

# Education Awards

## Background

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) uses the Professional Development Achievement framework to recognize and reward the educational achievements of all early learning professionals.

## Apply for an Award

Once you complete your education application in MERIT and have your education verified, you may be eligible to earn education awards for the following verified achievements:

- Highest level of education
- Up to four ECE (early childhood education or early care and education) majors
- Up to three ECE certificates and credentials

## Verify your Education

To verify your education, you must complete an education application and submit copies of official documents. Proceed with the following steps:

1. Login to [merit.dcyf.wa.gov](https://merit.dcyf.wa.gov)
2. Click on the “My Education” tab.
3. Click on the circle next to the words “Complete My Education: enter information about...”
4. Click “No” to the ECEAP question.
5. Click on the blue “Go” button.
6. Click on the “Add Degree” button. This section is used to count how many ECE, School-Age, or ECE/School-Age Combined credits you have.
7. Click on the “Add Certificate” button if you want to have a certificate or credential verified.
8. Remember to submit copies of official transcripts to Centralia MERIT at: [centraliamerit@centralia.edu](mailto:centraliamerit@centralia.edu).

## Receive your Award

To receive your award, you must have a Statewide Vendor Number. If you do not have a statewide vendor number, you can find the application online: [Apply for a Statewide Vendor Number](#).

## Movement

After you receive an initial education award, you may earn additional awards for movement. Movement is defined as a degree or ECE accomplishment that you attain or complete *after* you first reported your education in MERIT and had it verified. In order to qualify as movement, newly obtained degrees must be higher than the previously verified degree – they may not be the same level of degree with a different major.

## Full List of Available Awards

<b>Degree Award — Available for Highest Level of Education</b>	
Ged (General Educational Development)	\$50
High School Diploma	\$50
Associate's Degree	\$100
Bachelor's Degree	\$200
Master's Degree	\$300
Doctoral Degree	\$400
<b>ECE Major Award — Available for Up to Four Verified ECE Majors</b>	
Associate's Degree With ECE Major	\$100
Bachelor's Degree With ECE Major	\$100
Master's Degree With ECE Major	\$100
Doctoral Degree With ECE Major	\$100
<b>ECE Certificates &amp; Credentials Award — Available for Up to Three Verified ECE Certificates &amp; Credentials</b>	
Washington State ECE Initial Certificate	\$50
Washington State ECE Short Certificate of Specialization	\$50
Washington State ECE Certificate	\$50
Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential	\$50
Home Visitor Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential	\$50
1 year ECE Certificate/Diploma (Minimum of 45 Credits)	\$50
MACTE Accredited Teacher Credential in Infant/Toddler (I/T)	\$50
MACTE Accredited Teacher Credential in ECE	\$50
Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) Diploma in Assistants to Infancy (A to I): Covers Birth to 3 Years of Age	\$50
Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) Diploma in Primary: Covers 3–6 Years of Age	\$50
13 Military Modules	\$50
Other Certificate Equal to a Minimum of 12 ECE Credits	\$50

## What is an ECE Major?

DCYF recognizes the following ECE majors:

- Early childhood education
- Human development with a specialization in ECE
- Children's studies/childhood education

- Elementary education with one of the following endorsements:
  - Early childhood education
  - Early childhood special education
  - P-3
  - P-3 special education

If your degree major is not listed above, but you believe that it is an ECE major, DCYF can review your transcripts in more detail to see whether your major aligns with Washington State Core Competencies and ECE Credential Standards.

### **Contact Information**

For questions about Education Awards, contact the DCYF professional development registry team at [DCYF.MERIT@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:DCYF.MERIT@dcyf.wa.gov) or call 1-866-482-4352 and select option 5.