



Georgia Professional Standards Commission

Policy Brief, Summer 2026

2023 - 2026 Literacy Legislation: GaPSC Development, Implementation, and Monitoring

The 2023 passage of the Georgia Early Literacy Act required postsecondary students completing Georgia teacher certification programs to graduate with the knowledge and skills necessary to teach reading, serving as a call to action for the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) and all Georgia educator preparation providers. As a result of this mandate, by August 2024, Georgia teacher preparation programs were utilizing evidence-based structured literacy practices grounded in the Science of Reading to prepare individuals to teach children how to read. These practices are defined by a set of standards delineated in GaPSC Educator Preparation Rule [505-3-.03 Foundations of Reading, Literacy, and Language](#).

The Georgia Early Literacy Act of 2026 (HB1193) expanded the role of the GaPSC in evaluating the ongoing implementation of the Foundations of Reading, Literacy, and Language (FRL) standards in educator preparation programs; and established expectations for the development of a new endorsement for preparing individuals to serve as Literacy Coaches. Simultaneously, the GaPSC convened a task force charged with updating standards for the preparation of educational leaders and streamlining entry into the profession. Although the work is still underway, the Educational Leadership Task Force has developed expectations for the knowledge and skills necessary for school administrators to successfully lead literacy initiatives.

This Brief describes the development, implementation, and ongoing monitoring of the FRL standards in educator preparation programs, addresses how educational leaders will be prepared to support literacy initiatives, and describes the development of the Literacy Coaching Endorsement. The following questions are addressed:

- [Where did the FRL standards come from and how were they developed?](#)
- [How can we be sure that all Georgia teacher preparation programs are fully implementing the standards?](#)
- [How will we know pre-service teachers are learning how to utilize structured literacy grounded in the Science of Reading?](#)
- [How are school administrators being prepared to lead literacy initiatives?](#)
- [How is the Literacy Coaching Endorsement being developed and when will programs begin?](#)
- [When will we be able to see if these efforts are making a difference for Georgia children?](#)

For more information, contact GaPSC Executive Secretary, [Dr. Joseph C. Barrow, Jr.](#), or [Dr. Penney McRoy](#), Director of Educator Preparation.

Where did the FRLL standards come from and how were they developed?

The Foundations of Reading, Literacy, and Language (FRLL) standards were developed by a task force facilitated jointly by the University System of Georgia (USG) and the GaPSC. (Task force members are listed in the [Appendix](#).) From January 25 to March 21, 2023, the task force met eight times. Task force members reviewed national standards and state standards and adapted them for use in programs leading to teacher certification at all levels (birth through grade 12).

National standards reflected in the FRLL standards include those published by the International Literacy Association, the International Dyslexia Association, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children. These national standards are recognized by literacy experts as being aligned with the Science of Reading. State standards reflected in the FRLL standards include the Georgia Department of Education English Language Arts Standards for P-12 instruction and the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards published by the Department of Early Care and Learning. [Rule 505-3-.03 Foundations of Reading, Literacy, and Language](#) was formally adopted by the GaPSC in June 2023 and became effective July 1, 2023.

What happened next and how can we be sure that all Georgia teacher preparation programs are fully implementing the FRLL standards?

The work to implement the standards in Georgia teacher preparation programs began in the summer of 2023, immediately after the Rule was adopted. GaPSC staff implemented the three-phase implementation and monitoring process described below. Phase 4 represents an additional monitoring process, set to being in academic year 2027-28.

Phase 1: Preparing for Implementation, October 2023

By October 18, 2023, ¹GaPSC-approved educator preparation providers (EPPs) were required to submit to GaPSC Readiness Assessments and Action Plans for their programs.

- In Readiness Assessments, EPPs indicated the extent to which each of the FRLL standards were or were not yet addressed in courses.
- In the Action Plans, EPPs described how they would revise courses and programs of study to assure alignment to the FRLL standards, revise field and clinical experiences and candidate assessments, and train faculty on the FRLL standards.
- An overarching (administrative) Action Plan for each EPP described oversight procedures to ensure faculty in each program were trained on the new standards and completed the steps described in the program-level Action Plans.

GaPSC staff examined each Readiness Assessment and Action Plan and provided feedback to each EPP to support their next steps in the implementation process. All GaPSC-approved EPPs successfully completed Phase 1 of the implementation process.

¹GaPSC-approved EPPs include public and private colleges and universities, as well as RESAs and school districts offering the GaTAPP program or endorsements. In October 2023 and 2024, a total of 67 GaPSC-approved EPPs were required to submit FRLL reports.

