

Memorandum of Agreement Template

Statewide Associate to Baccalaureate Articulation Agreement

Introduction to the Template

This template provides sample language and appendix items that can be used to develop a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). This template also provides example language from two states; however, it is not meant to be used verbatim but rather as sample language that can be modified to meet your unique articulation needs. For example, both states address articulation for early childhood degrees for teachers of preschool-aged children (nursery–Grade 3 and prekindergarten–Grade 4 [PK-4] certifications). If a state or program wanted to develop a statewide agreement that included birth to 5-years-old certification, language would need to be modified to accommodate degrees or courses of study that include infant and toddler-aged children. Specific language choices will occur as the MOA is developed and agreed upon by all parties.

Key Stakeholders

Key stakeholders refers to those who have legal authority and responsibility for implementing the Agreement. The key stakeholders for statewide associate to baccalaureate degree agreements are the institutions of higher education offering the associate degree program, institutions of higher education offering the baccalaureate degree program, and the state agencies that regulate and approve both programs. Statewide agreements may be made between state agencies, enacted as statute, or made between administrators of the state university system and state community college system. Individual MOAs between individual institutions may be needed to define specific courses transferred and waived.

Additional stakeholders may be invited to provide input into the development of the MOA, including higher education faculty and administrators, student advisors, students, staff of professional associations, employers, professional development system staff, and early childhood education policy analysts and advocates.

State Context

Generally, degree programs leading to state teacher licensure must follow approval guidelines developed at the state level and may choose or be required to follow additional professional program accreditation requirements from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Often national professional standards provide the unifying framework, and current professional accreditation provides quality assurance.

State Examples

Sample language in this template is drawn from two current state “program-to-program” agreements that encourage or require associate degree completion before transfer, provide both substantive early childhood content and practice at the associate level, avoid “terminal” or dead-end associate degree programs, and use student performance on national standards of the profession as quality assurance mechanisms. Statewide articulation agreements will reflect the writing style and format of similar statutes in the state. Each statewide agreement is the product of its own state context, described briefly here.

Connecticut Context

The Connecticut agreement requires that associate degree programs meet the state standards for program approval and be accredited by the NAEYC Commission on Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation in order to be included in the statewide articulation agreement. Quality assurances include accreditation by the profession (NAEYC and CAEP) plus state program approval, with additional criteria for specific teacher certification tracks.

- *Connecticut's 2006 Early Childhood Education Workforce Supply Report to the General Assembly on Public Act 05-245 used state data and existing policy to develop the background and objectives for a statewide articulation agreement, incorporating NAEYC standards as shared outcomes and requiring NAEYC associate degree accreditation as evidence to meet NAEYC standards.*
<http://www.ctdhe.org/info/pdfs/2006/PublicActReportForECE.pdf>
- *In 2010, the Connecticut State Department of Education Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification revised state policy to allow more than two professional courses to be completed before admission to the early childhood teacher education program, raising the maximum number of transfer credits to 18*

for associate degree programs accredited by NAEYC. It also allowed associate degree practicum to meet the baccalaureate preschool–kindergarten practicum requirement for Connecticut’s Nursery–Grade 3 certification programs if:

- *The associate degree program holds current accreditation from the NAEYC Commission on Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation at the time the student graduates;*
 - *The practicum site holds accreditation from the NAEYC Academy for Early Childhood Program Accreditation; and*
 - *The practicum site includes children with various developmental needs.*
- *2011 Public Act 11-54 established the requirement that 50 percent of teachers in state-funded programs serving infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children must have a bachelor’s degree, and 50 percent must have an associate degree. <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2011/ACT/PA/2011PA-00054-R00SB-00927-PA.htm>*
 - *The 2014 Early Childhood Teaching Credential (ECTC) History Update summarizes the set of Public Acts that led to Connecticut’s birth-to-age 5 ECTC, which can be earned either through the associate to baccalaureate articulation route or through an alternate direct assessment route, using a standardized portfolio review process.*
http://www.ctearlychildhood.org/uploads/6/3/3/7/6337139/ectc_history_update_1-13.pdf

