

505-2-.45 MONTESSORI CERTIFICATE

Nature of Amendment(s):

Substantive
 Clarification
 Further Definition

Discussion:

It is proposed that Rule 505-2-.45 MONTESSORI CERTIFICATE be INITIATED to establish the Montessori certification structure and title that will allow qualified Montessori teachers to obtain certification.

Current/Amended Sections(s):

(1) Background. Montessori education has over 100 years of history and is practiced in more than 500 public schools across the United States. Both child-centered and highly structured, Montessori education has been shown to increase student achievement while reducing the impact of economic inequity.

(2) Purpose. The Montessori certificate is part of a modified tiered teacher certification system that provides a statewide structure to recognize Montessori teachers, and ensure students in Montessori classrooms have access to fully-implemented Montessori education. Unlike the traditional (non-Montessori) teacher certification structure, which has four tiers, the Montessori teaching structure has two tiers consisting of the Induction and Professional tiers. Holding a valid Montessori certificate:

- (a) Confirms an individual has met requirements for becoming a Montessori teacher in Georgia;
- (b) Provides a structure of support for early career Montessori teachers. An early career teacher is defined as one who is new to the profession with fewer than three (3) years of successful experience;
- (c) Supports Montessori teachers in continually developing the knowledge and skills to improve effectiveness; and
- (d) Requires teachers to meet professional learning requirements to maintain a Montessori certificate.

(3) Definitions.

(a) Montessori Accreditation Counsel for Teacher Education (MACTE) is the international standard setting and accrediting body for Montessori teacher education. The Montessori teacher education program, not the college, school, department, or other administrative unit of the institution, receives MACTE accreditation. MACTE is a member of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA) and is recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE).

(b) Montessori credential:

1. Professional certificate issued by another state, country or jurisdiction that has signed the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) Interstate Agreement;
 2. Montessori certificate or credential issued by a MACTE-accredited education program provider;
- and

3. Verification letter from a MACTE-accredited program documenting credential level, teacher education program, and date of completion.

(c) Letter of Equivalency is issued to an individual by a MACTE-accredited teacher education program and verified by MACTE, confirming after a review of the candidate's transcripts and records that the individual's Montessori teaching credential is equivalent to the credential offered by the MACTE-accredited program issuing the letter. A letter of equivalency may be submitted by a Montessori teacher whose credential was earned before the Montessori teacher education program was accredited.

(d) Induction certificate is part of Georgia's tiered teacher certification system that provides a statewide structure for the professional development of early career educators and educators new to the state of Georgia and assures the effectiveness of these educators. Unlike the traditional (non-Montessori) Induction certificate that includes four (4) pathways, the Montessori certificate is issued in Pathways 3 and 4.

(4) Montessori Fields.

- (a) Infant Toddler (birth – 3)
- (b) PK2- K (ages 2 1/2 – 6)
- (c) Elementary I Grades 1st- 3rd (ages 6 – 9)
- (d) Elementary I- II Grades 1st – 6th (ages 6 – 12)
- (e) Secondary I Grades 7th - 9th (ages 12 – 15)
 - 1. Secondary I Language Arts & Social Studies
 - 2. Secondary I Science & Mathematics
- (f) Secondary I – II Grades 7th- 12th (ages 12 – 18)
 - 1. Secondary II English
 - 2. Secondary II Social Studies
 - 3. Secondary II Science
 - 4. Secondary II Mathematics

(5) Induction Requirements.

(a) The Montessori Induction certificate is issued to individuals employed as Montessori teachers by a Georgia local unit of administration (LUA) who have less than three years of full-time, acceptable experience. Acceptable experience is outlined in GaPSC

GaPSC Rule 505-2-.25 EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS. The Montessori Induction certificate is issued as Pathway 3 and 4 as follows:

1. **Pathway Three (3):** Individuals prepared by a teacher education program accredited by Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) shall:

- (i) Hold a bachelor's degree or higher from a GaPSC-accepted accredited institution;

(ii) Complete a MACTE-accredited program and submit verification of the credential or letter of equivalency from the preparation program;

(iii) Attain a passing score on the GACE content assessment at the Induction level or higher or meet exemption requirements;

(iv) Attain a passing score on the Georgia Educator Ethics – Program Exit Assessment;

(v) Earn three (3) semester hours of college credit with a grade of “C” or higher or five (5) Georgia Professional Learning Units satisfied through a Georgia public school system or RESA in the identification and education of children who have special educational needs; and

(vi) Have the employing Georgia LUA request the certificate according to procedures outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.27 CERTIFICATION APPLICATION PROCEDURES](#).