Phase 2: Monitoring Implementation, October 2024

Full implementation of the FRLI Standards was required in all applicable programs by August 1, 2024. By October 23, 2024, all GaPSC-approved EPPs were required to submit the Evidence of Implementation Report, with artifacts and narratives proving, in short, that the 2023 Action Plans were indeed actualized.

- The 2024 Reports included curriculum maps showing how each of the FRLI standards were fully implemented (introduced, practiced, and mastered) in coursework throughout all programs.
- Also included in the 2024 Reports were narratives describing the following:
 - How departments and programs within the EPP were held accountable for making the changes identified through completion of the Readiness Assessment, and what systematic procedures were put in place to monitor implementation.
 - How the EPP ensured all faculty, including those who supervise student teachers, are qualified to teach and/or support the new standards, and how faculty will be provided with ongoing professional learning to support full implementation.
 - How candidate (student), program, and EPP assessment practices and protocols have been planned and implemented to ensure the standards are being implemented with fidelity.

Rather than relying solely on GaPSC staff to evaluate these reports, 51 literacy experts from across the state were trained to serve as Literacy Focused Reviewers. A rubric was developed and utilized to ensure the reviews were consistent. In a process lasting until mid-January 2025, the reviewers (facilitated and supported by GaPSC staff) examined every curriculum map and narrative, and met multiple times to discuss their findings and provide feedback to all EPPs. After the first round of reviews 82% of EPPs were found to have fully met implementation expectations. After resubmissions and a second round of reviews, by March 25, 2025, 100% of GaPSC-approved EPPs were confirmed to have fully implemented the FRLI standards.

Phase 3: Ongoing Monitoring of Implementation, beginning Fall 2025

All GaPSC-approved EPPs undergo regularly scheduled comprehensive approval reviews every seven years. As a part of the approval review process, EPPs provide evidence of meeting a total of six [Approval Standards](#). Included in the Approval Standards, are the four components of Standard 6.6 described below, specifically addressing preparation for the teaching of reading, literacy, and language.

- **6.6.1 Program of Study/Curriculum**: EPPs shall ensure candidates complete a well-articulated sequence of courses and/or experiences to address the knowledge and skills associated with the teaching of reading, as specified for all applicable programs in Rule 505-3-.03 Foundations of Reading, Literacy, and Language. EPPs are expected to provide evidence that the standards delineated in Rule 505-3-.03 are being met in coursework, and, as applicable, in field and clinical experiences.

- **6.6.2 Candidate Assessments:** EPPs shall ensure that in all applicable programs, assessment data from coursework, and field and clinical experiences, as applicable, demonstrate candidates' acquisition of the knowledge and skills delineated in Rule 505-3-.03 Foundations of Reading, Literacy, and Language.
- **6.6.3 Knowledge of Dyslexia:** EPPs shall require candidates seeking teacher certification to demonstrate knowledge of the definitions and characteristics of dyslexia and other related disorders; competence in the use of evidence-based instruction, structured multisensory approaches to teaching language and reading skills, and accommodations for students displaying characteristics of dyslexia and/or other related disorders; and competence in the use of a multi-tiered systems of support framework addressing reading, writing, mathematics, and behavior, including: (I) Universal screening; (ii) Scientific, research-based interventions; (iii) Progress monitoring of the effectiveness of interventions on student performance; (iv) Databased decision making procedures related to determining intervention effectiveness on student performance and the need to continue, alter, or discontinue interventions or conduct further evaluation of student needs; and (v) Application and implementation of response-to intervention and dyslexia and other related disorders instructional practices in the classroom setting.
- **6.6.4 Faculty Resources:** EPPs shall ensure that faculty have the knowledge and skills necessary to address the standards delineated in Rule 505-3-.03 Foundations of Reading, Literacy, and Language.

Literacy Focused Reviewers

Of the 51 individuals trained to serve as Phase 2 Literacy Focused Reviewers, 24 committed to serving on GaPSC Approval Review teams as Literacy Focused Approval Reviewers specifically focused on examining evidence related to the four literacy standards described above. One Literacy Focused Reviewer serves on every GaPSC approval review team. GaPSC staff are currently recruiting additional Literacy Focused Reviewers who will be trained in fall 2026 and begin serving on approval review teams in spring 2027.