Pennsylvania Context

The Pennsylvania agreement requires that associate degree programs meet state standards for program approval, which are aligned with the NAEYC Standards for Professional Preparation. Associate degree programs are encouraged to earn accreditation from the NAEYC Commission on Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation in order to be included in the statewide articulation agreement. Quality assurances include a statewide associate-level student portfolio, with statewide rubric state-program approval and optional accreditation by the profession (NAEYC and CAEP).

http://www.pacollege-transfer.com/Portals/6/PAFiles/PK4EDU_P2P_AGREEMENT_Aug_18_2011.pdf

Purpose and Background

Typical content in this section includes a brief statement of shared goals and a brief summary of relevant context and background. This section provides examples of language from Connecticut and Pennsylvania.

Sample Language from the Connecticut Workforce Report

The Connecticut Workforce Report outlined the purpose and background of the state's articulation agreement. Connecticut chose to include the actual agreement as an appendix on their process and rationale for articulation.

- Public Act 05-245 called for the establishment of a committee to assess pathways to baccalaureate degree programs in early childhood education; make recommendations to increase access to initial certification in early childhood or child development; and make recommendations for strengthening articulation between 2-year and 4-year early childhood education or child development programs. Central to these early child care initiatives is the recognition that preschool children need and deserve appropriately educated and trained teachers to ensure that they are ready and able to learn when they arrive at school. The Department of Higher Education's Early Childhood Articulation Committee is composed of coordinators and faculty of early childhood, child development, and related programs at public and independent institutions.
- The goal of the Early Childhood Education Articulation Plan is to maintain an accessible pathway to career mobility for early childhood educators by facilitating the movement from one level of collegiate education to another. The educational mobility of students is accomplished under the Articulation Plan, through the establishment of a recommended minimum transfer credit for graduates of the state's Associate degree level early childhood education programs who want to continue their education toward a baccalaureate degree, leading to state teacher certification in early childhood education or child development.
- The recommended process for award of credit described in the Articulation Plan is for program to program articulation rather than a course by course transfer of credit by which students are assessed on an individual basis. Program to program articulation is based on the common core of knowledge and

programmatic outcomes which early childhood education associate degree graduates bring to their study of early childhood education at the baccalaureate level.

Sample Language from the Pennsylvania Articulation Agreement

Pennsylvania chose to embed information about context and background directly into their articulation agreement document.

Legislative Context

- The passage of Act 114 of 2006 facilitated seamless transfer of up to 30 credits of foundation coursework among two- to four-year public institutions. The passage of Act 50 of 2009 required these same institutions to accept for transfer the entire Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees, including early childhood education, toward the graduation requirements of parallel bachelor degree programs.
- Program-to-program transfer articulation eliminates the need for a course-by-course evaluation by the receiving four-year institution. In its place is a focus on major competencies, learning outcomes, and the existence of valid evaluation measures.

Standards and Outcomes-Based Articulation

- The Statewide Program-to-Program Articulation in Early Childhood Education to Serve Pennsylvania's Children Background Paper served as the foundational document for guiding the associate and bachelor degree faculty in early childhood education and PK-4 certification toward a goal of statewide articulation, based on the accreditation standards for program quality, identified by NAEYC.
- A Portfolio, compiled of key assessments, aligned with NAEYC standards, defines the student's competency level in each Major Content Area. A common rubric defines knowledge and performance outcomes across all institutions. The Portfolio serves as an exit criterion for the associate's degree and provides supporting documents based on established standards-based criteria. The Portfolio is based on the five NAEYC standards, Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) requirements for upper-division coursework in PK-4 Teacher Preparation programs, and evidence of successfully completed field experiences (at least 40 hours) in Levels I and II.

