



Exploring the Possibilities of Badges for the Early Childhood Workforce CCDBG: A practical case study example

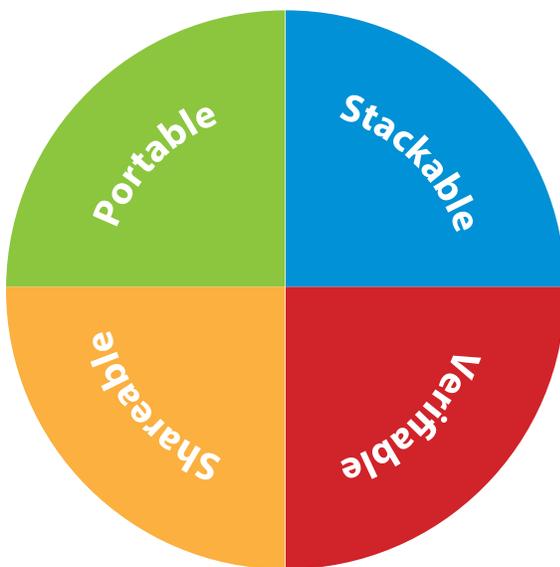
PAPER 2 of 3

The National Workforce Registry Alliance (Alliance) seeks to promote a framework that improves training, education, and ultimately the competency of early childhood professionals. Together with the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the Council for Professional Recognition, and a work group of expert advisors, the Alliance is exploring the role of digital badging and its potential to contribute to career development.

Badging: The Basics

For the workforce, a badge is not merely a graphic demonstration for show; it has embedded shareable, portable data points regarding participation in training and education and verification of achievements and qualifications of the learner. Badges can share valuable data points with employers, agencies, educators, and the practitioner herself making future professional development and career pathway plans.

Four Shared Characteristics of Badgesⁱ



Acknowledgements

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The Alliance thanks the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Council for Professional Recognition for their partnership, and the expert work group members who added so much value to these discussions: Child Care Aware of America, National Afterschool Association, National Association for Family Child Care, National Head Start Association, National Association for Regulatory Administration, and ZERO TO THREE.

According to the Mozilla Foundation, anyone can create and issue a badge: the Open Badges standard provides technical and conceptual guidance to issuers to ensure meaningful criteria for badge creation. But that doesn't mean "anything goes." Processes for verification, quality assurance and endorsement are also critical. For the early childhood workforce, this verification and quality assurance are what would give a badge currency.

Three Main Roles in the Process of Badgingⁱⁱ



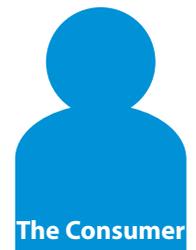
The Issuer

an institution or program



The Earner

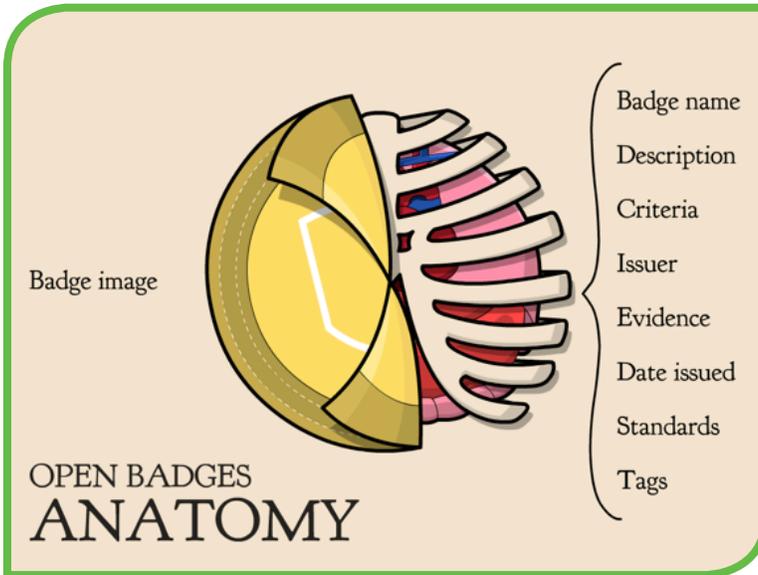
the student/ learner



The Consumer

an employer or other educational institution, reviewing the qualifications of the individual

