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Governor
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MEMORANDUM

Date: October 1, 2008
To: Early Learning Coalitions and VPK Providers
From: *JB* Brittany Birken, Director, Office of Early Learning, Agency for Workforce Innovation
Subject: VPK Director Endorsement and Instructor Credential Expirations

In an effort to maintain open communication and support collaboration efforts with our partner agencies, the Agency for Workforce Innovation wants to remind coalitions and providers that many Director and Staff Credentials issued by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) are due for renewal prior to Jan. 1, 2009.

Director Credential

DCF Director Credentials are valid for a period of five years, meaning any Director Credential issued prior to Jan. 1, 2004, must be renewed before the end of this year. Some Voluntary Prekindergarten Education (VPK) programs could be in jeopardy of becoming ineligible if these credentials are not renewed by January 1, 2009.

Individuals who renew their Director Credential prior to 2009 and have previously been exempt from the VPK Director Endorsement, will remain exempt and need no further action. These certifications will still be accepted for purposes of the VPK program. All individuals are encouraged to receive the VPK Director Endorsement, including those who are exempt.

For those who have not met the requirements of the VPK Director Endorsement Certificate (see <https://training01-dcf.myflorida.gov/dcf/cct/dircred.html>), it is strongly recommended that those directors do not allow their credential to lapse if they are in charge of a VPK program.

The Director Credential Renewal Application is available for download on the Department of Children and Families website at www.myflorida.com/childcare and then by selecting the "Forms and Applications" link.

Agency for Workforce Innovation

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It is important to keep in mind that in order to offer the VPK program, a provider must have a director with either a Director Credential *who is exempt* from the VPK Director Endorsement Certificate, or a Director Credential who possesses a VPK Director Endorsement Certificate. There is no "grace period" for VPK programs led by directors without the proper credential and/or endorsement.

Staff Credential

As of June 30, 2005, individuals who acquired a DCF Staff Credential with an approved Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC) or a National Early Childhood Certificate must complete a renewal process every five (5) years to maintain an active Staff Credential.

Until December 31, 2008, an individual may renew a National Early Childhood Certificate (for example, the Child Development Associate credential) through the Department of Children and Families FCCPC renewal process. After January 1, 2009, individuals must renew a National certificate or credential through the agency or body that issued it.

Pursuant to rule 65C-22.003(7), Florida Administrative Code, the former Child Development Associate Equivalency (CDAE) credential is now the Birth Through Five Credential Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC). Those individuals that require renewing their CDAE utilizing the FCCPC renewal process may discover that additional training or educational credits to qualify for a renewal are required.

It is strongly recommend that current renewal requirements are consulted immediately by accessing the following DCF web page:

https://training01-dcf.myflorida.gov/dcf/cct/b5_fccpc_program.html

Please note that after December 31, 2008, any individual with an expired FCCPC or National Credential will not be eligible to be counted as a credentialed staff person for the purpose of meeting licensing standards. Providers must have instructors who have an active Staff Credential. VPK programs without directors and instructors who hold the proper credentials and/or endorsements will not be allowed to continue their program.

All early childhood credentials and renewals are analyzed and issued by the Child Care Training Services Center. Due to an expected increase in both Director and Staff Credential renewals between now and the end of the year, it may take between 4-6 weeks for credentials and renewals to be processed. The Agency advises that those needing to renew their credentials submit applications as soon as possible to avoid delays and placing VPK programs in jeopardy come January 1, 2009.

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