

2025 Early Childhood Educators Institute

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Planning is underway for the 9th annual Early Childhood Educators Institute (ECEI) hosted by the Vermont State University’s Center for Schools. The Center is now seeking proposals for session/course offerings for its four-day, online, professional development event.

Each summer, the VTSU Center for Schools gathers early childhood practitioners for several days of professional development sessions with the option of aligned credited coursework. The goal is to advance the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and practices of early childhood providers in their efforts to educate young children and to support families. We are looking for skilled instructors willing to teach a 4-day session, with an aligned course for those seeking credit, in topic areas critical to the early childhood field.

The 2025 ECEI will run fully online, for 4 days, for a total of 20 professional development hours:

Session dates are July 29, July 31, August 5, and August 7 from 9:00-3:00

Session format is a combination of synchronous Zoom meetings and asynchronous work

Registrants choose 1 strand for all 4 days and have the opportunity to also register for an aligned 3-credit course

Those who register for credit will continue with online coursework until October 1, 2025

Instructor Responsibilities include:

Attend the instructor information session prior to the institute

Share a single VTSU Zoom meeting room link with registrants for all synchronous sessions

Send a welcome letter to students 2 weeks prior to the institute

Be available from 9:00-3:00 all four days of the institute

Lead post-institute synchronous and asynchronous work and assignments for those students seeking graduate or undergraduate credit

Hold at least 2 Zoom office hour meetings between August 8 and October 1, 2025

Complete credit-bearing coursework by October 1, 2025

Enter final grades into the VTSU system by November 30, 2025

Instructors-of-Record are required to hold a minimum of an earned master's degree.

This year’s theme is “Reflective Practice.”

The theme for the 9th annual Early Childhood Educators Institute will be “**Reflective Practice**”. Educators working in early childhood environments should continually improve or revise their teaching practices to meet the increasingly diverse needs of the young children they are supporting. Reflective practice can help to ensure all young children learn most effectively and teaching is tailored to learning needs. Early childhood educators can benefit from reflection in a number of ways. Reflective practice can promote professional growth, foster innovation, cultivate better teacher-child-parent/caregiver relationships, and enhance problem-solving skills. Our very first institute keynote on July 29th will focus on the importance of reflective practice and will be shared with the entire participant group. We are asking our instructors to intentionally build in a number of opportunities for participants in their strands and courses to identify, experience, and utilize reflective practice. We request that you emphasize this during the time you are with your students synchronously and we also request your students utilize some kind of reflective practice during the asynchronous time they are spending with you as well. In addition, we ask that you create an assignment or two for those seeking credit once they finish their 4 days and move on to their own teaching and learning environments and finish the course.

If your proposal is accepted the Center for Schools team can help you incorporate this theme into your syllabus.

Return and new sessions/courses are welcome! Some session/course topics that have been suggested or offered in the past include (but are not limited to):

Family engagement-How to talk with families

Leadership

Advocacy

Trauma informed practices

Social emotional learning

Neurodiversity

How to Team with Other People

       Augmentative Communication Strategies

Registration Requirements:

Sessions/courses must have a minimum of 6 registrants to run. VTSU Center for Schools reserves the right to cancel low enrolled sessions/courses.

Timeline:

**Proposals will be accepted through 9 am on Monday, March 3, 2025.**

Notifications of accepted proposals will be sent via email by March 11, 2025.

For accepted proposals: final syllabus must be electronically submitted for review to VTSU Center for Schools before 5 pm on Monday, April 7, 2025. *Please note: failure to submit on time may result in loss of session approval*.

Proposals will be evaluated using the rubric below.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | Highly  Recommend  | Recommend w/Clarification  | Not  Recommended  |
| Proposed Session / Course Description (Abstract)  | Sophisticated abstract that fully envisions the course and its overall scope  | Competent abstract that offers a general sense of the course and its scope  | Abstract is vague, unclear, and/or does not provide insight into the scope of the course  |
| Intended Outcomes  | Outcomes are relevant, clear, and connected to the course description  | Outcomes are connected to the course description, though not necessarily clearly defined  | Outcomes are vague, unclear, and/or not connected to the course description.   |
| Connection to Institute Theme  | Connections are direct, relevant, and reflective  | Connections make logical sense   | Connections are vague and/or lack relevancy  |

If you are interested in submitting a proposal for a professional development session and the aligned course for the above topics or another topic critical to the early childhood field, please develop a 6-8 sentence narrative identifying the rationale of your proposed content topic, your intended outcomes, and the audience you wish to address across the Birth through 3rd Grade continuum, then complete the [ECEI Session Proposal](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flocalweb.castleton.edu%2Fcfsmachform%2Fview.php%3Fid%3D1383129&data=05%7C02%7Ctara.lidstone%40vermontstate.edu%7Ce3e23d444e06414a243d08dd446b62b4%7Cb17e9703dbdd49fa909c03dfd13086af%7C0%7C0%7C638741950186508811%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=xYF%2FhcQGNk1iWjg3tPd%2Be6OEgvUNckmI0rd4hKPF%2Ff4%3D&reserved=0) using the hyperlink or by clicking the link below:

[https://localweb.castleton.edu/cfsmachform/view.php?id=1383129](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flocalweb.castleton.edu%2Fcfsmachform%2Fview.php%3Fid%3D1383129&data=05%7C02%7Ctara.lidstone%40vermontstate.edu%7Ce3e23d444e06414a243d08dd446b62b4%7Cb17e9703dbdd49fa909c03dfd13086af%7C0%7C0%7C638741950186525207%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=gxldlfS7UMk3nJuCg8oo9%2BNZHpeMlz4mv6e68u0v3W0%3D&reserved=0)

If you have colleagues who might be interested in submitting a proposal, please forward them this email.

Compensation: $3,500 per strand/course.

For more information on the ECEI institute, please email Tara Lidstone, ECEI Instructor Liaison.

Warm regards,

Tara Lidstone, M.Ed., VLI

Assistant Director, VTSU Center for Schools & ECEI Instructor Liaison

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Visit our [website](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.castleton.edu%2Fcontinuing-ed&data=05%7C02%7Ctara.lidstone%40vermontstate.edu%7Ce3e23d444e06414a243d08dd446b62b4%7Cb17e9703dbdd49fa909c03dfd13086af%7C0%7C0%7C638741950186546642%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=sgQ86ioqZV4cN54NuL8nrQhvvZ16uUDWIiLZBPDAPT8%3D&reserved=0) for the current list of professional development opportunities.