Anatomy of a Badge

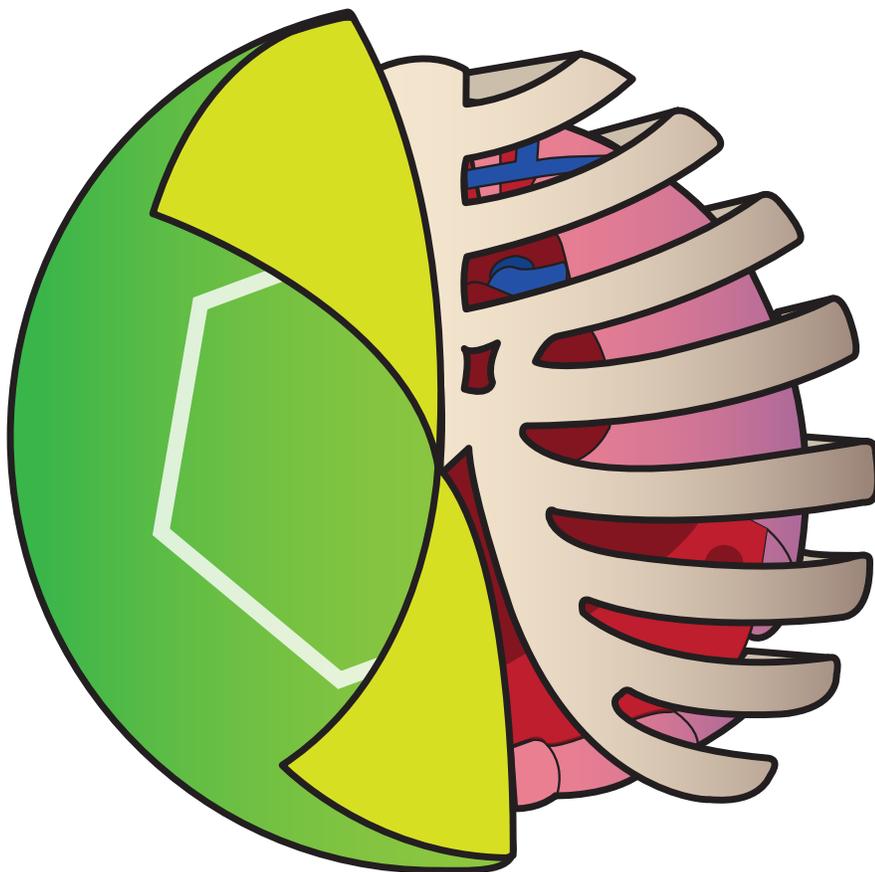


- Badge name
- Description
- Criteria
- Issuer
- Evidence
- Date issued
- Standards
- Tags



From *Open Badges in Education: What is a Badge and Why Do It?* 2014

Based on this work from *Open Badges in Education*, the Alliance developed this “anatomy” for a badge for the early childhood workforce:



- Topic Area
- Badge Name
- Badge Description
- Criteria
- Name of Badge Issuer
- Learning Outcomes Accomplished to Attain the Badge
- Competency Base Required to Demonstrate Acquisition of Knowledge
- Recipient
- Verification
- Date Issued

A Case Study

The new Child Care and Development Block Grant law calls for states to establish requirements to protect the health and safety of children in the care of providers who accept subsidy dollars. (Some states will apply such requirements to all licensed care in the state.) There will also be minimum health and safety training, to be completed pre-service or during an orientation period in addition to ongoing training, appropriate to the provider setting involved, that addresses each of the requirements relating to ten stated topics, and may include requirements relating to nutrition, access to physical activity, or any other subject area determined by the State to be necessary to promote child development or to protect children’s health and safety. Each State Plan is to include the number of hours of training required for eligible providers and caregivers to engage in annually, but the states will determine this for themselves. The federal law does not call for a specific number of hours.

