

Association of Children's Residential and Community (ACRC), in partnership with The Center for Youth Justice at Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy, and CWLA presents:

# Pathways to Organizational Excellence Certification

Information Session



[www.togetherthevoice.org/organizational-excellence](http://www.togetherthevoice.org/organizational-excellence)

# Partner Introductions



# Why an Organizational Excellence Certification?

This certification aims to help organizations approach their Organizational Excellence efforts with intention and ensure that **excellence** is:

- 1) Deeply embedded in their culture;
- 2) Reflected throughout their policies and practices;
- 3) And can endure through significant leadership and administrative changes

The 12-month certification will culminate in completing a capstone project demonstrating the organization's implementation of one of the 5 focus areas of the CLAS Standards covered through training, coaching and collaborative learning opportunities.

# Why an Organizational Excellence Certification?

This certification aims to help youth- and family-serving organizations strengthen their culture, improve teamwork, and build stronger connections with the communities they serve.

This year-long certification program supports organizations in becoming fair, community-centered, and responsive—so they can meet the real needs of their staff, youth, and families. Through hands-on training, personalized coaching, and practical tools, your team will learn how to make positive change that:

- Becomes part of your organization's everyday culture
- Shows up in your policies, practices, and decision-making
- Lasts through leadership or administrative transitions

The 12-month certification will culminate in completing a capstone project demonstrating the organization's implementation of one of the 5 focus areas of the CLAS Standards covered through training, coaching and collaborative learning opportunities.

# Certification Objectives:



**Assess** where leaders may be on their learning and commitment continuum to excellence through assessment tools and education in building a culturally & linguistically responsive organization



**Deepen** leaders' organizational knowledge & competence in the CLAS Standards through coaching, peer-sharing, and learning.



**Gain** a better understanding and strategies for implementing core principles, methods, and techniques toward building an organization that eliminates disparities and promotes health & well-being.



**Demonstrate** a commitment to developing an excellence journey within the organization for sustainability to achieve certification status.



**Embed** the principles of the CLAS Standards into the organization's culture, policies, and practices.

# Components of the Certification



An overview of the timeline for the project.

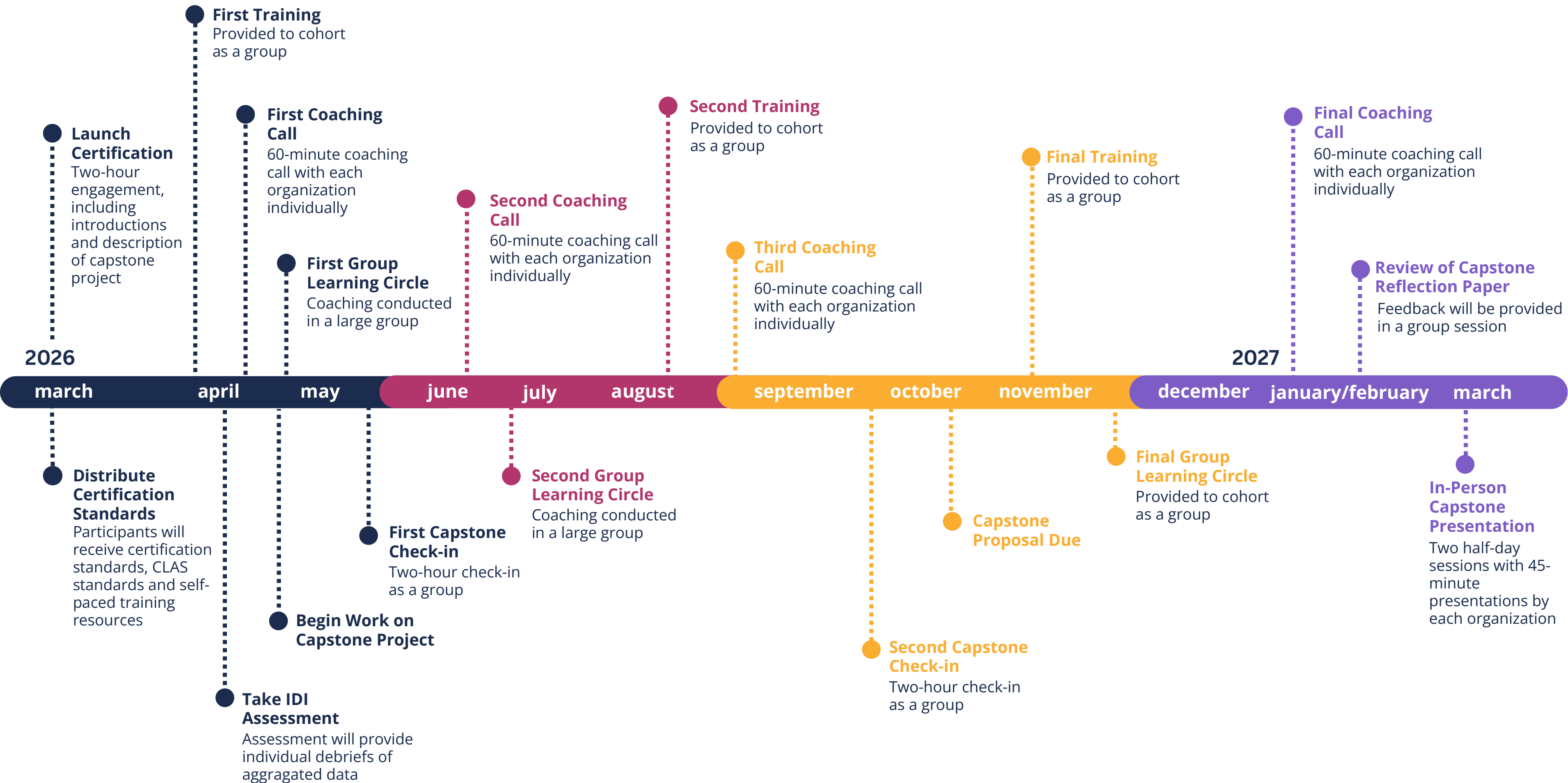


Each participating organization will have the opportunity to decide on which of the CLAS Standards they would like to focus on during the course of this project.



