



GaPSC Quarterly Highlights

2nd Quarter, 2024

The mission of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) is to build the best prepared, most qualified, and most ethical education workforce in the nation. This document highlights progress and actions of this state agency during second quarter 2024.

A Message from Matt Arthur

What an exciting time for Georgia as the focus on literacy continues across the state! As noted in our previous *GaPSC Quarterly Highlights*, GaPSC has already begun implementing the requirements of the HB528, Georgia's Early Literacy Act, and has made significant progress toward meeting them. We appreciate your ongoing input and involvement in this collaborative work to ensure effective literacy education.

As a reminder, all state-approved educator preparation program providers (EPPs) submitted Action Plans in Fall 2023 specifying how the [Foundations of Reading, Literacy, and Language Rule](#) standards will be fully implemented by August 2024. In October 2024, all state-approved teacher preparation programs will submit reports to GaPSC providing evidence of implementation. Beginning in Fall 2025, all state-approved teacher preparation programs will be reviewed against the [Foundations of Reading, Literacy, and Language Rule](#) standards in regularly scheduled approval reviews. Candidate performance data aligned to the standards will be required for approval.

To assist EPPs, GaPSC continues to provide multiple forums (via webinars) for all approved program providers to share literacy practices. Webinar topics are suggested to us by program providers based on their professional learning needs. EPPs can learn more about these discussions by contacting their GaPSC Education Specialist.

GACE Transition: Your Assistance is Needed

We are less than one year out from substantive changes to our GACE assessment program, in which every GACE assessment will change. Please be sure to stay up to date on our progress through the *Latest on GACE* communications posted at [GaPSC - Latest on GACE](#).

We need your help to communicate the following to all educators:

- Until July 1, 2025, the current GACE program, including the registration process and testing calendar, will remain the same. Because scores from tests offered by different test suppliers are not comparable, examinees must pass all parts of an assessment with the same testing supplier for that assessment to count toward certification. Passing scores on tests within an assessment cannot be split between the two suppliers. For example, an examinee cannot pass the Elementary Education Test 1 with ETS and expect to take Elementary Education Test 2 with ES to get credit for completing the Elementary Education GACE assessment. Additional details about the transition dates for specific assessments will be forthcoming.
- **Georgia has a customized assessment program, meaning it is developed by Georgia educators and those who prepare Georgia educators and is aligned with Georgia's standards. We encourage certified educators and those who prepare educators to apply or nominate others to serve on GACE development, fairness review, and standard setting committees. Full information, along with a link to complete and submit an application and/or nominate colleagues, is available at [GACE Recruitment \(nesinc.com\)](#).**

By July 1, 2025, all GACE teaching field content assessments will be aligned with the science of reading and measure different levels of knowledge and application of the teaching of reading appropriate for the preparation field.

At the start of this new academic year, I thank you not only for the work you do each and every day, but also for your collaborative partnership with us, which we greatly value. Each of you has such an important and impactful role in ensuring effective education in Georgia, and we remain committed to supporting you.

Matt

Reminders

Below are reminders worth noting:

Certification

- Beginning July 1, 2024, Waiver certificates will be issued for one year only and will not be extended.
- Educators should utilize the [GaPSC Certificate Upgrade Advisor](#) prior to enrolling in an advanced degree program for a certificate level upgrade to ensure the selected program leads to certification.
- Charter/Strategic Waiver districts are advised to use their flexibility to waive certification when possible until educators meet requirements to qualify for a Provisional or other type certificate.
- Waiving certification using a charter/strategic waiver requires the educator to hold a Clearance certificate, which requires a passing score on the GACE Educator Ethics Assessment (Test Code 360). Requesting a Paraprofessional License for these educators and placing them in a teaching position to avoid the ethics assessment is out of compliance and unethical. We will be contacting districts using this practice and closely monitoring their submissions to our office.
- Candidates completing clinical practice in a Georgia school must hold a Pre-Service certificate before beginning field and clinical experiences, unless they hold a valid Professional, Induction, Provisional, Permit, or Waiver certificate. A candidate who is employed as a teacher of record while holding only a Clearance certificate must also hold a Pre-Service certificate, or their clinical practice may not be accepted for certification. Updated guidance is in development.

Educator Preparation

- [GaPSC Rule 505-3-.01](#) now specifies that EPPs must enter data in two TPMS fields--Clinical Practice Beginning Date and Cooperating Teacher Cert ID--by September 30 (Fall semester) and February 28 (Spring semester). These fields apply to those candidates participating in their culminating clinical practice, and the reporting deadlines are effective immediately (paragraph (3) (c) 8. (ii), p. 9). This information will be monitored and used to inform EPPs of any actions needed to ensure candidates are properly placed and credentialed.
- [GaPSC Rule 505-3-.01](#) also requires EPPs to enter in TPMS or NTRS all candidates beginning programs in summer and fall semesters by October 31 and all candidates beginning programs in spring semester by March 31. This requirement applies to all programs, including Endorsements.

