

**New Program Proposal  
Associate in Public Service  
Major in Early Care and Education  
Williamsburg Technical College**

**Summary**

Williamsburg Technical College requests approval to offer a program leading to the Associate in Public Service degree with a Major in Early Care and Education, to be implemented in Fall 2005.

The State Technical College System's Board approved the proposal on September 28, 2004. The proposal was submitted for Commission review on January 18, 2005. The proposal was reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs at its meeting on March 7, 2005, and approved unanimously without substantive discussion.

Regulatory changes by the Head Start and the Federal legislation known as "No Child Left Behind" both require increased educational attainment levels for persons working with children in childcare facilities and in Title I schools. These are the two major catalysts for promoting Early Care and Education associate degree programs in the state. This proposed program should help to meet the demand for qualified childcare workers in the service area of Williamsburg Technical College. Qualifications for a paraprofessional working in a Title I school require him or her either to be credentialed at the associate degree level, or to be able to pass a standard written assessment, or to have completed 60 credit hours toward an undergraduate degree in the field of early care and education (No Child Left Behind).

The purpose of the program is for the College to prepare graduates in the College's service area to fill positions as childcare workers. The program is designed to assure that graduates of the program are prepared adequately to provide value-added to the emotional and academic development of young children in their care. There are currently 11 approved programs in this field within the state's Technical College System. No competing programs of this type are being offered in the area of the state served by Williamsburg Technical College. Thus, there will be no "unnecessary duplication" of effort with the advent of this program.

The curriculum will consist of 65 semester hours of coursework, including 33 credits in Early Childhood Development, , 16credits in General Education, and sixteen additional hours required for graduation. The proposed associate degree program is built upon an existing certificate in Early Care and Education (27 credits). The certificate program will be retained and will seamlessly meld with the new associate degree. The new degree program will, however, replace the Early Childhood and Public Service specialization within the Associate in Occupational Technology degree with a Major in General Technology, the degree vehicle used throughout the technical colleges for offering programs before approval of a specific degree program to serve an emerging market has been either requested or attained.

As with the other 11 proposals of approved programs in this major, this program is described in the proposal as “occupational in content and does not lead to teacher licensure or certification. Students who have future plans for further [i.e., baccalaureate] education will have the option of taking college transferable general education courses.” This language is congruent with both the position of the State Technical College System staff and the State Department of Education. The State Department’s letter of June 23, 2000, indicates support for Early Care and Education associate degree programs, but also expressed concern that student advisement for the program by all faculty and staff, as well as all published literature about it, “should be extremely clear that the associate degree [in Early Care and Education] does not lead to certification as a teacher in South Carolina public schools.”

The quantified need for the program’s graduates has been determined through a survey of area employers of childcare personnel. According to that survey, a total of 77 full-time and 51 part-time early care and education openings (new and turnover positions together) will be available in the three-year period of 2005- 2007 within the service area of the College.

A clarification of the program proposal by the staff of the State Technical College System indicates that the institution currently has a faculty complement of one full-time and two part-time (1.25 FTE) faculty members. In the first three years of the program’s implementation, however, an additional .25 FTE will be added, for a total each year of 1.50 FTE.

Enrollment in the proposed program is estimated to begin at nine students (11.4 FTE) in FY 2005 and increase to 24 students (26.4 FTE) in FY 2007. If enrollment projections are met, the program will meet the current CHE program productivity standards in each of the first three years of the program’s implementation.

No new courses are necessary to add to the institution's catalogue. All courses in general education required by the program are offered currently at the College. All Early Care and Education courses required by the program are currently offered either in the AOT degree with an option in Early Childhood and Public Service or within the 27 credit hour Certificate in Early Childhood Development, of which this program will become an extension.

The program will seek accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) immediately upon the program's approval. However, because of the backlog for accreditation through NAEYC, an on-site review by a NAEYC team is unlikely to take place until the third year of the program's implementation. The program is anticipated to receive accreditation in 2008.

There are no new physical plant requirements for the proposed program, since it replaces the existing AOT degree with a major in General Technology specialization in Early Childhood and Public Service. No new costs for equipment are necessary for the first three years. The library will require a total additional expenditure of \$1,675 for the three-year period, in addition to the new resources brought into the campus through the statewide higher education electronic library's databases.

The institutional budgets for the first three years of the program's implementation show new costs for the salaries and fringe benefits of the .25 FTE increase in adjunct faculty. The current FTE 1.25 faculty is considered an ongoing cost of the AOT degree option and are not, therefore, shown as "new costs." Total new costs for the program as estimated by the institution begin at \$7,975 in year one and include faculty, supplies/materials, and library. Estimated costs are \$7,825 in year two and \$9,825 in year three. Costs for year 3 also include \$2,000 for the on-site accreditation visit. The total estimated for new costs for the three-year period is \$25,625.

Shown below are the estimated Mission Resource Requirement (MRR) costs to the state associated with implementation of the proposed program for its first three years. Also shown are the estimated revenues projected under the Mission Resource Requirement and the Resource Allocation Plan, as well as student tuition.

Year	Estimated MRR Cost for Proposed Program	Extraordinary (Non-MRR) Costs for Proposed Program	Total Costs	State Appropriations	Tuition	Total Revenue
2005-06	\$81,818		<b>\$81,818</b>	0	\$32,900	<b>\$32,900</b>
2006-07	\$158,133		<b>\$158,133</b>	\$21,600	\$63,492	<b>\$85,092</b>
2007-08	\$189,234		<b>\$189,234</b>	\$41,684	\$76,190	<b>\$117,874</b>

These data demonstrate that if the new program meets its enrollment projections and contains costs as they are shown in the proposal, the program will not be able to cover new costs with revenues it generates by the third year of its implementation. Nevertheless, the institution and the community are committed to the program. The institution has indicated that it possesses adequate funding to make the program successful.

In summary, the proposed program will develop a cadre of better educated personnel working in childcare facilities in the Williamsburg Technical College service area. The program does not represent unnecessary duplication, even though 11 other programs of this type have been approved already. The local populations interested in the program are not mobile and no other program of this type exists within the college's service area. The program's need is evident in order for the area's employers and employees to meet the provisions for educational attainment of childcare workers as required by recent changes in Head Start regulations and in federal education legislation. The current option for Early Care and Education in the AOT degree program with a Major in General Technology will be terminated when this program is implemented.

### **Recommendation**

The staff recommends that the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commend favorably to the Commission approval of the program at Williamsburg Technical College leading to the Associate in Public Service degree with a Major in Early Care and Education, to be implemented in Fall 2005, provided that:

- no "unique cost" or other special state funding be required or requested;
- all advisement by faculty and staff as well as all published literature shall indicate that, while some courses may transfer, the program is

not a college transfer program and does not lead to teacher licensure or certification; and

- the specialization in Early Childhood and Public Service within the AOT degree's Major in General Technology be terminated at the same time the new program is implemented.