

Children's Program Administrator's Credential (CPAC) "Lessons from Leaders"

Great leaders make all the difference when it comes to the quality of early childhood programs. They are at the forefront of efforts to build learning communities that serve young children, families, and staff. Their work is critical and very demanding. Directors inspire program philosophy; they hire, mentor, and support teachers, engage and counsel parents, and lead change efforts. They also create and monitor budgets, manage facilities, and ensure that programs are in compliance and dedicated to quality improvements. Despite the nature and enormous scope of their work, many New York City directors take on the role with no prior training, and are often alone in their daily decision-making.



Until recently, there have been few comprehensive professional development opportunities to support those in early childhood leadership positions. To address this need, the New York State Association for the Education of Young Children (NYSAEYC) created the Children's Program Administrator's Credential (CPAC). The credential is designed to help individuals meet the 18 competency areas determined by the state as necessary to build and sustain programs of excellence. The credential is awarded by NYSAEYC to individuals who complete the necessary course work and demonstrate mastery of the competencies through a portfolio submitted for review. Credentialing directors is a vital part of a growing movement to strengthen and professionalize our workforce. Due to the specialized nature of the credential, individuals who have earned the CPAC are recognized in state regulations and QRIS standards regarding staff qualifications to be uniquely qualified and prepared for the work required of them.

Based on the state model, the New York City Early Childhood Professional Development Institute (PDI) developed an 18 credit graduate level program in Early Childhood Leadership and Management offered through CUNY's School of Professional Studies (SPS). Courses cover a range of diverse topics that address ALL of the hats a director wears. Students hone existing skills and develop new ones, and are supported throughout to apply course content to their everyday work life. CPAC students explore and tackle the multi-faceted challenges of EC leadership alongside faculty and peers, and this collaboration is always a priority. The instructors, many of whom have been directors themselves, understand the complexities of a director's work. As the CPAC Coordinator I work closely with our instructors to support students and personalize the learning experience.

Whether you are a new or seasoned professional, an aspiring director, or a current teacher, we invite you to think strategically about your career path and make a professional investment in CPAC. Several of our students who are well on their way to earning the credential have already received returns on their investment, earning promotions in recognition of the enhanced skills gained by their participation in the program.

Leaders are not born, they are cultivated. That's what CPAC is all about. Our work is to guide and support your efforts to become a more effective director, one who partners with parents and staff to shape a vision of academic success for all the children you serve. Join us to further develop your leadership potential, and BE the strong visionary leader our field needs.

Sincerely,

Nancy Klinger
CPAC Program Coordinator



Nancy Klinger

The CPAC Program

There is a lot of good news for Early Childhood Education. New York City's Administration for Children's Services (ACS) is preparing to launch EarlyLearnNYC; NYS continues to strategize ways to implement an early childhood workforce system; and QualityStarsNY, the state's quality rating and improvement system, is gaining momentum. With all these changes taking place, **now** is the best time to make an investment in your professional development and position yourself for success by earning the Children's Program Administrator Credential (CPAC).



CUNY's CPAC program uses a practice-based learning model that is comprised of 4 key components:

Coursework: The program is comprised of 18 1-credit courses that are offered throughout the year. Each course is directly aligned with the 18 competencies designated by the NYSAEYC as essential to successfully running an early childhood program. CPAC courses will fulfill NAEYC accreditation's leadership requirements. Earning the credential will also enhance the QualityStarsNY rating for your program.

Portfolio: To earn the CPAC, students must complete the required courses and submit a portfolio to the New York State Association for the Education of Young Children (NYSAEYC) for review. Course assignments are designed to be used to compile the portfolio, which demonstrates a mastery of the competencies. Students are supported as they prepare the portfolio.

Mentoring: Every student is guided through the program with the support of a CPAC Coordinator and a team of instructors. The CPAC Coordinator actively engages with students and assists with course selection and offers guidance and support regarding academic and professional issues. This mentoring component is a unique aspect of our program.

Recognition: Students who successfully earn the credential are celebrated and honored by faculty and peers. Their achievement is shared with the Early Childhood community at large and broadcasted through various publications.