Ethics

- GaPSC's Ethics Division published the "2024-25 Avoiding Missteps: The Code of Ethics for Educators" training PowerPoint to assist EPPs, school districts, and schools as they provide preparation/professional learning regarding the Georgia Code of Ethics. This resource is available at https://www.gapsc.com/Ethics/Ethics_Resources.aspx
- GaPSC's Video Series was expanded to include four new videos on Standards 1-4 of the Code of Ethics. These instructional videos are available at [GaPSC Video Series](#). Videos on Standards 5-10 will follow.
- If an applicant checks 'Yes' on a Personal Affirmation Question (PAQ), the applicant has 45 days to provide the required documentation to the Ethics Division; otherwise the applicant will need to reapply. Any subsequent application will trigger an investigation into the original issue, as well as any new issues. Please be aware of and stay in contact with applicants in your district who are not responsive to inquiries from the Ethics Division.
- For the 2024-25 school year, an educator who wishes to terminate a contract for the upcoming school year must submit a letter of resignation or request to be released from the contract by June 1, 2024. A *Guidelines for Breach of Contract* document regarding Standard 9: Professional Conduct of the Code of Ethics for Educators is available on GaPSC's website, under Ethics Resources. Note that if a system releases an educator from a contract, the educator does not need to be reported.
- Educators who have had their certificates revoked, denied, or suspended are not allowed to work in the school in any capacity (sub, volunteer, para, aide). It is the responsibility of the superintendent/designee to ensure such individuals are not employed or serving in any capacity in their district.
- Schools can request consent orders and case summaries on educators who have had a disciplinary action with the GaPSC.

Assessment

- As shared in this issue's *Message From Matt Arthur*, we are looking for educators and those who prepare educators to assist with GACE development. The link to the application to apply or nominate others to serve is available at [GACE Recruitment \(nesinc.com\)](https://www.gapsc.com/Commission/Recruitment/Recruitment.aspx).
- Additional details about the transition dates for specific assessments will be forthcoming. To stay updated on the GACE program, please visit the [Latest on GACE](#) page on our website.

Policy Changes

At the March 14, 2024, Commission meeting, proposed Educator Preparation rules were initiated. These rules were adopted May 9, 2024, and became effective June 15, 2024. Below is a summary of these rules actions.

Educator Preparation

- [505-3-.01 REQUIREMENTS AND STANDARDS FOR APPROVING EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROVIDERS AND EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS](#) was amended to clarify candidates are responsible for applying for the Pre-Service Certificate; to add dates by which EPPs must enter in TPMS the beginning of clinical practice and supervising teacher Cert ID; to revise the definition of LUA to make it consistent with the definition used in Certification Rules; and to make non-substantive updates in terminology.
- [505-3-.76 ALTERNATIVE PREPARATION FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM](#) was amended to clarify determination of leadership positions, to remove references to guidelines, and to make capitalization and other non-substantive adjustments.

GaPSC current and proposed rules are available at <https://www.gapsc.com/Commission/Rules/home.aspx>. All Commission meeting minutes are available at <https://www.gapsc.com/Commission/CommissionInfo/Minutes.aspx>.

Enhancements

The following are examples of second-quarter GaPSC actions aimed at enhancing the quality of our service:

- Sessions were conducted at statewide and national convenings to share information about Georgia's Safe Schools Act (pursuant to HB147), in which GaPSC partnered with Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security (GEMA/HS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Georgia Public Safety Training Center (GPSTC), Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), and Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) to create the School Safety and Anti-Gang Endorsement. This endorsement provides educators and school personnel with online and in-person training in multidisciplinary best practices for promoting and preserving safe schools and for identifying and deterring youth gangs.
- *A Guidance for Interpreting and Implementing Rule 505-3-.01 Requirements and Standards for Approving Educator Preparation Providers and Educator Preparation Programs* (Rule Effective date June 15, 2024) was published and is available at [505 3 .01 Guidance and Implementation Timeline v7 effective June 2024.pdf \(gapsc.com\)](#).
- In addition to conducting sessions at statewide conferences, GaPSC staff provided multiple professional learning and technical assistance events to assist school districts, schools, and EPPs as they work with their in-service educators, and EPP faculty as they work with their pre-service educator candidates. In total, GaPSC presented to over 1,032 individuals during second quarter.

Examples of GaPSC Support and Professional Learning Events 2nd Quarter, 2024

Certification

- 1 HR Presentation
- 2 EPP Presentations
- 3 School District Presentations

Educator Preparation

- 2 GaTAPP Provider Meetings
- 1 HR Directors Presentation
- 22 EPP Presentations
- 1 Technical Assistance Webinar (Foundations of Reading, Literacy, and Language Implementation)
- 1 Orientation to GaPSC Webinar for New EPP Personnel
- 11 Data Conversations with EPPs
- 13 Approval Review Orientations

Ethics

- 8 New Teacher, Back-to-School Training Events

Assessment

- 1 GACE Presentation
- 1 Stakeholder Meeting
- 1 GaPSC Updates Session

Support by the Numbers

During the second quarter of calendar year 2024, GaPSC:

- Answered 10,861 certification calls, totaling 17,952 year to date (YTD)
- Responded to 15,280 certification emails, totaling 26,698 YTD
- Opened 28,884 certification cases, totaling 62,366 YTD
- Completed 27,447 certification cases, totaling 60,556 YTD
- Completed 590 ethics cases, totaling 1,124 YTD

Between April 1 and June 30, 2024, GaPSC approved one new initial preparation program and two new endorsement programs. During this quarter, work was conducted on new or continuing approval reviews for a total of three program providers.

Need Assistance?

The [GaPSC website](#) provides helpful, detailed information. If you don't find the answers you need on the website, the following contact information may be helpful:

- [Certification](#): Please use the online contact form [here](#).
- [Educator Preparation](#): EPPs are asked to contact their education specialist.
- [Ethics](#): Contact information is provided [here](#).
- [Assessment](#): Contact information is provided [here](#).