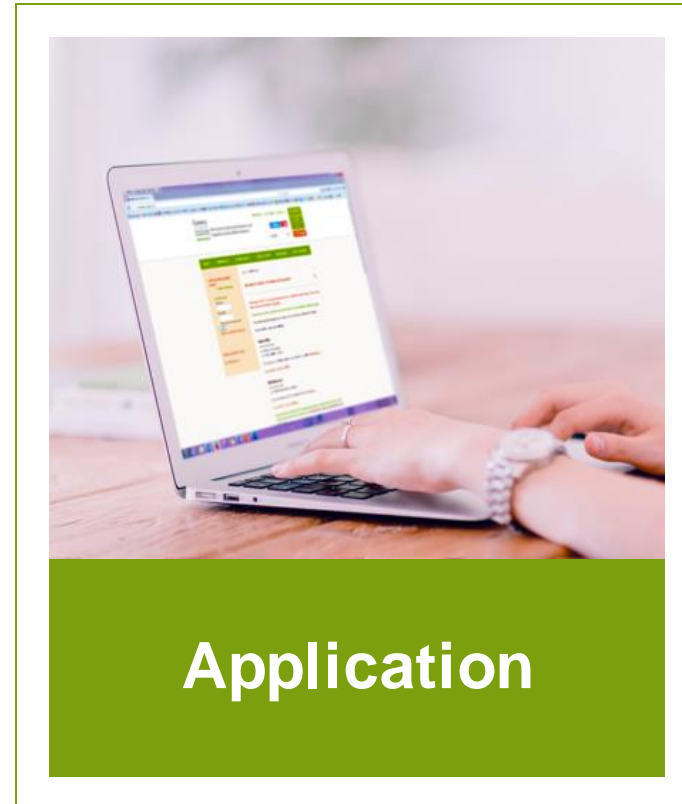


Application

- ❖ To apply for a CDA credential, candidates **MUST** submit an application directly to the Council, along with their full application fee.
- ❖ CDA candidates can apply online or using a paper application. Paper applications can be found in the *CDA® Competency Standards* book.

Online application fee: \$425

Paper application fee: \$500



The Ready to Schedule Notice

- ❖ After an application is processed and approved by the Council, candidates will then receive a ***Ready to Schedule Notice***.
- ❖ Candidates who apply online will receive the notice via email, candidates that apply using a paper application will receive the notice via email if they provide an email address on their application or via postal mail if an email is not provided.

The notice informs the candidate that they are now able to:

- Schedule the CDA Verification Visit with their PD Specialist.
- Schedule the CDA Exam at a Pearson VUE testing center.

Demonstrate Competence with the CDA Verification Visit® and CDA Exam®



CDA Verification Visit®

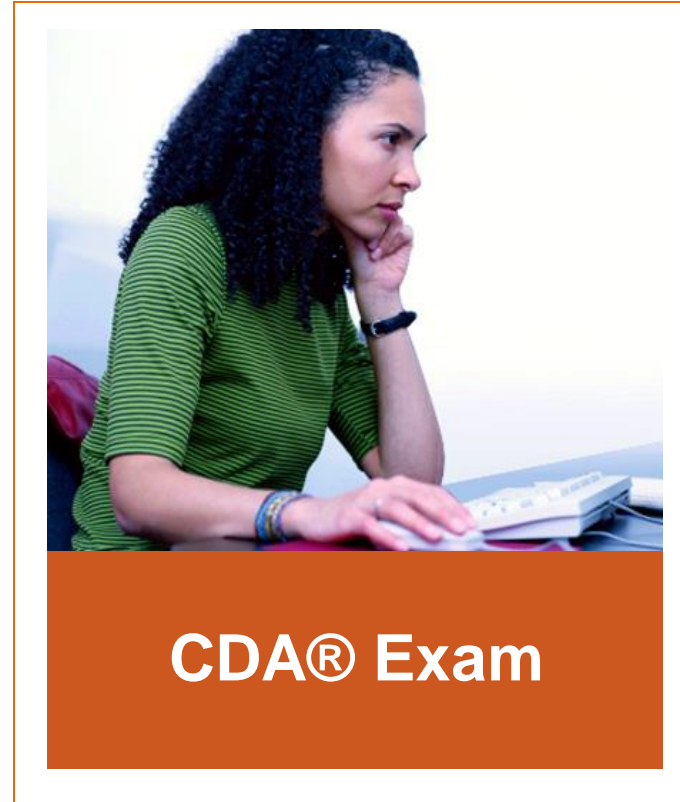
- ❖ During the CDA Verification Visit, the selected PD Specialist will:
 - **REVIEW** the *Professional Portfolio* (1 hours)
 - **OBSERVE** the Candidate working as the lead teacher directly with children (minimum of 2 hours)
 - **REFLECT** with the Candidate on areas of strength and growth for the purpose of setting professional goals (1 hours)
- ❖ The CDA Verification Visit lasts a minimum of 4 hours.
- ❖ The PD Specialist will send recommended scores to the Council through an online scoring tool.