Early childhood directors play a critical role in developing and establishing a program's culture and philosophy. Thus, the CPAC program is designed to help individuals become stronger directors so that they can better guide their staff and agencies, improving outcomes for the children and families they serve.

IN-CLASS LESSONS APPLICABLE TO EVERYDAY WORK LIFE

The greatest reward is that every assignment encouraged me to "get cracking", providing me with opportunities to address a staff, family, or program issue. I'd go right back to my program the day after class and immediately started to experiment and play with new ideas. That's what I did for every single course. I had the best staff meeting ever after completing the Staff Development course.

*Gem Moriah, Director
Graham Windham Early Learning Center, Bronx*

The assignments encouraged me to use what I was learning, try new things, and propel change. I took the strategic planning assignments I did for several CPAC courses very seriously. We've actually already accomplished everything I originally put forth, including:

- a full day program
- an extended day program
- an outdoor classroom playground

And let me tell you, I never would have been able to accomplish this without CPAC's finance courses. I was initially scared of tackling the business side of leadership, but I'm so glad I did. I have a new understanding of budgets, and the reallocation of resources, and expenses. You can't make decisions and consider changes without a working knowledge of how to manage the money. Now we're already at work on new projects. Full steam ahead!

*Geraldine Dasaro, Director of Education
Our Saviour's Lutheran Preschool, Brooklyn*



Geraldine Dasaro

*"The assignments encouraged me to use what I was learning, try new things, and propel change."
- Geraldine Desaro*



PEER LEARNING & QUALITY INSTRUCTION FROM TALENTED PROFESSIONALS

It's always a quality learning experience coming to class. Each session is filled with laughter, excitement, challenge, and camaraderie. It's always a combination of mini-lecture, hands-on activities, role-play, and discussion. With CPAC participation you have amazing opportunities to network with other directors. First of all, they represent the entire [Early Childhood] community coming from independent, for-profit, public, and family daycare programs. You come to understand the community as a whole and how it works to serve children and families. What a relief to discover that I didn't have to begin everything from scratch, but rather could build on what others have already done. Good examples would be developing handbooks and new personnel policies and procedures, as well as writing grants. How good it is to be learning with others who do what I do. When I go to my CPAC classes, I feel like this is a place where I can ask questions, share issues of concern in confidence, and get support.

Gem Moriah, Director
Graham Windham Early Learning Center, Bronx

The instructors, themselves, are strong, effective guides who make classes fun and interesting. They always weave students' stories and challenges into the content to make for lively, meaningful exchanges. Their responses to the work I submit raise new questions for me to consider. The courses make use of great books and articles, with references to other wonderful resources. I share them with my teachers and parents as part of a lending library. One of my CPAC instructors encouraged me to take my staff on this professional development journey with me, and that's exactly what I've been doing.

Tatyiana Lipkin, Director
Brooklyn Child Care, Inc., Brooklyn



Tatyiana Lipkin

PRACTICAL LESSONS TO HELP YOU ADVANCE AS A PROFESSIONAL

First, I found out that I had to move away from my assumptions about the climate, and find out what people, staff, and parents were really thinking and feeling. I was greatly helped by the tools introduced in the Organization and Management Systems courses. We were given surveys and inventories for staff and parents to do, and these were so revealing. Additionally, they were great preparation for NAEYC's Accreditation process. I was always being pushed to produce evidence to support my assumptions.

Agnes Mills, Deputy Director
La Peninsula Community Organization, Inc.- Headstart, Bronx



Agnes Mills



Carmen Brasuell

I needed to do a better job marketing our program in our community. Based on what I learned in the Marketing course in terms of content, and the "how-to" I experienced in the Technology course, I completely re-did my program's brochure. Now it really speaks to who we are, what we do, and what we believe about young children. Assignments and instructor guidance certainly helped motivate these changes.

Carmen Brasuell, Program Director
Escalera Head Start/Goddard Riverside Community Center, Manhattan

We completed questionnaires about our leadership style, and still others about the way we manage time. I got insights from the time exercises, encouraging me to re-think how I do what I do, when I do it, and also to consider how to delegate various tasks.

