



**COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC AFFAIRS PROGRAM REVIEW
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
2023-2024**

Program Title Associate of Arts in Teaching/Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Education			
Program Director/Coordinator Professor Carole Williamson			
Division Education, Transitional Studies, and Academic Services	Division Chair Professor Susan Sies		
<table style="width: 100%;"><tr><td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;">Type of Program Transfer Degree: ☐ Associate of Arts (A.A.) ☒ Associate of Arts in Teaching (A.A.T.) ☐ Associate of Fine Arts (A.F.A.) ☐ Associate of Science (A.S.) ☐ Associate of Science in Engineering (A.S.E.) </td><td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> Terminal Degree: ☐ Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) Certificate: ☐ Directed Technology Certificate ☐ New Certificate Program within an Existing Degree Area ☐ New Stand-Alone Certificate </td></tr></table>		Type of Program Transfer Degree: ☐ Associate of Arts (A.A.) ☒ Associate of Arts in Teaching (A.A.T.) ☐ Associate of Fine Arts (A.F.A.) ☐ Associate of Science (A.S.) ☐ Associate of Science in Engineering (A.S.E.)	Terminal Degree: ☐ Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) Certificate: ☐ Directed Technology Certificate ☐ New Certificate Program within an Existing Degree Area ☐ New Stand-Alone Certificate
Type of Program Transfer Degree: ☐ Associate of Arts (A.A.) ☒ Associate of Arts in Teaching (A.A.T.) ☐ Associate of Fine Arts (A.F.A.) ☐ Associate of Science (A.S.) ☐ Associate of Science in Engineering (A.S.E.)	Terminal Degree: ☐ Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) Certificate: ☐ Directed Technology Certificate ☐ New Certificate Program within an Existing Degree Area ☐ New Stand-Alone Certificate		

Please provide the following information about the program based on the results of the Program Review. Use a bulleted format and do not exceed one page (front and back).

1. Synopses of the significant findings from the program review. Include the results from the annual assessments of student learning goals.

- The A.A.T. ECE program focuses on continuous improvement. Faculty members are more intentional about assessing, collecting, and interpreting annual program goals data to enhance curriculum, instruction, and course delivery formats.
- The faculty revamped course titles, descriptions, outcomes, and prerequisites, elevating two courses to the 200-level to better reflect the program's offerings.
- A hallmark is the AAT's early intentional directed practicum opportunities of 60+ hours with Carroll County Public Schools, Head Start, and early care and learning centers.
- Due to the ECE Program's Director's actions to put program courses online, the discipline was able to successfully pivot to online learning during COVID-19. All program courses are now online.
- The Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund (CCCPDF) established in 2009 continues to provide financial support to AAT ECE applicants committed to working in childcare for two years. To date, MSDE has awarded \$1,500,000, for tuition, student fees, and books.
- Since graduates prioritize cost-effectiveness, most AAT ECE graduates transfer to four-year programs in the Baltimore Metropolitan area. Students often receive recognition as MSDE Teachers of Promise.
- Some graduates choose high demand Student Support, Instructional Assistants, and Substitute Teacher positions in Carroll County Public Schools and in early care and education centers.
- Part-time enrollment increased from 2018 to 2020 with increased full-time enrollment during COVID-19.

2. Strengths of the program.

- Strong collaboration with CCPS, Head Start, and early care and education centers for directed practicum placements, delivering approximately 30 ECE-270 practicums per year.

- Faculty vested in student support through Starfish alerts, personal communications, referrals to the Academic Center for tutoring, and faculty help sessions.
- Five faculty teach ECE courses with related master's degrees. Adjuncts have specialized expertise in Head Start, early childhood public education, and childcare administration. All receive positive course evaluations.
- Students benefit from the flexible Hy Flex course delivery, which combines face-to-face, hybrid, and online learning. Pilots were conducted in fall 2023 and spring 2024 semesters.
- Despite COVID-19 challenges, there were 47 graduates, a commendable achievement for a small community college.
- The overall student success rate in ECE courses is excellent with 92% of students earning a C or better.
- Faculty continually assess degree outcomes at the program and state level, collaborating with other community colleges in this five-year assessment period.
- The AAT programs are provided guidance and represented in higher education by the University of Maryland System AAT Oversight Committee.
- The program utilizes resources like the K128 Education Classroom, technology, library, Marketing and Creative Services, and strong leadership at the College.

3. Weaknesses of the program.

- Lack of diversity: Program, like the teaching profession, is predominantly white female; however, Hispanic females constitute the dominant minority.
- Student success rates in transitional and credit mathematics courses show a 15.3% to 45.9% failure rate. Lack of high school mathematics prep is a continuing factor.
- External factors (negative social commentary, stress, burnout, ideological debates, and stagnant wages) contribute to the ECE teacher shortage.

4. Plans for Improvement including timeline.

- Market the AAS and AAT programs to county childcare professionals and middle/high school students by FY 2025 prior to the Blueprint sliding scale in 2026.
- Continue to expand Hy Flex, which must include buy in from faculty willing to teach in this modality (beginning Fall 24).
- Assess all ECE courses for Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and accessibility (2 courses per year) in upcoming assessment period. Develop a plan for corrections by Spring 2029.

5. Identification of weaknesses or deficiencies from the previous review and the status of improvements implemented or accomplished.

- A fully online A.A.S. ECE degree approved by MHEC (Maryland Higher Education Commission) in 2022 provides benefits for AAT ECE students.
- Credit for Prior Learning: The College now accepts current Child Development Associate (CDA) and CET non-credit training classes for a credit degree in ECE.
- With leadership, made efforts to increase enrollment, including new publications for the CCCPDF and introduction of the Hy Flex course modality.
- Utilize the Associate of Arts (AA) Teacher Education as a default degree for students who do not have the 3.0 GPA to be exempt from MSDE Basic Skills requirement and/or not meet the AAT ECE Cumulative GPA of 2.75.

6. Budget/position requests (list the items and the costs).

- College should focus on providing more financial incentives for students to major in Early Childhood Education.
- Mentor Teachers need appropriate compensation for hosting ECE-270 45-hour directed practicum students: 30 Mentor Teachers x \$25 gift card = \$750 per year.

- College should follow through on retrofitting K128 as a Hy Flex classroom not only for Education classes but other disciplines: \$5,000 for a microphone to improve communication with online and face-to-face students.
- College must determine appropriate compensation for Hy Flex faculty for equitable faculty load.

Signatures

Program Director/Coordinator

Date

Susan Fuller Liles

4/3/2024

Division Chair

Date

Sharon Brunner

4/18/2024

Dean, Curriculum and Assessment

Date