SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS FORMS

New Certificate

Use this form to propose a certificate program at either the undergraduate or graduate level. A certificate program is a sequence, pattern, or group of academic credit courses that focus upon an area of specialized knowledge or information and develop a specific skill set. Certificate programs typically are a subset of the curriculum offered in degree programs, include previously approved courses, and involve 9-12 credit hours including prerequisites. In some cases, standards for licensure will state explicit requirements leading to certificate programs requiring more than 12 credit hours (in such cases, exceptions to course or credit requirements must be justified and approved). The Board of Regents, Executive Director, and/or their designees may request additional information about the proposal. After the university President approves the proposal, submit a signed copy to the Executive Director through the system Chief Academic Officer. Only post the New Certificate Form to the university website for review by other universities after approval by the Executive Director and Chief Academic Officer.

UNIVERSITY:	BHSU
TITLE OF PROPOSED CERTIFICATE:	**Early Childhood Education**
INTENDED DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION:	**Spring 2026**
PROPOSED CIP CODE:	**13.1210**
UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT:	**College of Education**
BANNER DEPARTMENT CODE:	**BSCE**
UNIVERSITY DIVISION:	**College of Education**
BANNER DIVISION CODE:	**6D**

☒ **Please check this box to confirm that:**

- The individual preparing this request has read AAC Guideline 2.3.2.2.C, which pertains to new certificate requests, and that this request meets the requirements outlined in the guidelines.
- This request will not be posted to the university website for review of the Academic Affairs Committee until it is approved by the Executive Director and Chief Academic Officer.

University Approval

To the Board of Regents and the Executive Director: I certify that I have read this proposal, that I believe it to be accurate, and that it has been evaluated and approved as provided by university policy.

Pamela Cameron — 9/12/2025

Institutional Approval Signature — Date

President or Chief Academic Officer of the University

Note: In the responses below, references to external sources, including data sources, should be documented with a footnote (including web addresses where applicable).

1. **Is this a graduate-level certificate or undergraduate-level certificate (*place an "X" in the appropriate box*)?**

   Undergraduate Certificate ☒ Graduate Certificate ☐

2. **What is the nature/ purpose of the proposed certificate? Please include a brief (1-2 sentence) description of the academic field in this certificate.**

The Early Childhood Education certificate is stackable with the BHSU ECE/SPED Bachelor's degree, the ECE minor, and a potential associate's degree. It is also closely aligned to the requirements for SD Child Development Associate (CDA) credential.

3. **If you do not have a major in this field, explain how the proposed certificate relates to your university mission and strategic plan, and to the current Board of Regents Strategic Plan 2014-2020.**

   Links to the applicable State statute, Board Policy, and the Board of Regents Strategic Plan are listed below for each campus.

BHSU:	*SDCL § 13-59*	*BOR Policy 1.2.1*
DSU:	*SDCL § 13-59*	*BOR Policy 1.2.2*
NSU:	*SDCL § 13-59*	*BOR Policy 1.2.3*
SDSMT:	*SDCL § 13-60*	*BOR Policy 1.2.4*
SDSU:	*SDCL § 13-58*	*BOR Policy 1.2.5*
USD:	*SDCL § 13-57*	*BOR Policy 1.2.6*

Board of Regents Strategic Plan

Part of BHSU's institutional mission is to meet regional workforce demands and this degree will help our local partners meet the sustained demand for early childhood professionals. This program will align with the SD DSS Child Development Associate Project.

This degree request aligns with Goal 1, Objective 5 of the BHSU Strategic Plan, by improving student readiness for job searches and career planning. Additionally, the program aligns with Goal 2, Objective 3, aligning curriculum with emerging workforce needs in western South Dakota.

Similarly, this certificate supports Goal 4 of the SDBOR Strategic Plan by "align[ing] new…undergraduate programming to the South Dakota and national workforce needs." As documented below, South Dakota is experiencing a shortage of early childhood educators and daycare providers.

4. **Provide a justification for the certificate program, including the potential benefits to students and potential workforce demand for those who graduate with the credential.** *For workforce related information, please provide data and examples. Data may include, but are not limited to the South Dakota Department of Labor, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Regental system dashboards, etc. Please cite any sources in a footnote.*

There is a shortage of early childhood professionals and daycare providers in South Dakota. The SD Department of Labor short-term (2023-2025) projections indicate 107 new openings for childcare workers and 859 annual openings. The long-term (2022-2032) projections estimate 159 new openings and 849 annual openings for childcare workers.

Additionally, our professional advisors have reported increased interest in Early Childhood Education opportunities at BHSU from prospective students and families. From 2023-2025,

our ECE/SPED program has increased from 14 students to 19 students and we currently have 17 students in our ECE minor.

5. **Who is the intended audience for the certificate program (including but not limited to the majors/degree programs from which students are expected)?**
   The intended audience is students who have attained a CDA credential, which can be completed through the SD DSS, current BHSU students who are pursuing a degree other than ECE.SPED but want additional training in early childhood education, and students interested in the ECE minor or ECE/SPED Bachelor's degree. Additionally, there are opportunities to collaborate with high school CTE programs that focus on the Education and Training Career Cluster.