- The Portfolio is reviewed and assessed as part of the capstone experience at the two-year program level and, therefore, serves as an exit requirement for the Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education. The two-year institution certifies that the graduate with the associate's degree has met the learning outcomes identified in the program; has been assessed, using the common rubric; and possess the appropriate knowledge, skills, and dispositions as they relate to the PDE and NAEYC standards. A properly assessed Portfolio is required of all students transferring under this Agreement.

Objective of the Agreement and Conceptual Framework

- Based on the common purpose and mutual goal of ensuring quality education and seamless transition for students with Associate's Degrees in Early Childhood Education, the primary objective of this Agreement is to create a single pathway from an associate degree to a bachelor degree program that leads PK-4 teacher certification for all early childhood students, including those who work in a child care setting. And while no institution will find this Agreement perfectly matches an existing program, the hope is that the requirements outlined will ensure a high-quality program for all early childhood students at the participating institutions and remove obstacles, such as loss of credits or need to repeat courses, for students who seek PK-4 teacher certification after the associate's degree.
- Institutional trust across programs is foundational in this type of articulation. As a specialized program area for the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accreditation, NAEYC accreditation allows both two- and four-year institutions to trust the value of each other's programs, based on objective criteria. In fact, PDE's Chapter 49-2 standards for PK-4 Certification are closely aligned with NAEYC standards, which support the success of the transferring student into the four-year program. Therefore, all two-year institutions included in this Agreement are required to use NAEYC standards and outcomes to guide program development. Institutions are also strongly encouraged to participate in the NAEYC accreditation process, though accreditation is not mandatory.
- Associate degree programs prepare both workforce and transfer students, and thus, the focus of the associate's degree may be different from a four-year degree. Often, an associate degree program will have a primary area of concentration from birth to age five; in contrast, bachelor degree programs often have the stronger area of concentration in ages pre-kindergarten to age 9, due to the responsibility for preparing the candidates for certification. This Agreement assumes that most of the responsibility for ensuring the candidate meets PDE certification requirements and specialized program accreditation

requirements after the entry level will fall to the four-year institution. However, the Agreement also assumes that general education course work supports and informs early childhood methods and materials and is as important for workforce preparation as for degree program preparation. Thus, content coursework is as much a part of this Agreement as is program coursework.

Partners and Responsibilities

Typical content in this section includes student performance criteria and partner roles and responsibilities, including communication materials and processes. This section offers examples from the Connecticut and Pennsylvania agreements. As a reminder, you may access both of these agreements in their entirety at: <https://earlyeducatorcentral.acf.hhs.gov/articulation-agreements>

All Parties agree to the following terms and provisions:

Student Criteria

This section addresses requirements for students who wish to take advantage of the statewide articulation agreement.

Sample Language from the Connecticut Agreement

- The candidate matriculated in a bachelor's degree teacher preparation program leading to certification will be required to complete both a practicum in preschool or kindergarten AND student teaching in elementary Grades 1–3. The practicum must be completed in a public school or NAEYC-accredited private preschool or Head Start program which includes students with various developmental needs.

Sample Language from the Pennsylvania Agreement

- Complete all of the requirements listed on the Program-to-Program Articulation Early Childhood Education Transfer Checklist and on the front page of the statewide Early Childhood Education Portfolio. Assessment of the Portfolio is a requirement for students transferring under this Agreement. Therefore, each student will have his/her Portfolio reviewed and assessed, in accordance to the common rubric, as

part of the associate degree capstone experience. The associate degree institution may determine if the Portfolio is used as the basis for any course grade or is a requirement for graduation.

- A transferring student will be responsible for the same level of knowledge and expertise in each of the broad areas as a native student and will eventually need this content mastery to pass the Praxis II in order to attain PK-4 teacher certification by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
- Students must contact the baccalaureate institution the semester before they plan to transfer.