Linda Soleyn, Associate Director
The Medical Center Nursery School, Manhattan

I wanted to strengthen our relationships with families. Certain phrases such as "families are your most critical partners" are often bandied about, yet I never really understood what it meant. I left the Programming for the Whole Family course with a much broader and deeper perspective about working with families, and what school-family partnerships could really look like in practice.

Jennifer Barriteau, Director
Graham Windham Early Learning Center, Bronx

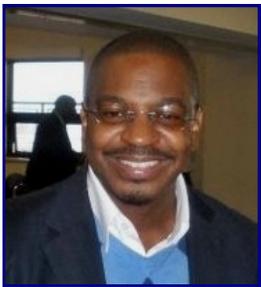


Linda Soleyn



Michelle Joyner

*"When you are feeling inspired, it's easier to inspire others. It also makes it easier to take risks, try new things, and be a catalyst for change."
-Michelle Joyner*



Edward Hawkins

GET INSPIRED TO BE AN INSPIRATION

The idea of using video and photos of children to "capture" them at work/play was introduced in the Programming course. The very next day I visited a classroom and took pictures of children who were "studying" soil to be used for a planting experiment. I brought the photos to that class' team, and it actually began to shift the way we observe children and use observations to develop plans that support children's growth. As we studied the photos, we could "see" the children's interests and questions, like gifts of information to help us further develop learning opportunities. Now all my teachers are taking photos and bringing them to meetings so we can reflect about them together, and develop plans accordingly.

Michelle Joyner, MS. Ed., Founder/CEO
King's Kids Early Childhood Learning Center, Albany

I sometimes have to experience something on a very concrete level before putting it into practice. One evening in the Programming class, we sorted and arranged open-ended materials in an attempt to make a bird's nest. This experience has inspired me to encourage exploration with a much greater variety of materials for children to represent their thinking. It also gave me a new sense about the use of open-ended materials to individual learning opportunities.

Marie Claire Foss, Location Director
The International Preschools, Manhattan



Marie Claire Foss

In my CPAC coursework I've come to look upon standards as "friends" so to speak, using them to help me plan for intended outcomes for children. This kind of intentionality has become embedded in my practice. I've also developed a much greater appreciation of assessment, particularly assessment of the teaching-learning process.

Deanna Butler, Senior Learning Specialist
PDI's Pipeline Crisis/Winning Strategies Initiative, Brooklyn

CPAC – A CATALYST FOR CHANGE IN YOUR CAREER

My experience with CPAC has been an eye-opener. It has made me realize that as an administrator, I too can affect the education of the children we serve. I'm excited about strengthening my voice in my agency—encouraging some rethinking about the issues of time for teachers to meet/plan, how space is designed, and how resources are used.

Wendy Vega, Director of Operations
Early Childhood Programs at The Children's Aid Society, Manhattan

CPAC has helped me be a catalyst for change, and has given me a framework for thinking about being a director, an educational leader, and an organizational manager. Before CPAC, I used to function with a "putting out fires" mentality, just trying to stay on top of things. However, my participation in the Management Systems course, for example, has helped me to develop a more coherent vision. I see the connections between the course and my work as an educational director becoming more apparent. Indeed, there is a bridge between theory and practice. With a new perspective on how I lead and what I do, I can see the transformation process occurring within myself, my staff, and ultimately the children whom we serve.

Edward W. Hawkins, Educational Director
United Community Day Care Center Inc., Brooklyn

I'm gaining knowledge and skills and they are continually showing up in my performance as a leader. For me personally, CPAC has put me on the fast track. When I began the CPAC program I was a teacher, then a staff developer, and now I am the Director of Education. My supervisor kept expanding my role as she noted my broadened knowledge and skills.

Geraldine Dasaro, Director of Education
Our Saviour's Lutheran Preschool, Brooklyn



INSTRUCTOR PERSPECTIVES

A CPAC class becomes a support group for all participants. I usually start each class with a "go around", to talk about something that happened during the week that seems relevant to the topics we've been discussing or the reading they've been doing. Invariably someone presents a problem they've been struggling with and the group spontaneously goes to work to help solve it. After one session of the Staff Development course a group gathered around one new director and sat with her to continue to make suggestions and to support her. Nobody had to stay after class, but the group really rallied around her, and I think she left feeling much relieved.