2. **Pathway Four (4):** Individuals employed in a Georgia Montessori school / classroom while enrolled in a MACTE-accredited program shall:

(i) Hold a bachelor’s degree or higher from a GaPSC-accepted accredited institution;

(ii) Provide verification of acceptance in a Montessori teacher education program accredited by MACTE;

(iii) Pass the GaPSC Program Admission Assessment or meet exemption criteria outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.26 CERTIFICATION & LICENSURE ASSESSMENTS](#);

(iv) Pass the GACE content assessment at the Induction level or higher;

(v) Complete the Georgia Educator Ethics– Program Entry Assessment; and

(vi) Have the employing Georgia LUA request the certificate according to procedures outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.27 CERTIFICATION APPLICATION PROCEDURES](#).

(b) The Induction Montessori certificate is not issued for service fields (See GaPSC Rule [505-2-.140-.149](#)) or leadership fields (See GaPSC Rule [505-2-.153 EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP](#)).

(6) Professional Requirements.

(a) The Performance-Based Professional Montessori teaching certificate is issued in Montessori teaching fields to individuals teaching in Georgia public schools evaluated by the statewide evaluation system who meet the following requirements:

(i) Have a minimum of three (3) years of successful educator experience (as defined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-25 EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS](#)) within five (5) years of the date of application while holding an induction or professional certificate. All three (3) years must have been earned in a Georgia school with a summative performance rating of “Proficient” or “Exemplary” while being evaluated on the Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS) component of the statewide evaluation system, Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES);

(ii) Request the certificate according to procedures outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.27 CERTIFICATION APPLICATION PROCEDURES](#);

(iii) Meet Special Georgia Requirements (See GaPSC Rule [505-2-.24 SPECIAL GEORGIA REQUIREMENTS](#)); and

(iv) For those holding an Induction certificate attained through Induction Pathway Four (4), complete a MACTE-accredited teacher education program.

(b) The Standard Professional Montessori teaching certificate is intended for those teachers evaluated by a school-, district- or agency-approved evaluation system and not evaluated by the statewide evaluation system. It is issued to Montessori teachers who do not meet the requirements for the Performance-Based Professional Montessori teaching certificate but do meet the following requirements:

(i) Have a minimum of three (3) years of successful educator experience, as defined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.25 EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS](#), earned within five (5) years of the date of application. This experience must have been earned while holding an induction or professional Montessori certificate, or a non-professional out-of-state Montessori certificate that was subsequently converted to professional status in the state, field and grade level of experience;

(ii) Request the certificate according to procedures outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.27 CERTIFICATION APPLICATION PROCEDURES](#);

(iii) Meet Special Georgia Requirements (See GaPSC Rule [505-2-.24 SPECIAL GEORGIA REQUIREMENTS](#)); and

(iv) For those holding an Induction certificate attained through Induction Pathway Four (4), complete a MACTE-accredited teacher education program.

(7) Reciprocity.

(a) Individuals holding a bachelor's degree or higher from a GaPSC-accepted accredited institution and verifying a valid or expired professional Montessori certificate issued by a state signing the NASDTEC Interstate Agreement shall qualify for the Standard Professional Montessori teaching certificate by meeting the following requirements:

(i) Have three (3) or more years of successful out-of-state experience (as defined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-25 EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS](#)) earned within five (5) years of the date of application while holding a professional Montessori teaching certificate. This experience may have been earned as a Montessori classroom teacher or in an education position that required the maintenance of a valid Montessori professional teaching certificate. Educators having fewer than three (3) years of successful experience may qualify for a Montessori Induction certificate;

(ii) Pass the GACE content assessment at the Induction level or higher, or meet exemption criteria outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.24 SPECIAL GEORGIA REQUIREMENTS](#);

(iii) Meet Special Georgia requirements (See GaPSC Rule [505-2-.24 SPECIAL GEORGIA REQUIREMENTS](#)); and

(iv) Have the employing Georgia LUA request the certificate according to procedures outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.27 CERTIFICATION APPLICATION PROCEDURES](#).