This particular example is something that gives states and a significant portion of the early childhood workforce something in common. The Alliance is basing this work on the assumption that the new federal requirements for health and safety training, first aid and CPR will increase the need to deliver and access such training, and the idea that a badge from a recognized entity would demonstrate achievement and simplify the monitoring of compliance.

Of course this is just a slice of the training and professional development needs of the early childhood field. A concrete

starting place was needed as the Alliance and the work group explored the complex issues of the workforce. By using a practical example, we could test ideas, reveal the pitfalls, and explore questions about the role and value of badges. In other core knowledge or content areas, however, there is higher variability in language, organization of topics and minimum requirements. Additional discussion and work would be required to identify topic categories and minimum requirements to support application of badges.

Two States – Two Different Scenarios

Even with a seemingly straightforward case study concept, work group discussion revealed a need to acknowledge the different “starting places” of states, their current details, as well as the current context of opportunities and capacity for professional development generally and to leverage the opportunity of badging specifically.

To explore further, the Alliance selected two states. “State A” was selected because it has strong systems in place and is working to connect the dots across systems and settings. “State B” is not as far along, and though there are some opportunities, there is less capacity.

The first two tables were compiled about two states from data and summaries from the Administration for Children and Families and current state child care regulations. The third table uses the “anatomy” framework and includes a draft set of answers to the data points that would be included in a badge.

Table 1: Systems and Pieces

State A	State B
An Early Learning Challenge grantee	Not an Early Learning Challenge grantee
Long-standing universal preK state	New Preschool Development Grant – “Development Grantee”
Statewide Quality Rating and Improvement System (<i>which currently includes centers, homes, Head Start, preK and school age</i>)	Piloting a Quality Rating and Improvement System (it does not currently include family child care settings)
Child care licensing, subsidy, preK and quality initiatives in the same state agency	Multiple agencies administer programs and services
The state has a robust Professional Development Registry that is technology-ready	The state has a Professional Development Registry maintaining paper files
State has a training and trainer approval system	The state does not have a trainer or training approval system
State has career advising	The state does not have career advising
	The state has a career lattice in place: professional development across settings/funding streams
Child care centers are licensed	Child care centers are licensed; church-based centers are exempt
Family child care homes are licensed starting at 3 children in care	Family child care homes are licensed starting at one child in care

Table 2: Child Care Center Teacher Qualifications and Training Requirements

State A	State B
CDA or a “technical certificate of credit” (topics specified) or a “technical college diploma in ECE” or an AA in ECE or a “paraprofessional certificate” or 25 quarter hours or 15 semester hours from a college in ECE or a BA and 3 months’ experience or a Masters or if the candidate enrolls in a program and creates a written professional development plan	High school diploma or GED
Orientation training before working with children	Within 30 days of employment, must participate in 12 clock hours via workshop, meetings, videotapes or one-on-one consultation, unless written documentation of prior equivalent is on file - 1 hour each of 6 topics is required toward this 12-hour requirement
1st year of training: 10 clock hours, with at least 6 of those hours on prescribed topics 10 clock hours of annual training in ECE or subjects related to job assignment	12 clock hours of training each year
Evidence of training shall be documented in personnel files available for Department inspection	Documentation shall be kept on file at the center – regulations include detailed prescription of what must be kept on paper
CPR every other year and First Aid every three years	CPR and First Aid are required

The scenarios in the following table are based on a Lead Teacher in a child care center, as a starting example. The Alliance acknowledges all settings and roles are important; this was a starting point to examine specifics only.

Table 3: Digital Badging Scenarios for a Lead Teacher in a Child Care Center

Data Points	State A	State B
Topic Area	Health and Safety	Health and Safety
Badge Name	Basic Child Care Health and Safety	Basic Child Care Health and Safety
Badge Description Knowledge area content for this badge (check those that apply): List appropriate knowledge area(s) (Any existing matrix may be cross walked to the general recommended categories.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Safety • Teacher-Child Relationships • Physical and Intellectual Development • Social and Emotional Development • Observation and Planning • Child Development • Program Management and Operation • Age Appropriate Curriculum • Professional Development 	Meets the health and safety requirements of CCDBG; a competency-based badge <i>See Table 4</i>	Meets the health and safety requirements of CCDBG; a competency-based badge <i>See Table 4</i>
Criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hours (clock?) • Expiration (yes/no) • Renewal (yes/no) 	10 Expiration?	12 Expiration?