6. **Certificate Design**
   A. **Is the certificate designed as a stand-alone education credential option for students not seeking additional credentials (i.e., a bachelor's or master's degree)? If so, what areas of high workforce demand or specialized body of knowledge will be addressed through this certificate?**
      BHSU recently updated an agreement with the State of South Dakota to articulate 10 credit hours for students who have completed the CDA credential. This certificate provides a pathway from the CDA credential to the ECE minor and the ECE/SPED major.

   B. **Is the certificate a value added credential that supplements a student's major field of study? If so, list the majors/programs from which students would most benefit from adding the certificate.**
      The ECE minor, the ECE/SPED Bachelor's degree, and the Elementary Education Bachelor's degree would particularly benefit from this certificate. A business major interested in owning/operating their own childcare center would also find value in this certificate.

   C. **Is the certificate a stackable credential with credits that apply to a higher level credential (i.e., associate, bachelor's, or master's degree)? If so, indicate the program(s) to which the certificate stacks and the number of credits from the certificate that can be applied to the program.**
      The certificate is stackable with the ECE minor, ECE/SPED Bachelor's degree, and the potential Associate's in ECE. All 10 hours from this certificate can be applies to each of these academic programs.

7. **List the courses required for completion of the certificate in the table below (if any new courses are proposed for the certificate, please attach the new course requests to this form).**
   Certificate programs by design are limited in the number of credit hours required for completion. Certificate programs consist of nine (9) to twelve (12) credit hours, including prerequisite courses. In addition, certificates typically involve existing courses. If the curriculum consists of more than twelve (12) credit hours (including prerequisites) or includes new courses, please provide explanation and justification below.

Prefix	Number	Course Title *(add or delete rows as needed)*	Prerequisites for Course	Credit Hours	New (yes, no)

			Include credits for prerequisites in subtotal below.		
ECE	328	Guidance with Young Children		2	No
ECE	328L	Guidance with Young Children Lab		1	No
ECE	411	Social Development in Early Childhood		3	No
ECE	413	Early Childhood Curriculum		3	No
ECE	495	Early Intervention Practicum		1	No
			Subtotal	10	

8. Student Outcome and Demonstration of Individual Achievement.

Board Policy 2:23 requires certificate programs to "have specifically defined student learning outcomes.

A. What specific knowledge and competencies, including technology competencies, will all students demonstrate before graduation? *The knowledge and competencies should be specific to the program and not routinely expected of all university graduates.*

Students will gain hands-on experiences in preschool through third-grade settings, acquire the training needed to work with young children, and learn strategies for reaching each individual child to enhance learning.

B. Complete the table below to list specific learning outcomes – knowledge and competencies – for courses in the proposed program in each row. *Label each column heading with a course prefix and number. Indicate required courses with an asterisk (*). Indicate with an X in the corresponding table cell for any student outcomes that will be met by the courses included. All students should acquire the program knowledge and competencies regardless of the electives selected. Modify the table as necessary to provide the requested information for the proposed program.*

	Program Courses that Address the Outcomes				
Individual Student Outcome (Same as in the text of the proposal)	ECE 328 *	ECE 328L*	ECE 411*	ECE 413*	ECE 495*
Gain hands-on experience pre-school settings		X			X
Facilitate developmentally appropriate learning environments for early learners	X	X		X	X
Understanding and meeting social needs of children			X		
Methods for developmentally appropriate practices				X	
Practical application of learning under supervision of faculty and field-based practitioner		X			X

Modify the table as necessary to include all student outcomes. Outcomes in this table are to be the same ones identified in the text.

9. Delivery Location.

Note: The accreditation requirements of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) require Board approval for a university to offer programs off-campus and through distance delivery.

A. Complete the following charts to indicate if the university seeks authorization to deliver the entire program on campus, at any off campus location (e.g., USD Community

College for Sioux Falls, Black Hills State University-Rapid City, Capital City Campus, etc.) or deliver the entire program through distance technology (e.g., as an on-line program)?

	Yes/No	***Intended Start Date***
On campus	Yes	**Spring 2026**

	Yes/No	***If Yes, list location(s)***	***Intended Start Date***
Off campus	Yes	Black Hills State University-Rapid City	**Spring 2026**

	Yes/No	***If Yes, identify delivery methods*** *Delivery methods are defined in AAC Guideline 2.4.3.B.*	***Intended Start Date***
Distance Delivery (online/other distance delivery methods)	Yes	X15: Online Asynchronous	**Spring 2026**
Does another BOR institution already have authorization to offer the program online?	No	**If yes, identify institutions:**	

B. Complete the following chart to indicate if the university seeks authorization to deliver more than 50% but less than 100% of the certificate through distance learning (e.g., as an on-line program)? *This question responds to HLC definitions for distance delivery.*

	Yes/No	***If Yes, identify delivery methods***	***Intended Start Date***
Distance Delivery (online/other distance delivery methods)	Yes	X15: Online Asynchronous	**Spring 2026**

10. Additional Information: This certificate will not currently result in state certification. However, each course can be applied toward state certification through the BHSU ECE/SPED Bachelor's program.