

**Reference Document: Career Pathway Costs in Sitka**

This document, prepared by the Sitka Early Childhood Coalition, is provided for informational purposes as a reference for the types of Career and Technical Education (CTE) and early childhood education career pathways available in Sitka. It is included to support discussion of workforce development opportunities within the community.

# Career Pathway Costs in Sitka

## Background

In October 2023, Sitka's Early Childhood Coalition (ECC) convened a childcare career pathway summit with more than 40 providers, educators, state/agency employees, parents, and students attending. Collaborating, we piloted early childhood education classes at Mount Edgecumbe High School, Sitka High School, and Pacific High School. The pathway helps students become early childhood educators, parents, and caregivers.

### **Introduction to Early Childhood Education (A105, Fall Semester 24/25)**

At MEHS, 13 students enrolled and completed this dual-enrollment course. At SHS and PHS, 16 students completed the course.

### **Child Development and Learning (A107, Spring Semester 24/25)**

21 students completed coursework at MEHS and SHS.

### **A105/A107 During the 2025/26 School Year**

Only SHS offered classes this last school year. 6 students completed the 2-class sequence. We really struggled with finding instructors, especially at MEHS.

## Collaboration

Working through the ECC, we collaborated to launch this pathway. The University of Alaska provided guidance to launch the program, paying adjunct fees the first year. The Sitka Tribe of Alaska provided funding for books and enrollment fees. The Sitka School District and local childcare providers offered observation opportunities to all students. The ECC Coalition provided a weekly forum for coloration and problem solving.

## Impact

Large numbers of students pre-registered for classes each of the two years. Final and actual enrollment depended on several factors including the final master schedule. When only a single class is offered at a single time slot, many students who want to take the course are unable to fit it in with their schedule. More courses and options are needed.

Our biggest anecdotal evidence of impact is the number of students who have reported they are "switching" to a career in early childhood education after taking these courses. Others have taken jobs at Ventures and other centers. The local school district and childcare providers have expressed the importance of developing the next generation of caregivers and see this pathway as a solution to expanded needs.

Heartfelt evidence came at a Chamber of Commerce childcare panel discussion. Two students caused tears when they explained why they were taking these courses. One student wanted to be able to better advocate for their special needs sibling in IEP meetings and other settings. The other shared that their family was preparing to become a therapeutic foster-care home and they wanted to be a good foster sibling.

## What are the costs?

Costs include adjunct instructor fees, student tuition, textbooks and workbooks, and security check fees.

### Adjunct Instructor

**\$4500 per 3 credit class at UAA. Each class is 3 credits and instructors get paid \$1500 per credit.**

The University of Alaska Anchorage absorbed adjunct instructor fees and student fees (see below) for the 2024/2025 school year. During the 2025/2026 school year, both the Sitka School District and Mount Edgecumbe applied and received a Preschool Development Grant. Only the Sitka School District used their grant. The school district supplemented the grant with funds from other sources. Mount Edgecumbe was unable to find an instructor and did not run classes.

### Student tuition

**\$25 per credit for high school students. \$75 for a three-credit class. Total depends on enrollment.**

Costs were absorbed by UAA in the first year and a PDG grant in year 2. Adults in the community cannot enroll in a dual enrollment class offered to high school students. An adult class would have a per-student \$850 tuition fee for a 3-credit class.

### Textbooks for EDEC A105 and EDEC A107

**Textbooks are approximately \$100 per book. \$35 per workbook.**

One text was used for both classes. Sitka Tribe of Alaska spent approximately \$8,500 in purchasing textbooks and workbooks for the 2024/2025 school year. These were used at all three high schools. We will inventory how many textbooks remain. Most likely no new textbooks would have to be purchased for these classes. Workbooks would have to be purchased.

Implementing new classes (EDEC 106, 108, and 242) would require purchase of additional textbooks and workbooks.

### Security Check

**\$20 per student.**

Some classes require students to have a security check. These are for classes involving field trips to centers, observations, and hands-on experiences.

## Projected Costs of Early Childhood Career Pathway Classes

|                                                                                      | Adjunct fees | Tuition           | Textbooks                             | Workbooks                                          | Security Fees                                      | TOTAL                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 2-semester sequence EDEC 105/107. 12 students in each class                          | \$9,000      | \$900             | \$300<br>(3 replacement texts)        | \$420 or more<br>(Same students take both classes) | \$240 or more<br>(Same students take both classes) | \$10,860                                 |
| Same as above w/2 sections offered per semester. 12 students in each class, 24 total | \$18,000     | \$1,800           | \$600                                 | \$840 or more                                      | \$480 or more                                      | \$21,720                                 |
| <b>Additional costs to add classes to the program.</b>                               |              |                   |                                       |                                                    |                                                    |                                          |
| Adding one new class (ex. EDEC 242) with 12 students                                 | \$4,500      | \$450             | \$1,500<br>(3 spare texts)            | \$420                                              | \$240                                              | +\$7,110<br>(Additional cost to pathway) |
| Adding new 2-semester sequence (ex. EDEC 242/108)                                    | \$9,000      | +900              | \$3,000<br>(3 spare texts each class) | \$420 or more                                      | \$240 or more                                      | +13,560<br>(Additional cost to pathway)  |
| *Adult class                                                                         | \$4,500      | \$850 per student | \$100 per student                     | \$35 per student                                   | \$20 per student if applicable                     | Depends on enrollment                    |

Sitka needs to build its capacity for adjunct professors with UAA approval to teach these classes. Generally, UAA is looking for someone with a master's degree in early childhood education, or something similar. UAA will work with potential adjuncts, advising them and reviewing their credentials for suitability.

An additional barrier is time availability. We have had qualified people unable to teach dual-credit courses during the school day because of their jobs. Evening classes for adults would be a possibility for these potential adjuncts. We recommend surveying the community for interest in early childhood classes offered in the evening.

Local funds for a career pathway would be invaluable if UAS were to develop a local certification for early childhood.