(b) Teachers meeting all requirements for the Standard Professional Montessori certificate by reciprocity with the exception of the Special Education requirement will be issued a Standard Professional Montessori certificate. This requirement must be completed as part of the professional learning requirements for renewing or converting the certificate.

(8) Non-Renewable.

(a) The Non-Renewable Professional Montessori certificate may be issued at the request of an employing LUA to individuals under the following circumstances:

1. Individuals who hold a valid Professional Montessori certificate and are assigned to a different Montessori teaching field in which they do not meet certificate requirements;
2. Individuals who hold a valid professional (non-Montessori) certificate and are assigned to a Montessori teaching field in which they do not meet certificate requirements; and
3. Educators who have previously held a professional Montessori certificate but have not met renewal requirements outlined in section (15) below.

(9) Add a Field.

(a) To add a Montessori field to an existing level four (4) or higher traditional (non-Montessori) professional certificate, an individual must complete a MACTE-accredited program in the Montessori field, submit verification of the credential or letter of equivalency from the preparation program, pass the appropriate GACE content assessment in the new field, and complete all applicable Special Georgia Requirements per GaPSC Rule [505-2-.24 SPECIAL GEORGIA REQUIREMENTS](#).

(b) To add a Montessori field to an existing Montessori teaching certificate in the appropriate age group, the educator must earn a credential from a MACTE-accredited program in the new Montessori field and submit verification of the credential or letter of equivalency, pass the appropriate GACE content assessment, and complete all applicable Special Georgia Requirements per GaPSC Rule [505-2-.24 SPECIAL GEORGIA REQUIREMENTS](#).

(10) Certificate of Eligibility.

(a) Individuals not meeting the employment requirement, but who meet all other requirements for the Montessori Induction Pathway Three (3), or the Professional Montessori certificate qualify for a Georgia Certificate of Eligibility. The Georgia Certificate of Eligibility is valid for five (5) years and is intended to assist individuals seeking employment. Upon employment and request from the Georgia LUA, the individual will be issued the Montessori Induction or Professional certificate.

(b) If the Certificate of Eligibility expires without being replaced with a Montessori Induction or Professional certificate, the individual may receive a new Certificate of Eligibility upon reapplication to the GaPSC.

(c) The Certificate of Eligibility is invalidated upon issuance of a Montessori Induction or Professional certificate.

(11) Implementation.

(a) Teachers currently employed in a public Montessori classroom must hold a valid Montessori certificate by July 1, 2021.

(b) A grandfathering period is provided to protect educators currently employed in Georgia public Montessori classrooms prior to the effective date of this rule. In order to qualify for Montessori certification under this grandfathering provision, educators must meet the following conditions prior to July 1, 2018:

1. Employed in a public Montessori classroom while holding an acceptable GaPSC certificate;
2. Earned one or more years of satisfactory Montessori teaching experience, as outlined in GaPSC RULE [505-2-.25 EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS](#); and
3. Completed a Montessori diploma program outlined by the employing school system and submit verification from the employing school system at the time of application.

(c) Grandfathered Montessori educators will not be required to complete a MACTE-accredited program but must meet all other eligibility requirements.

(d) Teachers currently employed in a private Montessori classroom are eligible for the Montessori certificate upon request of the employing LUA. Experience earned to convert from an Induction Montessori to the Professional Montessori certificate must be earned from a school holding acceptable GaPSC-accreditation as outlined in GaPSC Rule 505-2-.25 EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS.

(12) Certificate Upgrade.