Other Language That May Be Included

- *Complete an associate degree program approved by [name of state agency that approves associate and baccalaureate higher education and teacher education programs].*
- *Fulfill grade requirements for individual courses and for the overall grade point average that meet the minimum requirement of the state and of the accepted institution in the intended degree or certification track.*
- *Contact the baccalaureate institution the semester before planning to transfer.*

Partnership Roles and Responsibilities

This section outlines specific responsibilities and roles of the associate and baccalaureate degree partners. In a statewide agreement, this section typically addresses quality assurance elements, such as accreditation status for associate degree programs, student performance assessment processes of both participating institutions, and/or exactly which credits are included in the transfer across programs.

Sample Language from the Connecticut Agreement (Associate Degree)

The associate degree institution will:

- Hold NAEYC Associate Degree Program Accreditation at the time a candidate graduates from the associate's degree level program in order for that candidate to articulate to the bachelor's degree level teacher preparation institution.

Sample Language from the Pennsylvania Agreement (Associate Degree)

The associate degree institution will:

- Provide participating baccalaureate institutions with names and contact information for students interested in transfer under this Agreement.
- Provide advising to students interested in transfer under this Agreement.
- Provide coursework aligned with the statewide 30-Credit Core early childhood content areas and NAEYC preparation standards.
- Provide coursework aligned with the statewide 30-Credit Core general education content areas.
- Sign the Program-to-Program Articulation Early Childhood Education Transfer Checklist and Portfolio Summary Page Assessment to certify that the student has met the learning outcomes identified in the degree program; has been assessed using the common rubric; and possesses the appropriate knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to the PDE and NAEYC standards. The receiving baccalaureate institution does not evaluate the portfolio since the portfolio has already been verified by the associate degree institution.

Sample Language from the Connecticut Agreement (Baccalaureate Degree)

- On and after July 1, 2014, the bachelor's degree level institutions offering planned programs leading to the Nursery–Grade 3 #113 endorsement can, at the discretion of the bachelor level institution, accept the preschool or kindergarten practicum credits from a NAEYC-accredited associate degree program toward the certification program on the following conditions:
 - The preschool or kindergarten practicum must have been completed in a public school or NAEYC-accredited private preschool or Head Start program which includes students with various developmental needs.
 - The bachelor's and associate's degree programs must come to an agreement on the competency criteria that are measured through the candidate performance assessments.
 - The bachelor's degree program must ensure that the candidate has met bachelor's degree level competencies and certification requirements, including those courses and practicum transferred in from the associate's level institution.

Sample Language from the Pennsylvania Agreement (Baccalaureate Degree)

Four-year institutions will:

- Provide advising to students interested in transfer under this Agreement.
- Provide coursework aligned with the statewide 30-Credit Core early childhood content areas and NAEYC preparation standards.
- Provide coursework aligned with the statewide 30-Credit Core general education content areas.
- Use the Transfer Checklist and the Portfolio Summary Assessment to provide official evaluation of all previously completed coursework to show how credits have been applied to the student's bachelor degree program and to identify the remaining degree requirements for PK-4 teacher certification.
- Apply course credits to the approved Major Content Area. An exact match of course title or content is not required from between the two- and four-year institution is not required. The chart provides guidance for the categories. Individual institutions may choose to credit the courses in any way that provide fidelity to the program, as long as the 30/30 credit standard is followed, and the Portfolio documents that the transferring student has met the required outcomes necessary in the areas noted.

Administrative and Compliance Provisions

Typical content in this section includes applicable federal, state, and accreditation policies, laws, and regulations and information on who is responsible for maintaining accreditation; how student data will be exchanged; the student appeal process; the terms of the agreement; how the agreement can be terminated, amended, and renewed; and if terminated, how the agreement still applies to currently enrolled students.

Options for sample language are provided that can be used or adapted to address the administrative and compliance provisions of the agreement. Options vary according to the type of agreement or partner organizations involved. Not all of the following language will be needed; you will need to choose which language best addresses the purpose of your agreement.

