Office of Early Childhood (OEC) Scholarship At-A-Glance: May 2021 Update

(Tentatively covering requests <u>to March 1, 2022)</u>

Please review this document <u>in its entirety</u> AND ensure your account contains **ALL** accurate, factual, and up-to-date information **BEFORE** you make a scholarship request!

Please do NOT falsify information or edit your profile in order to become eligible. This constitutes fraud and has negative consequences!

Remember: The system will check your account for key information and allow you through screens for which you may be eligible. *If your information is incomplete OR does not match any of the current eligibility, the system will not allow you to submit an application.* Please contact us for help!

<u>ALL</u> Applicants must meet the preliminary eligibility below <u>PRIOR</u> to requesting a scholarship:

1. All applicants must be directly <u>and</u> currently working with / serving children ages birth to 5 years old located in one of the following settings: Connecticut **family child care homes / center or group home(s) / school-based programs**. *Note: School-age providers employed in licensed programs receiving state funds may be eligible.*

2. All applicants must **have a free Registry account** (www.ccacregistry.org), **with confirmed employment** (for licensed and unlicensed family home providers currently receiving Care4Kids follow the instructions under the login section to accurately create your account) and **ensure qualifications documents are up to date.** In order to verify which documents have already been coded and uploaded to your account, log in and go to Participant Documents on the left menu, clicking to open and view the files to make sure the most recent copies are on file.

3. All applicants **must meet required details by request type** (see pages 2+)

COVID-19 Notice Regarding Scholarship

We are aware that schools and students are still navigating COVID-19. Reminder: The OEC Scholarship Terms of Agreement state that an applicant must communicate any changes to requests, ability to complete an awarded course, etc. Please refer to the Terms of Agreement for full details (page 7). If you have questions, please contact your OEC Registry regional Education Advisor. We are ready to help!

Proposed eligible groups, roles and expenses 2021-2022 (see details and definitions on pages 3-5 for more information)

I have an up-to-date Registry account where it confirms I am employed at my program. I am a...	I may be eligible for:					
	1. Credit-Based Coursework	2. Tuition-Related Fees	3. Pathways Exam Fees	4. CDA Credential fees	5. Connecticut Director Credential Fees	6. Non Credit Online Instructor Supported CDA Credential Training (content hours only)
Teaching staff member or administrator in a licensed group home or licensed child care center	✅ Toward: 1. A CDA credential or 2. an associate/bachelor degree in early childhood or 3. The 3 credit licensing requirement for directors or CT Director Credential or 4. When part of a school age head teacher application (up to 12 credits; see #8 below)	✅	✅ 1 .When part of an ECE associate or bachelor degree plan of study; confirm with your academic advisor. 2. When part of a School Age Head Teacher Application.	✅ One time for application fee; One time for renewal fee	✅ One time for application fee; one time for renewal fee at the Initial Level; multiple renewals at the Standard and Master level renewal fees	✅ Contact your Registry regional Education Advisor for steps.
Teaching staff member in a state-funded license-exempt program working toward a bachelor degree in early childhood	✅ Toward bachelor degree in ECE only	✅	✅ When part of an ECE bachelor degree plan of study			
Licensed or unlicensed family home provider currently receiving Care4Kids	✅ Toward: 1. Family child care setting CDA credential; or 2. Associate/bachelor degree in early childhood; or 3. Stand-alone courses supporting running a business including ESL	✅	✅	✅ Must be Family Child Care Setting; One time for application fee; One time for renewal		✅ Contact your Registry regional Education Advisor for steps.

Details for Eligible Requests

1. **For credit-based courses working <u>toward a degree</u>,** applicants must submit the following:
   a. **For summer 2021 DEGREE work:**
      i. Evidence of application for *2020-2021 for your college or university's financial aid* (i.e. copy of college's award letter) **AND**
      ii. Evidence of application for 2020-2021 federal financial aid (FAFSA confirmation page; www.fafsa.gov) if not specifically referenced in the college document **AND**
      iii. *CURRENT* Plan of Study or Graduation Evaluation (from your college advisor; indicates which courses you must take, what has been taken and when) **AND**
      iv. *CURRENT* transcripts on file in your Registry account*.*

   b. **For fall 2021 through summer 2022 DEGREE work:** All applicants must provide
      i. Evidence of application for *2021-2022 for your college or university's financial aid* (i.e. copy of college's award letter) **AND**
      ii. Evidence of application for *2021-2022* federal financial aid (FAFSA confirmation page; www.fafsa.gov) if not specifically referenced in the college document **AND**
      iii. *CURRENT or REVISED* Plan of Study or Graduation Evaluation (from your college advisor; indicating the next courses you must take, what has been taken and when)
      AND
      iv. *CURRENT* transcripts on file in their Registry account.