(a) Teachers holding a Montessori Induction Pathway 3 or Professional Montessori certificate are eligible to upgrade their certificate by meeting the requirements outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.33 CERTIFICATE UPGRADE](#). Teachers holding an Induction certificate attained through Pathway Four (4) are not eligible to upgrade to a higher certificate level until conversion to the Montessori Induction Pathway 3 or Professional Montessori certificate and meeting requirements outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.33 CERTIFICATE UPGRADE](#). Initial issuance of the Induction certificate level will be determined as outlined GaPSC [Rule 505-2-.02 CLASSIFICATION](#).

(13) Conversion to a Different Induction Pathway or Professional Montessori certificate.

(a) Teachers holding an Induction certificate attained through Pathway Four (4) may apply to convert their certificate to the Induction Pathway 3 certificate or the Professional Montessori certificate upon meeting all certification requirements.

(b) An Induction Pathway 4 certificate that is converted to the Induction Pathway 3 certificate will maintain the original expiration date.

(14) Validity.

(a) The Induction certificate is valid for three (3) years with the following exceptions:

1. If a teacher is converting from an Induction certificate attained through Pathway Four (4) to an Induction Pathway Three (3) certificate, the certificate will be issued with the same end validity date as the original; or

2. If a teacher has earned less than three (3) years of acceptable educator experience to convert to the Professional Montessori certificate, the certificate will be issued for three (3) additional years in order to meet conversion requirements.

(b) The Professional Montessori certificate is valid for five (5) years.

(c) The Non-Renewable Professional Montessori certificate issued for completion of requirements to add a field in Section (9) above is valid for three (3) years.

(d) The Non-Renewable Professional Montessori certificate issued for completion of renewal requirements is valid for one (1) year.

(15) Renewal.

(a) The Performance-Based Professional Montessori teaching certificate may be renewed by meeting the following requirements:

1. Satisfy professional learning requirements as outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.36 RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS](#);

2. Earn a minimum of two (2) “Proficient” or “Exemplary” TAPS annual performance ratings within five (5) years of the renewal date; and

3. Have the employing Georgia LUA request the certificate renewal according to procedures outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.27 CERTIFICATION APPLICATION PROCEDURES](#). Unemployed teachers may apply for renewal by having at least one (1) year of successful educator experience in a Georgia LUA, as outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.25 EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS](#), paragraph (3)(a)1, while holding a valid Georgia professional Montessori certificate.

(b) The Standard Professional Montessori teaching certificate may be renewed by meeting the following requirements:

1. Satisfy professional learning requirements as outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.36 RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS](#); and

2. Have the employing Georgia LUA request the certificate renewal according to procedures outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.27 CERTIFICATION APPLICATION PROCEDURES](#). Unemployed teachers may apply for renewal by having at least one (1) year of successful educator experience in a Georgia LUA, as outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.25 EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS](#), paragraph (3)(a)1, while holding a valid Georgia professional Montessori certificate.

(c) Teachers holding a Standard Professional Montessori teaching certificate evaluated by the statewide evaluation system will be issued a Performance-Based Professional Montessori certificate at renewal by meeting requirements outlined in (6)(a) above.

(d) Teachers holding a Montessori Induction or Professional certificate employed in a Georgia public or charter school who have received any combination of two (2) “Unsatisfactory”, “Ineffective” or “Needs Development” annual performance summative evaluations in the previous five (5)-year period shall not be entitled to a renewable certificate prior to demonstrating such performance deficiency has been satisfactorily remediated but may apply to the GaPSC for the appropriate nonrenewable certificate as defined by the GaPSC (See GaPSC Rule 505-2-.43 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION).

(16) Assessments.

(a) The assessments required for Montessori certification are outlined in GaPSC Rule 505-2-.26 CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURE ASSESSMENTS.

(17) In-Field Statement. (See GaPSC Rule 505-2-.40 IN-FIELD ASSIGNMENT). An individual holding the Montessori certificate is in-field to teach in the field and age group of issuance in a Montessori classroom. Holding the Montessori certificate is not in-field to teach in a traditional (non-Montessori) classroom.