Applicable Policies, Procedures, Laws, and Regulations

Because statewide articulation agreements are typically enacted in statute, there may be references to other relevant state policies, laws, and regulations, as noted below.

- The list of state-approved associate and baccalaureate early childhood teacher education programs will be updated annually and made publicly available.
- Periodic [annual, quarterly, or other] meetings will be scheduled to review progress and identify opportunities for advancing the purposes of this Agreement.
- All participants agree to address challenges or disputes expeditiously.
- In the event this Agreement is revised or terminated, students currently enrolled on the effective date of termination shall be allowed to continue their programs in accordance with the terms and conditions in effect prior to the termination or revision of the Agreement.
- Students transferring credit are subject to the same rights, responsibilities, and college policies as any other [name of college/university] students.
- The Agreement is effective upon [execution by state officers or upon the date indicated in this official memorandum].
- This MOA supersedes any previous agreements.

Principal Contacts

This section provides options for sample language that can be used or adapted to address the principal contacts of the agreement. Options vary according to the type of agreement or partner organizations involved.

The partner organizations designate the following individuals as principal contacts regarding this Agreement. These contacts may be changed at any time through written notice to each partner contact and partner agency.



Name of agency/education institution #1:

Designated contact person's name, title, affiliation, e-mail, phone, and address:

Name of agency/education institution #2:

Designated contact person's name, title, and affiliation:

Partner Signatures

Signature of contact person
[Individual's name and title]

Date

Signature of contact person
[Individual's name and title]

Date

Attachments and Supporting Documents

Attachments and supporting documents should include any items referenced in the final agreement. These add context and rationale to the agreement and are useful for building collaboration and understanding among cross-sector stakeholders. The following checklist describes the attachments and supporting documents that may be included.

- *Early childhood degree plans that note which courses are waived or deemed equivalent based on this Agreement and which will need to be completed after transfer. Include clear and transparent information for students about each degree and each track within the degrees covered in this Agreement*
- *Lists and links to state institutions and degree programs included in this Agreement, including transfer information pages for students with clear and transparent information about admission and completion requirements for the degree programs covered in this Agreement*
- *Statewide or higher education institution's guidance documents on early childhood career pathways that include placement of the state's associate and baccalaureate early childhood degree program credentials*
- *Links to programs offering student scholarships and other college-entry and completion supports*



- *Links to applicable federal, state, and accreditation policies, laws, and regulations for institutions of higher education*
- *Links to state early childhood core knowledge and competencies and to state early childhood teacher preparation or training approval systems, referenced in this Agreement*
- *Links to state-required core courses, state-required assessments (portfolios, licensing exams, etc.), state accreditation requirements, and state degree program approval requirements*
- *Links to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) early childhood professional standards and the NAEYC higher education accreditation systems. (Programs preparing for "blended" early childhood and special education licensure should include links to both the NAEYC early childhood professional standards and the Division for Early Childhood's [DEC] Recommended Practices.) These standards are available as noted below:*
 - *NAEYC Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation: <http://www.naeyc.org/ecada>*
 - *NAEYC Recognition of Baccalaureate and Graduate Degree Programs: <http://www.naeyc.org/ncate>*
 - *NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation: <http://www.naeyc.org/ecada/standards>*
 - *DEC Recommended Practices: <http://www.dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices>*
- *Links to additional adult education accrediting agencies and credit review agencies. Examples follow:*
 - *National College Credit Recommendation Service: <http://www.nationalccrs.org>*
 - *Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation: <http://caepnet.org>*
 - *Distance Education Accrediting Commission: <http://www.deac.org>*
 - *International Association for Continuing Education and Training: <http://www.iacet.org>*
- *Definitions/glossary*



References

An Act Concerning Requirements for Early Childhood Educators. State of Connecticut. Substitute Senate Bill No. 927. Public Act Number 11-54. Retrieved on June 21, 2015 from <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2011/ACT/PA/2011PA-00054-R00SB-00927-PA.htm>

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