

10A NCAC 09 .3217 ENHANCED EDUCATION STANDARDS FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME OPERATORS

(a) This Rule shall apply when evaluating the education of a family child care home operator.

(b) A child care provider meets the two-star education standard for a family child care home operator if the provider meets, at minimum, the requirements set forth in Option One, Option Two, Option Three, or Option Four as follows:

- (1) Option One: Completion of a Child Development Associate (CDA) that is active with no credit for prior learning.
- (2) Option Two: Successful completion of at least four semester hours in early childhood education or child development coursework at an accredited college or university.
- (3) Option Three: NC Family Child Care Credential or its approved equivalent.
- (4) Option Four:
 - (A) Have at least three years of early childhood work experience; and
 - (B) Annual completion of at least 0.5 continuing education credit specific to the ages and needs of children in care, in addition to applicable requirements in Rule .1703 of this Chapter; or successful completion of a competency evaluation as set forth in Rule .3218 of this Section.

(c) A child care provider meets the three-star education standard for a family child care home operator if the provider meets, at minimum, the requirements set forth in Option One, Option Two, or Option Three as follows:

- (1) Option One: Completion of a Child Development Associate (CDA) that is active with credit for prior learning.
- (2) Option Two:
 - (A) NC Family Child Care Credential or its approved equivalent; and
 - (B) Successful completion of at least six semester hours in early childhood education or child development coursework at an accredited college or university.
- (3) Option Three:
 - (A) Have at least five years of early childhood work experience; and
 - (B) Annual completion of at least 1.0 continuing education credit specific to the ages and needs of children in care, in addition to applicable requirements in Rule .1703 of this Chapter; or successful completion of a competency evaluation as set forth in Rule .3218 of this Section.

(d) A child care provider meets the four-star education standard for a family child care home operator if the provider meets, at minimum, the requirements set forth in Option One, Option Two, Option Three, or Option Four as follows:

- (1) Option One:
 - (A) NC Family Child Care Credential or its approved equivalent; and
 - (B) Successful completion of at least 12 semester hours in early childhood education or child development coursework at an accredited college or university; and
 - (C) Have at least one year early childhood work experience.
- (2) Option Two:
 - (A) NC Family Child Care Credential or its approved equivalent; or
 - (B) Successful completion of at least 15 semester hours in early childhood education or child development coursework at an accredited college or university; and
 - (C) Have at least one year early childhood work experience.
- (3) Option Three: Completion of an Early Childhood Certificate.
- (4) Option Four:
 - (A) Have at least eight years of early childhood work experience; and
 - (B) Annual completion of at least 1.5 continuing education credits specific to the ages and needs of children in care, in addition to applicable requirements in Rule .1703 of this Chapter; or successful completion of a competency evaluation as set forth in Rule .3218 of this Section.

(e) A child care provider meets the five-star education standard for a family child care home operator if the provider meets, at minimum, the requirements set forth in Option One, Option Two, Option Three, Option Four, or Option Five as follows:

- (1) Option One:
 - (A) Completion of an AAS degree in early childhood education or child development at an accredited college or university; and

- (B) Have at least eighteen months early childhood work experience.
- (2) Option Two:
 - (A) Successful completion of all required early childhood education coursework for an AAS degree program an individual is enrolled in at an accredited college or university, without full completion of the degree; and
 - (B) Have at least three years of early childhood education work experience.
- (3) Option Three:
 - (A) Completion of an AAS degree or higher in any major with at least 12 semester hours in early childhood education or child development coursework at an accredited college or university; and
 - (B) Have at least two years of early childhood work experience.
- (4) Option Four:
 - (A) NC Family Child Care Credential or its approved equivalent; and
 - (B) Successful completion of at least 18 semester hours in early childhood education or child development coursework at an accredited college or university; and
 - (C) Have at least four years early childhood work experience.
- (5) Option Five:
 - (A) Have at least 10 years of early childhood work experience; and
 - (B) Annual completion of at least 2.5 continuing education credits specific to the ages and needs of children in care, in addition to applicable requirements in Rule .1703 of this Chapter; and
 - (C) Successful completion of a competency evaluation as set forth in Rule .3218 of this Section.

(f) Semester hours in early childhood education or child development coursework required to meet the standards set forth in this Rule shall not include the coursework necessary for the North Carolina Family Child Care Credential.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85(3); 110-88(7); 110-90(4); 143B-168.3; S.L. 2023-40; S.L. 2024-34; 42 U.S.C. 9858e; 45 CFR 98.45; Eff. July 1, 2025.