



GaPSC Quarterly Highlights

4th Quarter, 2024

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

From Dr. Joseph C. Barrow, Jr.

When I began my new role as Executive Secretary at the GaPSC last month, two insights immediately emerged. First, I came to even further appreciate the important role GaPSC plays in supporting the educator pipeline across the professional continuum and in a highly collaborative way. Critical is continuing efforts to innovate and streamline processes, involve educational partners, including P12 districts and schools, educator preparation providers (EPPs), RESAs, other state agencies, and educational organizations. In addition, I knew I was very fortunate to inherit an excellent GaPSC staff who is keenly focused on exceptional service, strong collaboration, and a commitment to continuous improvement. I am very fortunate and grateful to serve with all educational partners and our staff in this shared, important work.

We all know a viable educator pipeline is critically important to ensure effective education in Georgia for our current and future students. One of the biggest challenges we have as a profession is attaining effective school staffing – ensuring we have schools fully staffed with well-prepared, qualified, ethical, and effective teachers, leaders, service, and support personnel – and those that will stay. We must do this work together as we face these challenges, which I prefer to call “opportunities.” Building on the trust you have with us is important to me. Should we as an agency need to make adjustments over time, we will “make haste, slowly” and, as author Stephen Covey notes, “make changes at the speed of trust.”

In these highlights, you will see several updates and reminders. We do ask you share this information in and across your sphere(s) of influence. Please pay special attention to the following:

- The GACE Transition and Literacy Assessment Policy is now posted at [GaPSC - Latest on GACE](#). We greatly appreciate those who served on a GACE Development or Fairness Review Committee in Fall 2024. Consider serving on a standard setting GACE committee this Spring.
- Learn more about the new SaaS solution coming in Spring 2026.
- Read the latest literacy updates, especially regarding EPPs’ Evidence of Implementation Reports.
- Enjoy the ten videos on each of the Code of Ethics standards now available on [GaPSC’s Video Series](#).

In closing, I have served public education over four decades and have had many experiences in varying roles at the local school and district level, as well as serving in an educational organization. I embrace this opportunity and responsibility to continue to serve education in a different role working closely with you as educational partners. Thank you for your trust, and please let us know how we can assist you.

Sincerely,
Joseph C. Barrow, Jr., Ed. D.
Executive Secretary

Reminders

Certification

- The Certification Division is currently working on a process to reflect completion of the Literacy Training legislative requirement on educators' files so building and system leaders can easily identify those who meet requirements.
- The School Safety and Anti-Gang Endorsement is a no cost, self-paced program covering best practices for promoting and preserving safe schools and for identifying and deterring young gangs available to any individual working in your school building. More information is available [here](#).
- As a reminder, educators holding a Provisional certificate enrolled in a GaPSC-approved endorsement program will not be eligible to add the field until conversion of the certificate to a Five-Year Induction or Professional certificate. Permit holders are not eligible to add endorsement fields, with the following exceptions: Permit holders in world language fields may add the ESOL endorsement; Permit holders in Drama and Audio/Video Technology & Film may add the Dramatic Writing Micro-Endorsement; and Permit holders in teaching fields, with the exception of JROTC, may add the Online Teaching endorsement.

Educator Preparation

- New standards aligned with the science of reading have been incorporated in all Georgia teacher preparation programs this year. This includes college and university programs, as well as GaTAPP programs, Literacy Specialist programs, and Reading endorsements. In mid-February, all GaPSC-approved program providers received feedback on the Evidence of Implementation Reports they submitted in October 2024, which indicated all 67 met either all or most expectations. Those that did not meet all expectations are submitting follow-up reports, and GaPSC staff will ensure all expectations are met.
- Ongoing monitoring of implementation of science of reading standards will occur through the GaPSC approval review process. Beginning in Fall 2025, all GaPSC approval reviews will require evidence that teacher candidates are meeting the FRL standards appropriate for their field of preparation.
- Individuals being prepared for leadership roles are also learning how to support evidence-based practices for the teaching of reading.
- Plans are progressing for the Teacher Pipeline Summit, set for April 23, 2025, at Georgia College and State University. Supported by the Governor's Office, this event is an outgrowth of SB88 (2021) and the GaPSC HBCU Collaborative, which has been in place since 2018. Input gathered from multiple stakeholders across the state on existing recruiting efforts, barriers to entering the profession, and teacher attrition will inform Summit participants, who will identify actions they can implement in their local settings to promote the profession and recruit and retain more males and educators of color. Ongoing work will culminate in a plan for an awareness campaign and a statewide, multi-year teacher recruitment plan.
- Over 100 new GaPSC Approval Reviewers will be trained this year, with the first of two training sessions beginning in March. GaPSC staff appreciate these volunteers representing universities, RESAs, and school districts from across the state who give of their time and expertise to participate in the approval review process.

Ethics

- Educators have until June 1st to leave their contract for the upcoming school year (2025-2026).
- Definitions, common violations, scenarios, and takeaways for each Georgia Code of Ethics Standard are now available [GaPSC's Video Series](#). These prevention tools are designed to help avoid ethical missteps.

Assessment

- The [GACE Transition and Literacy Assessment policy](#) is now available.

- The last administration of ETS content assessments (teaching, service, or Educational Leadership Tier I) is June 15, 2025. Not all assessments are offered on that date. More information about the transition from ETS to ES is available [here](#).
- It is not too late to serve on the GACE standard setting committee. Certified educators and those who prepare certified educators are encouraged to apply to serve.

Policy Changes

At the December 9, 2024, Commission meeting, proposed Certification and Educator Preparation rules were adopted and became effective January 1, 2025. A summary of the actions for these rules is available in [GaPSC's Final Notice of Effective Rules](#).

Proposed Certification and Educator Preparation rule changes were previewed for Commissioners at the December 9, 2024, meeting. On January 9, 2025, these proposed rules were initiated. The proposed rules are available in [GaPSC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking](#). Commissioners will consider adoption of these rules at the March 13, 2025, Commission meeting.

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 GaPSC actions aimed at enhancing the quality of our service:

- Under development is a unified software as a service, or SaaS, solution specific to educator certification and ethics. GaPSC has partnered with Systems Automation and the Georgia Technology Authority in this work. Launching in Spring 2026, this new, user-friendly solution will replace many of GaPSC's current systems, bringing all under a unified, integrated platform. An informative, brief video is available at [SaaS Solution 2026](#).
- Promotion of Georgia's School Safety and Anti-Gang Endorsement continued. 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. More information is available at [GaPSC - School Safety and Anti-Gang Endorsement](#).
- 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 1,798 individuals during fourth quarter.

Support by the Numbers

During the fourth quarter of calendar year 2024, GaPSC:

- Answered 5,886 certification calls, totaling 34,271 year to date (YTD)
- Responded to 10,840 certification emails, totaling 54,698 YTD
- Opened 14,050 certification cases, totaling 100,608 YTD

- Completed 14,595 certification cases, totaling 100,548 YTD
- Completed 445 ethics cases, totaling 2,147 YTD

Between October 1 and December 31, 2024, GaPSC continued approval for 2 existing programs, and approved 4 new initial preparation programs and 1 new endorsement program. During this quarter, work was conducted on new or continuing approval reviews for a total of 6 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](#).