

# EARLY CHILDHOOD P-3 CERTIFICATE

## Program Overview

This Post-Baccalaureate Teacher Certification Program in Early Childhood Education (P-3) is designed for college graduates seeking initial teacher certification in Early Childhood, Preschool through Grade 3. The streamlined yet rigorous program of professional teacher preparation studies combines theory, research, field experience, and practice. It is designed for part-time students who take one or two late afternoon/evening courses per semester. The clinical experience (student teaching and seminar) at the end of the program requires full-time enrollment for one semester.

The course work in this program may be applied toward completion of the 30-credit Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT). (<https://rider-curr.courseleaf.com/graduate/colleges-schools/education/programs-certificates/ma-teaching/>)

## Curriculum Overview

The Post-Baccalaureate Teacher Certification Program in Early Childhood Education (P-3) is a 24-credit graduate program requiring five teacher preparation courses taken in late afternoons/evenings followed by a semester of full-time student teaching.

## Certificate Offered

- NJ Early Childhood Certificate (P-3)

## Contact

**Kathleen M. Pierce, Ph.D.**

Professor & Director of Post-Baccalaureate Teacher Certification/Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Programs

Bierenbaum Fisher Hall 202

609-895-5478

[kpierce@rider.edu](mailto:kpierce@rider.edu)

**Associated Departments:** Department of Graduate Education, Leadership, and Counseling (<https://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-education-human-services/graduate-programs/>) and Department of Teacher Education (<https://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-education-human-services/undergraduate-teacher-education/>)

## Related Programs

- Teaching (M.A.T.) (<https://rider-curr.courseleaf.com/graduate/colleges-schools/education/programs-certificates/ma-teaching/>)

## Early Childhood Certificate (P-3) Requirements

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Complete the following courses:</b>		
CURR 700	Educational Foundations for Inclusive Practices	3
CURR 702	Early Literacy Development for Diverse Learners	3
CURR 710	Math Methods for the Inclusive Elementary Classroom	3
CURR 719	Math Applications and Connections in the Elementary Classroom	3

CURR 722	Advanced Studies in Literacy Development and Assessment	3
CURR 770 or CURR 771	Clinical Experience and Seminar in Teaching Supervised Clinical Experience in Teaching	9
ECED 532	Families, Community, and Diversity in Early Childhood Education	3
ECED 550	Language, Literacy, and Learning Across Domains in Early Childhood	3
LITR 508	Literacy and the Bilingual/Bicultural Child	3
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>33</b>

## Additional requirements for completion

- Completion of all courses before the clinical experience (student teaching) with a "C+" or better in each course and with a 3.0 grade point average.
- Completion of CURR 770 or CURR 771 with a "C+" grade or better.

## Courses and Descriptions

### CURR 700 Educational Foundations for Inclusive Practices 3 Credits

This course provides psychological and interdisciplinary perspectives on teaching and learning. Within the theme of optimal development of creative intelligence, and in concordance with important NJ and national professional standards, candidates will use these perspectives to begin their career-long processes of reflective professional development. More specifically, the course develops knowledge, skills, and dispositions pertinent to (a) child and adolescent development, (b) learning theories, (c) learner diversity, (d) classroom management, (e) career readiness skills, (f) philosophical and historical perspectives on education, (g) sociocontextual and interdisciplinary influences on education, and (h) higher-order, creative and critical thinking. The emphases on student development and learner diversity entail in-depth investigation of the following subtopics: the philosophical, legal, and historical foundations of special education; the characteristics of students with disabilities and learning strengths; inclusive practices; professional partnerships for support of diverse learners; and strategies for modification of curriculum content and materials aligned to NJ Student Learning Standards, learning environments and processes.

### CURR 702 Early Literacy Development for Diverse Learners 3 Credits

This course addresses current strategies for teaching beginning learners' vocabulary, comprehension, composition, and language study. It addresses strategies for the development of literacy for all learners ranging from the gifted and talented to those with learning disabilities or other special needs. The course develops proficiency with the management of literacy instruction for content areas in general education in preschool and primary grades and planning aligns with NJ Student Learning Standards. It provides candidates with the pedagogical literacy proficiency necessary for the development of their students' career readiness skills (employability skills, employment readiness through enhanced literacy capacities). Field experiences include observation and interaction in classes focusing on literacy instruction in inclusive classrooms.