Early Results are Positive

As of June 2026, 16 EPPs have undergone an approval review involving evaluation of the implementation of the FRLI standards. Of the 16 EPPs reviewed, only three received areas for improvement (AFIs) related to the literacy standards listed above. An AFI indicates that although the standard is met, implementation can be improved related to a particular aspect of the standard. A total of four AFIs were cited, with one EPP receiving two (one for standard 6.6.1 and one for standard 6.6.2) and the other two EPPs receiving one each (both AFIs were related to 6.6.3). The GaPSC requires EPPs to promptly address AFIs and to document evidence of their work to do so in progress reports, which are rigorously analyzed by staff and reviewed by the Commission.

In the fall of 2026, another six EPPs will be reviewed, and by 2030, all GaPSC-approved EPPs will have been reviewed against the FRLI standards as a part of their seven-year comprehensive approval review.

Phase 4: Literacy Compliance Reviews

In addition to the comprehensive approval reviews all GaPSC-approved EPPs undergo every seven years, beginning in academic year 2027-28, a Literacy Compliance Review will be conducted at the midpoint of the seven-year approval review cycle for each EPP. This will ensure that every three-and-a-half to four years, all GaPSC-approved EPPs will be reviewed on their performance related to the literacy-related standards described above. The results of all reviews (both the comprehensive reviews and literacy compliance reviews) will be published annually in a report to relevant state agency leaders and lawmakers, as required by HB1193.

As this additional review process drastically increases the workload of GaPSC staff, we are grateful that four new Education Specialist positions were funded by the legislature and approved by Governor Kemp. The recruitment process is underway, and the new Education Specialists are expected to begin in September 2026.

In addition to approval reviews, how will we know pre-service teachers are learning how to utilize structured literacy grounded in the Science of Reading?

Two other mechanisms provide assurances about the preparation of new Georgia teachers. First is the addition of a literacy assessment that must be passed to earn a Georgia Teaching certificate. Second, GaPSC Preparation Program Effectiveness Measures (PPEMs) provide an annual snapshot of GaPSC-approved EPP and program performance.

GACE Literacy Assessments

As specified by HB538, Literacy Assessments are now a required component of the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE) assessment program. To earn a Georgia Teaching certificate, individuals must pass the GACE Literacy Assessment appropriate for the grade level or subject they will teach according to the following timeline.

- Individuals beginning (enrolled and taking one or more classes) a GaPSC-approved teacher preparation program on or after June 1, 2025, must pass the appropriate GACE Literacy Assessment to earn Georgia Teacher certification.
- Individuals beginning (enrolled and taking one or more classes) an out-of-state teacher preparation program on or after June 1, 2025, who are completing field and clinical experiences in Georgia must pass the appropriate GACE Literacy Assessment to earn Georgia certification.
- Effective July 1, 2026, all out-of-state educators applying for Georgia Teaching certification must meet the literacy assessment requirement by passing the appropriate Georgia state-approved literacy assessment or by passing a GaPSC-accepted literacy assessment approved by another state.
- Georgia educators seeking to add a new teaching field to a five-year Induction or Professional teacher certificate must pass the appropriate content assessment, and, effective July 1, 2025, the appropriate literacy assessment.

Although the assessments have been available since July 1, 2025, not enough data are available for a valid analysis of performance (see the [timeline](#) below).

Preparation Program Effectiveness Measures (PPEMs)

Providing insights on EPP performance between comprehensive approval reviews, GaPSC publishes PPEMs annually on the publicly available [PPEM Dashboard](#). Currently, the measures include the GACE content assessment and surveys of first year educators and their employers. The surveys gather perceptions of preparation program quality. After adequate GACE Literacy Assessment data become available, average scores and pass rates will be incorporated into the PPEMs (see the [timeline](#) below). Prior to the pandemic, teacher observation data were included in the PPEMs, thus linking the performance of classroom teachers to their GaPSC-approved program provider. If, in the future, the Georgia Department of Education requires the statewide implementation of a teacher observation instrument, GaPSC will be able to include the resulting data in the PPEMs.

How are school administrators being prepared to lead literacy initiatives?

Although Georgia Educational Leadership programs have already begun to incorporate literacy-related expectations into their programs, the GaPSC Educational Leadership Task Force is developing standards specifically focused on developing the knowledge and skills necessary for school administrators to successfully lead literacy initiatives. These standards are part of a larger effort to update educational leadership preparation standards and streamline entry into the profession by potentially eliminating the two-tiered structure for leadership preparation and certification. As this work is still in progress, a timeline for implementation has not yet been developed.

How is the Literacy Coaching Endorsement being developed and when will programs be ready to begin?