2. **For the OEC licensing 3 credit director course requirement:** Applicant must be listed as an administrator of the program in the Registry; **if listed in another role: Applicants must** *submit a completed Administrator Scholarship Eligibility Form*, signed by the administrator/owner/board chair *(Role must include related experience and direct involvement in the administrative duties of the program.).*

3. **Connecticut Director Credential (CDC) competency coursework and CDC fees:** Applicant must be an administrator of the program in the Registry; if in another role: *submit a completed Administrator Scholarship Eligibility Form*. Please upload a copy of the completed CDC application from Charter Oak State College indicating meeting CDC requirements. For CDC information, go to www.charteroak.edu/certificates/directorcredential/.

4. **CDA (Child Development Associate) Credential fees:** Online application / renewal. Share your Council for Professional Recognition ID# with your OEC Registry regional education advisor. For CDA credential details, go to www.cdacouncil.org.

5. **Tuition-related fees:** Matriculation, Degree Application, Graduation, Transfer Credit, Special Credit Registry, College, Technology, Transportation Fee (if selecting "Other Fee", contact your Registry regional education advisor to discuss what the fee is and how much it is).

6. **Pathways Exam fees:** You must commit to the date and time of the exam when you request your scholarship (*exams must be reflected on current Plan of Study for degree seekers*).

7. **Non-Credit Instructor Supported Online CDA Credential Training via CCEI:** Individual subscription specifically for non-credit instructor-supported CDA credential training in English or Spanish. See www.cceionline.edu for details and talk to your regional education advisor. Note that successful completion of this program meets the 120 content hours required by the Council for Professional Recognition; all other requirements must still be met (see www.cdacouncil.org for all requirements).

8. **12 credits toward school age Head teacher application for OEC Licensing:** Applicants must complete a transcript review for any earned credits / degrees to assess Head Teacher eligibility. Requests must be accompanied by a completed Head Teacher Experience Verification Form which must also be on file in their Registry profile PRIOR to applying for scholarship. Scholarship funding is only considered for any credits necessary to achieve the minimum 12 credits to meet requirements.

About credit-based coursework:

    a.   Coursework must be completed at **regionally accredited institutions**.

        i.   The OEC does not have relationships with all colleges and universities, and reserves the right to deny a request for a relationship where the need may be fulfilled with a currently listed college or university.

       ii.   Contact your regional education advisor if you have questions about the vendor or cannot identify the course you wish to take from the application listing.

    b.   The OEC supports early childhood education (ECE) **degree attainment** and **degree progression** (i.e. an individual may request support moving from a CDA credential to an ECE associate degree program or from an associate degree to an ECE bachelor's degree program). The following are NOT eligible at this time: a second associate degree, a second bachelor's degree, state educator/administrator endorsements (aka teacher certification) and/or trainings, or work toward a Master's degree or higher.

Glossary of Terms/Definitions for center, group home, family child care, and school-based personnel:

- **"Academic Advisor or College Advisor"** refers to college personnel that will help the students set and achieve their educational goals by working closely with them to select courses, identify strengths, choose a major and act as resource until the student graduates. **"Administrator"** refers to a leadership-level staff member tagged within the OEC Registry's Staff Confirmation.

- **"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 what your institution decides is most important. The OEC requires complete transcript including the **"Transcript Keys". The transcript keys** are the **data on the back of a transcript**, also called a legend, which communicate grading types, course numbering schemes, accreditation of institution and other useful information.

- **"Confirmed Employment"** refers to Participant status at their worksite (see Registry instructions for Participants https://www.ccacregistry.org/docs/Instructions%20for%20registry%2005-17.pdf) Confirmed employment is required to request OEC scholarship assistance.

- **"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. Proof of FAFSA application is the confirmation email or SAR (Student Aid Report) after you have submitted your FAFSA. Go to www.fafsa.gov to learn more and apply.

- **"Institution's Financial Aid"** refers to funding award that is available exclusively to students (through financial aid office). This funding is to assist in covering the many costs incurred in the pursuit of post-secondary education. Financial aid is available from federal and state governments, educational institutions, and private organizations. It can be awarded in the form of grants, loans, work-study, and scholarships. In order to apply for federal financial aid, *students must first complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)*. The OEC scholarship assistance fund is a limited amount of money and there are many deserving individuals in our field. By applying for financial aid, the individual can find out about other funding opportunities that may save OEC scholarship for others. OEC scholarship intended to be used *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 weigh the offer seriously and consider what will work for you.

- **"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, what classes you have successfully completed so far, and what term you may be taking others. This 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.

- **"Teacher"** refers to an individual with primary responsibility for a group of children. This person must 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's Registry.

- **"Teaching staff members"** refers to all direct teaching roles including, but not limited to, the following OEC Registry's Staff Confirmation page roles: lead teacher, classroom teacher, assistant teacher. These individuals should show as assigned to a specific classroom or classrooms in the OEC Registry's program profile under Building / Managing Rooms and Staff.