**CDA Verification
Visit®**

CDA® Exam

- ❖ CDA candidates will complete the computer-based exam at a Pearson VUE testing center. Pearson VUE staff will provide approved accommodations.
- ❖ The exam consists on 65 multiple choice questions about examples of best practices in early childhood education, including five that represent a photo and a brief situation or story in an early childhood program.
- ❖ The exam offers 15 minutes for instructions and practice and one hour and 45 minutes to complete the exam.
- ❖ Once the exam is completed, the scores are sent to the Council electronically.



Credentialing Results



Credentialing Results

Multiple Sources of
evidence from the
CDA Verification
Visit®



CDA® Exam
Score



**CREDENTIALING
DECISION**

Credentialing Determination



Upon completion of the CDA Exam, the candidate's scores in each of the 13 CDA® Functional Areas will be transmitted in 24 hours from Pearson VUE to the Council.

Based on their findings from the CDA Verification Visit, the PD Specialist will submit their *Recommended Scores* to the Council online within 48 hours of the visit. The Council, using all sources of the assessment, establishes a final *Cumulative Score* which will determine a candidate's credentialing decision.

CDA® Renewal

- ❖ **Every three years**
- ❖ **Based on continuing education**

Tips for Success



Recap: High School Student Requirements

- ❖ Be enrolled in a high school Career and Technical Education (CTE) program.
- ❖ Be able to speak, read, and write well enough to fulfill the responsibilities of a CDA candidate
- ❖ Complete **120 clock hours of professional early childhood education**, covering the growth and development of children (setting specific), with no fewer than 10 hours in each of the eight subject areas
- ❖ Complete **480 hours of experience within the last three years working with children** (setting specific). Your experience may be as paid staff or volunteer.
- ❖ Complete a **Professional Portfolio** (including the family questionnaires). Each student's portfolio must contain a copy of an official letter on school letterhead or a certificate verifying 120 clock hours of training.

Instructor // Administrator Tips

- ❖ Ensure that students receive professional development training to meet the 120 hour education requirement.
- ❖ Assist students with applying online to start the assessment process
- ❖ Assist students with finding a Pearson VUE Testing Center
- ❖ Ensure that students have an active email account that is checked on a regular basis
- ❖ Apply to serve as a CDA PD Specialist, if interested (www.cdacouncil.org/cda-pd-specialists)

Pre-Application Material Tips

- ❖ Be sure to order enough *CDA Competency Standards* books (in the correct setting) so that you have one book for each student. Order at least one month in advance.
- ❖ Become familiar with the book and its contents.
- ❖ The professional portfolio must not be older than six (6) months when the application is sent to the Council.
- ❖ Please do not send any of these materials to the Council. Students must present them to the PD Specialist on the day of the CDA Verification Visit.

Understand the Assessment Process & Timeframe

- ❖ To avoid any delays, we encourage your students to use the checklist located on the inside of the front cover of the *CDA Competency Standards* book.
- ❖ Please make sure your application has the code "CTE" (Career Technical Education) in application under Section B: *Type of Program*.
- ❖ Once the application is approved by the Council, a *Ready to Schedule Notice* will be delivered to the candidate and the PD Specialist.

Remember that the Credentialing Process is Candidate-Driven

- ❖ The candidate must schedule and complete the **CDA Verification Visit with PD Specialist** within **six (6) months** from the *Ready to Schedule Notice* (received from the Council).
- ❖ The candidate must schedule and complete the **CDA Exam at a Pearson VUE** facility within **six (6) months** from the *Ready to Schedule Notice* (received from the Council).

Questions?



THANK YOU!

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