Table 3 continued on page 5

Table 3: Digital Badging Scenarios for a Lead Teacher in a Child Care Center (cont'd)

Data Points	State A	State B
<p>Name of Badge Issuer</p> <p>Data points to account for multiple sources of health and safety training</p>	<p>Anyone with access to the development tools. Currently, the workforce receives training from:</p> <p>Red Cross</p> <p>CCR&R</p> <p>A registry-approved trainer</p> <p>“An accredited school”</p> <p>“An accredited college, university or vocational school”</p> <p>“A Department-approved source”</p>	<p>Anyone with access to the development tools. Currently, the workforce receives training from:</p> <p>Red Cross</p> <p>CCR&R</p> <p>State agency</p> <p>State contractor via “quality enhancement” services</p> <p>Local, state, regional or national child care organizations</p>
<p>Learning outcomes accomplished to attain the badge</p> <p>List the learning outcome statements. There may be multiple statements.</p>		
<p>Competency base required to demonstrate acquisition of knowledge (multiple types allowed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tested knowledge • Demonstration of acquired skills • Activity participation 		
Recipient	(learner’s name)	(learner’s name)
<p>Verification</p> <p>Evidence of issuer qualification to issue a badge.</p> <p>This is the verification that badge issuer complies with the best practice recommendations for badge development in early care and education.</p> <p><i>(What the standards for badge issuers are is yet to be determined but the group was clear that some verification process is needed to provide currency to badges.)</i></p>	The Professional Development Registry	
Date Issued	(date)	(date)

Considerations for the Early Childhood Workforce

Badging has the potential to weave together the disparate threads of education and training that currently texture professional preparation in the field. Through this work, the intent of the Alliance is to add value to states and their systems, to employers, and to practitioners, which ultimately benefits children and families.

In this case study, the badge is a symbol of the compliance that is stackable to the next relevant competencies for the professional; and shareable with employers and agencies.

The Alliance and the work group suggest future work could include unpacking more of the ways badging can bridge gaps in the early childhood field, including gaps in

connections to systems; career advisement, portability of credentials, documentation of experience, and compensation. Collaborators raised questions about expiration of badges; worked to apply “lessons learned” in training approval and trainer approval in the work of Training Registries; and relationships to state systems.

The Alliance seeks to forward this work through exploratory and implementation pilots in states and through advocacy and intensive marketing to practitioners, employers and agencies to build support.

These ideas are explored in Paper 3.

Table 4: CCDBG Health and Safety Requirements

The new Child Care and Development Block Grant law calls for states to establish requirements to protect the health and safety of children in the care of providers who accept subsidy dollars. (Some states will apply such requirements to all licensed care in the state.)

1. the prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunization)
2. prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleeping practices
3. the administration of medication
4. the prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions
5. building and physical premises safety, including identification of and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury such as electrical hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic
6. prevention of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma
7. emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster, or a man-caused event
8. the handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of biocontaminants;
9. for providers that offer transportation, if applicable, appropriate precautions in transporting children;
10. first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation

There will also be minimum health and safety training, to be completed pre-service or during an orientation period in addition to ongoing training, appropriate to the provider setting involved that addresses each of the requirements relating to these ten topics above, and may include requirements relating to nutrition, access to physical activity, or any other subject area determined by the State to be necessary to promote child development or to protect children's health and safety.

Each State Plan is to include the number of hours of training required for eligible providers and caregivers to engage in annually, but the states will determine this for themselves. The law does not call for a specific number of hours.

ⁱMDR. *Digital Open Badges in Education*. Shelton, CT: MDR, 2014.

ⁱⁱ*Ibid.*



The National
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Supporting the nation's early childhood and afterschool workforce

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