Scholarship application and awards are monitored for appropriate use, misuse and fraud. Funds cannot be approved to pay for an event (course, exam, etc.) that has already incurred cost to the scholarship fund (i.e. Pathways Exam missed or did not pass; course dropped after the add/drop period or did not pass). Individuals may appeal scholarship request outcomes and probation / termination of eligibility status. Refer to the **Scholarship Use Policies and Appeal Process** at https://www.ccacregistry.org/_forms_documents/Scholarship_Use_Policy_And_Appeal_Process.pdf (Go to www.ccacregistry.org, then Policies and Appeals).

When are the Application Dates?

❖ Please use the **TENTATIVE** schedule below to plan your requests; All OEC scholarship assistance requests are dependent upon funding.

Apply during this time…	…for these terms / timeframes	Critical to Remember!
May 2021 to July 9, 2021	❖ Summer 2021	
May 2021 to September 30, 2021	❖ Fall 2021	**Plan your timing well: Commitment vouchers are non-transferable by individual, institution, term and course/fee, and are valid for 60 days from approval (see "Student-Use Expiration Date" on top left of your commitment voucher)! You MUST register for your event (Course, training, etc.) before the voucher expires.**
October 15, 2021 to January 14, 2022	❖ Winter 2021	
October 15, 2021 to March 1, 2022	❖ Spring 2022	
Beginning May 13, 2022	❖ Summer 2022	

<u>For Questions:</u> Please contact your Regional Education Advisor. **Please do NOT email documents directly to Registry staff. All documents should be uploaded directly into the user's account (go to www.ccacregistry.org – General Information – Submit Documentation)**

Regional Education Advisor	Covers these counties	Email	Phone
Typhanie Alexander	Fairfield	Typhanie.Alexander@ct.gov	800-832-7784 x4; 860-500-4539 direct
Val Parks	Middlesex, New Haven, New London	Valerie.Parks@ct.gov	800-832-7784 x2; 860-500-4541 direct
Margaret Westwood	Hartford, Litchfield, Tolland, Windham	Margaret.Westwood@ct.gov	800-832-7784 x3; 860-500-4543 direct

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

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

1. I understand there is **no on-going guarantee of funds.** The approval of my scholarship request is based on the availability of funds and the priorities set by the funding agencies and organizations.
2. I understand that all communication regarding the status of my scholarship assistance will go to the **email address I provided and assigned to my Registry account upon log in.** It is **my responsibility** to check that address for receipt of **_ALL_** information regarding my request for assistance. Email may come from Cfmail@ccacregistry.org or another similar address.
3. I understand **I must keep my Registry profile information current** including but not limited to my mailing address, my email address, my telephone numbers (*home or work*) and my employment by logging in to my Registry account and editing My Profile.
4. I understand that **I must make each specific request directly through my account online**.
5. I understand that prior to applying to the OEC for aid for degree-based college credit coursework, **I must complete and/or submit the following paperwork** including but not limited to:
   a. Evidence of federal financial aid application (FAFSA; www.fafsa.ed.gov)
   b. Evidence of application for my college or university's financial aid
   c. Updated Planned Program of Study **in early childhood education or child study** (See your academic advisor at your college / university for the list of specific coursework you need to complete your degree and a schedule of when you plan to take them / have taken them).
6. I understand that **if offered grant funds (via #5) I must accept those before utilizing any OEC funds**. OEC scholarship funds are to be used AFTER any grants but before any loans. The exception is if your early care and education employer has contributed grant funds, in which case OEC assistance precedes the program's funds.
7. Funds are paid directly to the college / university after the OEC is invoiced. Funds cannot be paid to the student nor to their program.
8. **I understand the commitment voucher is the guarantee that payment will be made on my behalf.** My commitment voucher will be sent to the institution I indicate and an email confirmation will be sent to me. I can view my commitment voucher information when logged into my Registry account under **_"My Scholarship Requests"._**
9. I understand that **I must notify my OEC regional education advisor** by email (for info go to www.ccacregistry.org - Contact Us), alerting any **changes to my scholarship award, including but not limited to:**
   a. *inability to use a commitment voucher*
   b. *dropping or adding an activity or course*
   c. *not registering for or canceling an activity or course*
10. I understand that **if I do not successfully complete the coursework or activity for which I requested scholarship,** I will not be eligible to receive further scholarship assistance without a thorough review of my circumstances, and may permanently lose eligibility. **The full Scholarship Use Policy and appeal Process documentation is located under My Resources – Resource Documents after log in.**
11. I understand that **I am responsible for purchasing training and/or non-textbook course materials** and supplies not covered by the commitment voucher, and that the OEC does not guarantee textbook expenses with all vendors.
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.