

505-2-.22 CERTIFICATION BY STATE-APPROVED PROGRAM

Nature of Amendment(s):

☒ Substantive
☐ Clarification
☐ Further Definition

Discussion:

It is proposed that GaPSC Rule 505-2-.22 CERTIFICATION BY STATE-APPROVED PROGRAM, dated April 15, 2024, be RESCINDED and that a new rule with the same number and title be INITIATED to include the addition of a new state-required literacy assessments in compliance with The Georgia Early Literacy Act (HB 538) of 2023 and changes to both organize format and include information for clarity and consistency.

(1) Summary and Definitions: State-approved programs are professional education programs based on established state standards and delivered as traditional or non-traditional routes to certification. Such programs, usually provided by colleges/universities, school systems, Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESAs), or collaborative arrangements between any of these agencies, must be approved by the appropriate state agency in order to verify completion of certification programs. Program standards and requirements are based on preparation necessary to obtain a certificate, and state-approved programs may or may not require a specific degree. The program enrollment date impacts requirements for completion so it is essential that individuals are aware of all requirements for program completion and certification upon entry into the program.

(a) Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC)-approved programs.

1. State-approved educator preparation programs that meet standards and requirements outlined in GaPSC Educator Preparation Rules 505-3-.01 thru 505-3-.113, which include those that result in certificates as well as endorsements. A listing of GaPSC-approved programs may be found on the GaPSC web site at www.gapsc.com. Information concerning program approval standards and procedures may be found [HERE](#).

(b) GaPSC-accepted programs.

1. State-approved educator preparation programs accredited by a GaPSC-accepted accrediting agency, such as those recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE), at the time the degree is awarded. The program must be approved by the state education agency where the institution is administratively located to lead to initial licensure.

(c) Enrollment in a program.

1. For the purposes of this rule, enrollment is defined as admitted to a GaPSC-approved or GaPSC-accepted program leading to educator certification and actively participating in course work.

(2) Out-of-State Programs. The GaPSC may certify individuals who have completed state-approved educator preparation programs in any state, under the following conditions:

- (a) The educator preparation program was approved by the state approval authority in a state that approves teacher preparation programs, the program was approved for the field in which the educator completed the program, and the program held approval status during the year in which the individual completed the program.

1. In the specific field of Speech and Language Pathology, the GaPSC shall accept [ASHA](#)-approved programs that are not state-approved but are completed at GaPSC-accepted accredited institutions.

- (b) The individual has completed all state-approved program requirements and the authorized official at the program provider has verified program completion on the appropriate GaPSC form.
- (c) The program was completed in a field recognized by the GaPSC. If the program was completed in an area recognized in Georgia as an endorsement only, the individual will be eligible for the appropriate endorsement certificate in that field.
- (d) The individual has completed field experience or clinical practice including student teaching. If field experiences, clinical practice or student teaching was completed in a Georgia local unit of administration (LUA), holding acceptable certification while completing practicum requirements is mandatory and educators (mentors, cooperating teachers, educational leadership coaches/mentors, Service (S) field supervisors) who supervise the field experiences at Georgia schools shall meet requirements outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.01 REQUIREMENTS AND STANDARDS FOR APPROVING EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROVIDERS AND EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS](#). If the educator does not meet these requirements, the clinical practice or field experience does not meet Georgia certification requirements and will not be accepted.

1. The following field examples are considered closely related for the purposes of cooperating teachers for field experience, clinical practice, or student teaching:

- (i) An individual earning certification in Birth through Kindergarten may work with a cooperating teacher certified in Early Childhood Education.
- (ii) An individual earning certification in Middle Grades may work with a cooperating teacher certified in the corresponding secondary (6-12) field.
- (iii) An individual earning certification in a world language field may work with a cooperating teacher certified in any other world language field.
- (iv) An individual earning certification in Science (6-12) may work with a cooperating teacher certified in any other secondary science field (Biology, Chemistry, Earth/Space Science, or Physics), and a candidate earning certification in any of the secondary science fields may work with a cooperating teacher certified in Science (6-12).
- (v) An individual earning certification in a Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) field may work with a cooperating teacher certified in any other CTAE field.

2. Effective July 1, 2020, individuals completing field experiences/clinical practice/ culminating residency (often referred to as student teaching) in a Georgia LUA must be placed in classrooms for a minimum of one full semester or the equivalent.

- (i) A full semester is defined as 600 hours (15 weeks, 5 days per week, 8 hours per day). Accounting for illnesses, holidays, and professional development, the accepted minimum is 500 hours.

- (e) Candidates enrolled in a GaPSC-approved initial teacher certification program on or after June 1, 2025, must attempt the appropriate literacy assessment prior to program completion and must pass the appropriate literacy assessment for certification.

(3) In-State Programs. GaPSC-approved programs shall include all coursework outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.24 SPECIAL GEORGIA REQUIREMENTS](#). However, the GACE content knowledge assessment and the GACE literacy assessment, effective for educators enrolled in a GaPSC-approved educator preparation program on or after June 1, 2025, are not considered part of the approved program, but is a separate state requirement for certification. GaPSC-approved program providers may verify approved program completion for an individual who has completed all program requirements, to include the Special Georgia Requirements, the GACE content knowledge assessment, and the GACE literacy assessment aligned with the field(s) of recommendation as long as the assessment(s) were attempted. If a GaPSC-approved provider verifies program completion with attempting but not passing the assessment, the individual will not be eligible for any certificate unless requested by an employing Georgia local unit of administration (LUA). Upon such a request, a One (1)-year Induction certificate may be issued.

(4) Out-of-Country Programs. The GaPSC may certify individuals who have completed the equivalent of a GaPSC-approved educator preparation program outside the United States. The program must be in a field recognized by the GaPSC and include clinical practice / student teaching. Individuals for certification who have attended colleges or universities outside the United States must provide the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) with a detailed course-by-course credential report of college-level credit completed as outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.29 EVALUATION OF CREDIT EARNED OUTSIDE OF THE U.S.](#)

(5) Advanced Degrees. In order to qualify for a certificate level upgrade, a Georgia educator must complete an advanced degree program that meets specific quality standards outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.33 CERTIFICATE UPGRADE](#). These standards apply to all advanced degree programs, even those that are state approved.

(6) Educational Leadership.

- (a) Georgia Educational Leadership programs that lead to certification must be GaPSC-approved programs, as described in GaPSC Rules [505-3-.76 ALTERNATIVE PREPARATION FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP](#), [505-3-.77 EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM](#) and [505-2-.153 EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP](#).
- (b) Georgia applies reciprocity to initial out-of-state Educational Leadership certificate holders based on completion of a GaPSC-accepted program at level six (6) or seven (7), and also at level five (5) when the educator has at least three (3) years of successful experience in a leadership position as outlined in Rule [505-2-.153 EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP](#).

(7) Resources.

- (a) GaPSC-approved programs for all fields are listed on the GaPSC web site [HERE](#).