A GaPSC task force is currently developing the Literacy Coaching Endorsement Preparation Rule. Task force members include representatives of Governor's Office of Education Workforce and Strategy (GOEWS), the Sandra Dunagan Deal Center, the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), several Georgia colleges and universities (public and private), and RESAs. The endorsement will include a competency-based component, to ensure those who earn the endorsement demonstrate both literacy knowledge and coaching skills. Approved providers will use a common assessment to measure endorsement candidates' demonstration of the knowledge and skills specified in the standards. The GaPSC Endorsement rules (preparation and certification) will be proposed for initiation by the Commission in October 2027. If the rules are adopted in December 2026, EPPs can begin applying for approval to offer the program in the fall of 2027 and programs may begin as early as spring 2028.

When will we be able to see if these efforts are making a difference for Georgia children? Is there a timeline?

Although the foundational work is complete--the new FRLI standards are being implemented in preparation programs and new GACE Literacy Assessments are available--the data necessary to inform the success of these efforts will emerge over the next three years. Consider the following timeline.

2024-25 Year 1	2025-26 Year 2	2026-27 Year 3	2027-28 Year 4	2028-29 Year 5
FRLI Standards implemented in all GaPSC-approved teacher preparation programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GACE Literacy Assessments became available July 1, 2025 Individuals entering teacher preparation programs on or after June 1, 2025, must pass the applicable GACE Literacy Assessment to earn certification Small percentage of FRLI-prepared teachers enter the workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited GACE data available from those entering programs in 2025-26 and completing in one year Increasing percentage of FRLI-prepared teachers enter the workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient GACE data available for establishing a baseline performance indicator Higher percentage of FRLI-prepared teachers enter the workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Second year of GACE data available for analysis The earliest point at which student testing data should be considered as an indicator of EPP/program success (An adequate number of students will have been taught the previous year by FRLI-prepared teachers.)

Notes:

- Depending upon the program type and degree level, it takes anywhere from one to two years to complete a GaPSC-approved teacher preparation program.
 - Bachelor’s degree: Candidates are admitted to teacher education programs at the beginning of the junior year.
 - Post-baccalaureate programs (e.g., Master of Arts in Teaching, Certification-only, GaTAPP): Candidates typically complete programs in 12 to 18 months.
- GACE Literacy Assessments will be taken near the end of a program. State-approved program providers determine when a candidate has sufficient preparation to attempt the appropriate literacy assessment.
- GaPSC data indicate that roughly 86% of GA program completers are hired in a Georgia public school the academic year immediately following completion of a program.

Appendix

2023 GaPSC/USG Reading Task Force Roster	
Dr. Susan Adams	Deputy Director Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
Dr. Debbie Alexander	Executive Director CSRA RESA
Dr. Scott Ardoin	Associate Dean of Research & Graduate Education University of Georgia
Mrs. Bernadette Ball-Oliver	Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Savannah Chatham County Public Schools
Dr. Linda Bradley	Professor of Literacy Education Georgia College & State University
Dr. Beth Day-Hairston	Dean, College of Education and Professional Studies Fort Valley State University
Dr. Mike Dishman	Dean, College of Education University of West Georgia
Dr. Kristian Douglas	Assistant Professor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction Clark Atlanta University
Dr. Adrian Epps	Kennesaw State University Dean, Bagwell College of Education
Dr. Robert Griffin	Assistant Professor of Literacy Education and Literacy Programs Coordinator, College of Education University of West Georgia
Ms. Kristi Holloway	Growing Readers Design Team Northeast Georgia RESA
Dr. Brandi Kenner	CEO/Executive Director, Choice-filled Lives Network and Senior Advisor, Sandra Dunagan Deal Center
Dr. Ryan Lee-James	Chief Academic Officer/Director Rollins Center
Dr. Jennifer Lindstrom	Statewide Dyslexia Coordinator, Georgia Department of Education and Associate Professor, University of Georgia
Dr. Laura Smith	Senior Associate Dean, College of Education University of West Georgia
Mrs. Amelia Snellgrove, Ed.S.	Affiliate Professor Thomas University
Mrs. Susan Stephens	Lecturer of Reading in Elementary Education Georgia Southwestern State University
Mrs. Bonnie Tomberlin	ELA Coordinator & SI Specialist Middle Georgia RESA
Dr. Arianne Weldon	Strategic Innovation Manager Georgia Family Connection Partnership (Get Georgia Reading)

Task Force Facilitators: Dr. Cynthia Bolton-Gary, USG and Dr. Penney McRoy, GaPSC