Sara Seiden

*College Supervisor at City College of New York
Previously the Director of the Roosevelt Island Day Nursery, 26 years*

I know I speak for the other instructors when I say how gratifying it is to teach these CPAC courses. I think it's due to our excitement about connecting with such a vital part of our early childhood profession -- the directors, who set the tone and determine the level of children's services in their communities.

Jean Mandelbaum, Ph.D.

*Adjunct Faculty Bank Street College, Early Childhood Consultant
Previously the Director of All Souls School, 28 years*

I had the students using calculators throughout, always encouraging them to examine and understand the "stories" behind the budget and accounting numbers we were sharing. It was so exciting to see them begin to get over their feelings of ineffectiveness about the business end of running child care programs. Our working together was a huge confidence builder.

Zuleika Fertillien

*Director and Founder of Beyond Basic Learning: The International School
MBA in Finance, Hofstra University/Masters in EC Leadership, Bank St College of Education*

The CPAC courses do much to encourage collegiality amongst students. In one of the sessions of the Personnel Management course the directors were so glad to share information about hiring teachers, but more particularly to ask questions and voice concerns about terminating a staff member. We talked extensively about the ladder of progressive discipline that should be in place, and its importance in considerations of letting a teacher go.

Betty Pearsall

*University Director of Child Care, City University of New York
Previously the Executive Director of the York College Child and Family Center, 4 years*

THE CPAC COURSES

Students will be able to take the course in any order and time frame that works for them. However, to earn the CPAC, an individual must take all 18 courses. Courses meet for 3 1/2 hours, once a week, over 4 consecutive weeks. Each course is worth one credit, and courses include:

- ECE601 Organizational Management: Principles & Practices
- ECE602 Personnel Management in Early Childhood Programs
- ECE603 Foundations of Staff Development
- ECE604 Supervision of Early Childhood Teachers
- ECE605 Management Systems for Quality Children's Programs
- ECE606 Formulating a Financial Plan - Financial Planning and Management of Children's Programs
- ECE607 Budgets and Accounting - Financial Planning and Management of Children's Programs
- ECE608 Expenses and Resources - Financial Planning and Management of Children's Programs
- ECE609 Technology and Communication to Enhance Early Childhood Programs
- ECE610 Systems to Insure Health, Safety, and Nutrition in Children's Programs
- ECE611 Legal and Regulatory Requirements in Administering Early Childhood Program
- ECE612 Marketing Early Childhood Programs
- ECE613 Ethics and Professional Standards
- ECE614 Programming for the Whole Child
- ECE615 A Leadership Approach to Programming for the Whole Family
- ECE616 Programming for Children with Special Needs
- ECE617 Integration Seminar in Children's Program Administration
- ECE318 Assessment as an Administrator

For complete course descriptions, please visit:

www.earlychildhoodnyc.org/education/CPACcourses.cfm

Who should take the CPAC?

The courses are designed to serve multiple populations of early childhood educators including:

- The next generation of teachers who envision joining directors, developing their career choices in a proactive way.
- Directors who want to become more effective leaders and to take their programs to new heights.
- New directors interested in developing their skills and talents in program administration.
- Directors requiring course work to meet the NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) Accreditation standards.
- Licensed or registered providers in need of professional development to meet 15/30 hour training



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PDI Blog

<http://earlychildhoodnyc.org/newswatch>

The benefits of taking the CPAC courses include:

- Earning a recognized statewide credential to help you advance in your career
- Mastering practical knowledge to help your program and organization grow
- Developing a professional network of support
- Sharing your knowledge and expertise with others
- Building new skills that will positively impact the young children you serve

Please join us and become part of a community of strong effective leaders who can really make a difference in the early care and education of young children.

For more information and to learn more about financial aid opportunities, please call **718.254.7353**

or

email cpac@earlychildhoodnyc.org

To apply to CPAC visit:
www.sps.cuny.edu/cpac