

# Illinois Director Credential

## Professional Contributions—Instructional Guidelines

A Professional Contribution is an activity and/or endeavor that goes above and beyond the scope of a position or job duty. Each participant must document a specified number of professional contributions related to children birth through age 12 and their families, dependent on credential level. Contributions to the fields of early childhood and school-age care can be no more than five years old from the date the portfolio is submitted to the Gateways to Opportunity office. The specific requirements are listed on the IDC checklist.

Professional contributions examples and suggested documentation follow each area listed below. This list is not exclusive; other comparable activities may be considered. **Note: Professional Contributions can be no more than five years old unless otherwise noted.**

### 1. Program Improvement

- Successfully lead an early childhood and/or school-age program through nationally recognized accreditation or Head Start/Early Head Start monitoring review.
- Develop or implement a Program Improvement Plan (s) based on Head Start/Early Head Start monitoring or Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) assessment data.
- Serve in a consulting, coaching or mentoring role to support program improvement.
- Serve as a validator for a national accreditation system.

#### Suggested Documentation

- Award of Excellence letter
- National Accreditation letter
- Letter from accrediting organization indicating your approval as a validator or your service as a validator.
- Action plans, objectives, and outcomes for Program Improvement Plan(s) (e.g., Continuous Quality Improvement Plan (CQIP).

### 2. Service in a Leadership Role in a Professional Organization

- Served on a community board as a representative of an early childhood and/or school-age program.
- Served on a local, state, or national advisory board for an early childhood and/or school-age organization.
- Served on a local, regional, or statewide committee to promote early childhood and/or school-age issues.
- Held an elected office in a local, state, or national early childhood and/or school-age organization.
- Served on a committee for an early childhood and/or school-age organization to organize a conference, community-wide advocacy event, or other major event.
- Coordinated or helped plan for an annual event (e.g., Week of the Young Child, etc.).

#### Suggested Documentation

- Provide a letter signed by the board president, executive director, or other official representative indicating your role, dates of service, and the name and address of the organization.
- Provide a letter, which lists you as a board member or officer. Include name and address of the organization and dates of service.
- Submit a copy of a certificate of service or other acknowledgment of your service to a professional organization.

**Please do not send original documentation, as it will not be returned.**

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## Professional Contributions—Instructional Guidelines (con't)

### 3. Presentations/Training

- Present at a professional conference or professional meeting.
- Conduct training in early childhood, school-age, or related topics.

#### Suggested Documentation

- Copy of conference brochure or agenda with presentation listing.
- Copy of correspondence letter from the conference or workshop chair/contact.
- Copy of PowerPoint presentation.

### 4. Advocacy

- Respond to Joint Commission on administrative rule during public comment periods.
- Organize or actively participate in advocacy events (e.g. rallies, lobby days, or public forums).
- Write letters to legislator(s) or policy makers about an issue related to early childhood and/or school-age.
- Organize advocacy event in your community related to early childhood and/or school-age.
- Write a letter to the editor about an issue related to early childhood and/or school-age.

#### Suggested Documentation

- Document the legislation that was out for public comment and the time period.
- Copy of a letter to the editor, blog post or written testimony (attach response received).
- Copy of letter to legislator(s), policy makers or government officials (attach response received).
- Documentation of planning rally event.
- Documentation of active participation in advocacy event (e.g., photos, Facebook posts, advertisements, articles written on it, etc.)

### 5. Writing and Publication

- Write a published peer-reviewed journal article\*.
- Write center newsletters that are distributed to families and staff.
- Write policy and procedure manuals for staff/parent handbooks.
- Author or contributing author to a published early childhood and/or school-age book\*.

#### Suggested Documentation

- Copy of published peer-reviewed journal article including the publication, date, and author\*.
- Copy of newsletter.
- Copy of handbook or manual cover and contents.
- Copy of book cover, titled page, and table of contents\*.

***\*There is no time requirement on these Professional Contributions.***

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## Professional Contributions—Instructional Guidelines (con't)

### 6. Research/Grant Writing

- Write a grant proposal.
- Write a Letter of Inquiry (LOI) per funder guidelines.
- Serve as a grant reader/reviewer.
- Write an early childhood and/or school-age doctoral dissertation\*.
- Write a Master's level degree thesis.
- Conduct an action research report or white paper.

#### Suggested Documentation

- Copy of cover sheet, table of contents, and abstract.
- Copy of transcript indicating completion of thesis, including title and content description.
- Copy of grant approval or rejection letter.
- Copy of letter indicating service as a grant reader/reviewer.
- Copy of funder guidelines for LOI.
- Copy of action research report or white paper.
- Copy of early childhood and/or school-age doctoral dissertation\*.

***\*There is no time requirement on these Professional Contributions.***

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