**Prerequisite(s):** CURR 700 with a minimum grade of C+.

**CURR 710 Math Methods for the Inclusive Elementary Classroom 3 Credits**

This course introduces teacher candidates to effective mathematics instruction based on learning trajectories of diverse learners in preschool and elementary classrooms. The course will guide candidates as they consider how to create inclusive, equitable, supportive yet challenging mathematics learning environments for their students. In alignment with the NJ Student Learning Standards and NAEYC and NCTM professional standards, emphasis is placed on planning and implementing an inquiry-based approach with hands-on experiences, use of technology, and traditional and non-traditional assessment strategies. The course provides candidates with the pedagogical proficiency necessary to foster mathematical understanding, engagement, and enjoyment. Field experiences consist of classroom observations with instructional analysis and assessment of children's mathematical thinking.

**Prerequisite(s):** CURR 702 with a minimum grade of C+.

**CURR 770 Clinical Experience and Seminar in Teaching 9 Credits**

This course, designed for those seeking teacher initial certification, requires full-time supervised daily participation in a school setting with diverse students including students with disabilities. These experiences test and strengthen the translation of educational theory and research into meaningful teaching practice. On-campus or site-based seminar accompany the clinical experience and emphasize the reflective development toward professionalism through sharing and analyses of how to support the learning needs of diverse students and connecting clinical experiences with content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge from prior course work. The clinical experience is augmented with a series of additional seminars that include the following: introductory/orientation seminars prior to the beginning of the semester; strategies for designing inclusive education practices and positive behavioral supports, assistive technology for diverse learners, transition planning; classroom management strategies; awareness of methods for strengthening student achievement and career readiness.

**CURR 771 Supervised Clinical Experience in Teaching 9 Credits**

The Supervised Clinical Experience in Teaching is available only to candidates seeking initial teacher certification and who currently work full-time teaching. Candidates may apply to the program for Supervised Clinical Experience in Teaching by providing evidence of successful, full-time teaching experience, planning, and evaluation. Once approved, candidates continue teaching within the appropriate certification area and under university supervision for a semester. On-campus or site-based seminar accompany the clinical experience and emphasize the reflective development toward professionalism through sharing and analyses of how to support the learning needs of diverse students and connecting clinical experiences with content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge from prior course work. The clinical experience is augmented with a series of additional seminars that include the following: introductory/orientation seminars prior to the beginning of the semester; strategies for designing inclusive education practices and positive behavioral supports, assistive technology for diverse learners, transition planning; classroom management strategies; awareness of methods for strengthening student achievement and career readiness.

**ECED 532 Families, Community, and Diversity in Early Childhood Education 3 Credits**

This course addresses the role of parents of young children within the context of school, home and society, as well as the influence of culture, traditions and current issues in early childhood education. Students will explore the efficacy of parenting techniques and behaviors on child development in the early years, including cognitive growth, emotional and social well-being and physical health. Students will investigate strategies for fostering home-school partnerships that enhance child development and educational success, as well as the influence of community, culture and socio-economic status on families and schools throughout our world. In addition, this course addresses current issues and challenges in the early childhood profession including inclusion of children with special needs, advocacy for quality care and education for all young children, and any other subject that might arise - either from the lives of children and families, teachers' professional development, or community agencies. A cumulative GPA of 2.75 is required.

**Prerequisite(s):** EDU 106 and EDU 206.

**ECED 550 Language, Literacy, and Learning Across Domains in Early Childhood 3 Credits**

This course focuses on development of language, the building of foundational literacy skills and the acquisition of knowledge during the early childhood years. The course also provides opportunities for teacher candidates to deepen their understanding of child development and growth. Teacher candidates will have the opportunity to consider how various experiences and interactions influence learning during these vital years and the importance of creating an environment that fosters and nurtures diverse and equitable opportunities for children. The role of play in learning and the influence of social interaction with caring adults and peers will be discussed. Teacher candidates will learn how to make curricular and teaching decisions based on knowledge of child development, subject-specific content, curriculum content standards, and home and community cultures. The course examines the role of language and literacy across the disciplines in early childhood. Developmental milestones in language acquisition and literacy development will be discussed and tools for screening young learners in these areas will be introduced. Teacher candidates will gain an appreciation for the professional responsibility of early childhood educators, particularly with regard to understanding children's homes and communities, fostering learning across developmental domains, tracking progress, and intervening and/or seeking the support of specialists as warranted. Required: 6 hours per week field placement in an early childhood classroom.