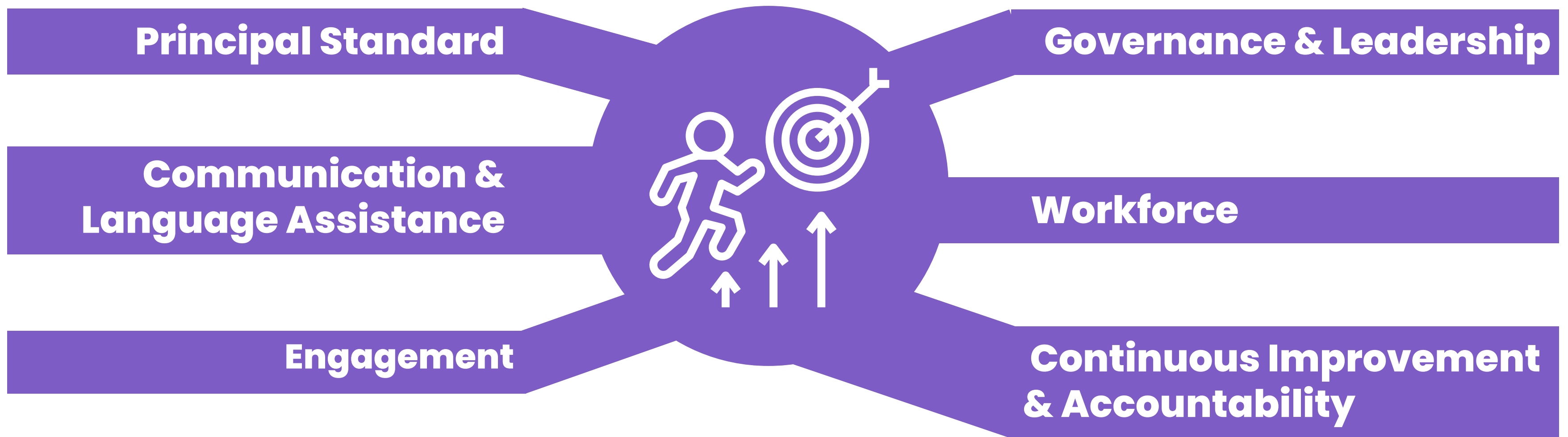
The National CLAS Standards are intended to promote health & well-being, improve quality, and help eliminate disparities by establishing a blueprint for individuals and health and human service organizations to implement culturally and linguistically appropriate services.

<https://thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/clas/standards>



# CLAS Standards

## Possible Focus Areas



The National CLAS Standards are a set of 15 action steps intended to promote health and well-being, improve quality, and help eliminate disparities by providing a blueprint for individuals and health and human service organizations to implement culturally and linguistically appropriate services.

Visit: [www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/clas/standards](http://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/clas/standards) for more details.

# Summary of Certification Timeline



## **Applications available**

**October 22, 2025**

Website: [www.togetherthevoice.org/organizational-excellence](http://www.togetherthevoice.org/organizational-excellence)



## **Launch date**

**March 31, 2026**



## **Applications due**

**January 31, 2026**



## **Certification Coaching/Training/Assessments**

**March 2026 – March 2027**



## **Organizations notified**

**February 28, 2026**



## **Final In-Person Event & Presentations**

**March 2027**

**\*NOTE:** Each organization must commit at least two staff to engaging in the certification process that will include coaching and training over a 12-month period.

# Investment

The cost for this certification is \$17,500\*, which can be paid in two installments.

- \$8,750 is due by January 31, 2025\*\*
- \$8,750 is due by February 28, 2025

## What you'll receive

- CLAS Standards & Self-paced training resources
- Three coaching calls with experts in the field and youth/family peer advocates
- Three Group Trainings
- Up to three Group Coaching Calls
- Self-Assessment
- Group Capstone Check-ins and reviews
- In-person Capstone Presentation\*
- 2-year Organizational Excellence Certification with successful completion of the 12-month project

*\*Note: Does not include travel costs associated with the in-person capstone in Washington, DC | \*\*Refundable, less a \$50 processing fee*



# Q and A



# Wrap Up & Next Steps

## Key Dates:

- **October 22, 2025: Application period opens**
- **October 29, 2025 (Noon–1 p.m. ET): Information Session #1**
- **November 18, 2025 (3–4 p.m. ET): Information Session #2**
- **December 12, 2025 (11 a.m.–noon ET): Information session #3**
- **January 31, 2026: Applications Due (first payment due)**
- **February 28, 2026: Organizations Notified (second/final payment due)**
- **March 31, 2026: Certification program launch**
- **March 2027: In-Person Event & Capstone Presentations at Georgetown University in Washington, DC**



# Contact Us

If you have questions, contact Mark Nickell,  
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*More info available here:*



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# Thank You

For Your Consideration

[www.togetherthevoice.org/organizational-excellence](http://www.togetherthevoice.org/organizational-excellence)

