Georgia Professional Standards Commission

Distance Learning Guidance Document

Rule 505-3-.01 Supplement

March 2021

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Purpose

The purpose of this guidance document is to provide support for EPPs as they implement the change in rule 505-3-.01, which requires that candidates **demonstrate** the specialized knowledge and skills necessary for effective teaching in a distance-learning environment.

GaPSC-approved educator preparation programs are required to provide evidence they are meeting specific technology standards. Do your pre-service graduates feel prepared to use technology effectively in their classroom on their first day of in-service teaching?

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in school closings across the world. Globally, over 1.2 billion children were out of the classroom. As a result, education changed dramatically, with the rise of e-learning, whereby teachers began to teach remotely and on digital platforms. Many changes caused by COVID-19 are here to stay and online learning is expected to persist post-pandemic.

With the increased investment in infrastructure and classroom technology by school districts nationwide, the use of technology in teaching can no longer be an afterthought in lesson and unit planning. Therefore, teacher preparation programs must ensure instruction focuses on the active use of technology. To meet this aim, coursework should go beyond simply viewing presentations or slides and provide pre-service teachers opportunities to use technology in ways that allow for active engagement. Additionally, teacher preparation program faculty members need their own experiences with the meaningful use of technology to model best practices in their courses.

Educator preparation providers must take a new look at learning goals and related curricula in preparation programs to assure teacher candidates are prepared to effectively use technology for teaching and learning. To successfully prepare teachers for effectively integrating technology, EPPs must:

- Provide teacher candidates with the knowledge and skills they need to be proficient with integrating technology into the learning experiences they plan.
- Design learning experiences that equip the next generation of teachers with the skills required to teach 21st century students in a variety of media.
- Reflect the current educational technology used in today's P-12 schools, so teachers arrive confident, experienced, and ready to lead their students to effectively use those technologies.

There are currently two expectations for EPPs to demonstrate that candidates can effectively implement appropriate use of technology in their practice. The first expectation is that technology is a cross-cutting theme of the Georgia Standards for the Approval of Educator Preparation Providers and Educator Preparation Programs (2016). Technology is found in multiple components of the approval standards, and candidates are expected to demonstrate their use of it. In addition, technology is woven throughout the InTASC Standards. This document will provide an overview of those two expectations and provide additional resources that might be helpful for EPPs as they strive to best train their candidates in the use of technology.

Technology in the Program Approval Standards

Technology is a cross-cutting theme across all of the Georgia Standards For The Approval Of Educator Preparation Providers And Educator Preparation Programs (2016). This means that instead of being a standard on its own, it is threaded throughout multiple standards:

> Standard 1: "Providers ensure that candidates model and apply technology standards as they design, implement, and assess learning experiences to engage students and improve learning and enrich professional practice" (p. 4).
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> Standard 2: "Partners co-construct mutually beneficial P-12 school and community arrangements for clinical preparation, including technology-based collaborations" (p. 10).
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> Standard 2: "Clinical experiences, including technology-enhanced learning opportunities, are structured to have multiple, performance-based assessments at key points…to demonstrate candidates' development of the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions…associated with a positive impact on the learning and development of all P-12 students" (p. 10-11).
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> Standard 3: "Providers present multiple forms of evidence to indicate candidates' developing content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and the integration of technology in all of these domains" (p. 16).

These standards provide guidelines for EPPs to ensure that candidates in each program infuse technology into lesson plan development in coursework, fieldwork, and clinical practice, and they help EPPs answer these questions:

- How does the EPP collaborate with partners to provide expertise on new technology in professional development for teachers in partner schools?
- How do partners collaborate with the EPP to provide expertise on new technology to candidates in coursework, fieldwork, or clinical practice?
- What performance assessments does the EPP use to measure candidate proficiencies in technologies used at clinical partner sites?

Candidates need experiences during their preparation to become proficient in applications of digital media and technological capabilities. They should have opportunities to develop the skills and dispositions for accessing online research databases, digital media, and tools, and to identify research-based practices that can improve their students' learning, engagement, and outcomes. They should know why and how to help their students access and assess critically the quality and relevance of digital academic content. Preparation experiences should allow candidates to demonstrate their abilities to design and facilitate digital or connected learning, mentoring, and collaboration. They should encourage use of social networks as resources for these purposes and to help identify digital content and technology tools for P-12 students' learning. Candidates should help their students gain access to what technology has to offer.

How can EPPs demonstrate that technology is infused across all programs?

- EPPs can create a curriculum map that shows program-deep and program-wide learning expectations, including frequent and required practice with technology applications by teacher candidates.
- EPPs can describe how they train faculty. Given that providers are teaching digital natives, faculty members must be able to demonstrate best practices that go beyond theory.
- EPPs must examine their current teacher observation rubric to be used in a digital learning environment. They can conduct virtual observations and analyze the data. What do these data say about the ability of your pre-service teachers to teach effectively in an online environment?
- EPPs can examine how they assess candidate digital lesson planning, distance learning instruction, and assessment. What performance assessments does the EPP use to measure candidate proficiencies in technologies used at clinical partner sites? What data can be gathered from current rubrics, and how might those be revised?
- EPPs can consider embedding the Online Teaching Endorsement into initial teacher preparation programs.

It is also important to note that diversity is the second cross-cutting theme threaded throughout the program approval standards. Technology and digital learning in our schools can efficiently bring quality education to all P-12 students. It can address the inequitable access to essential learning technology resources in the home and the community that has too frequently been evident in schools serving diverse and economically disadvantaged students. When that inequity persists, there are profound implications for the educational and economic opportunities available for our youth. Candidates need to know how to assess specific technological inequities experienced by their students, and identify and undertake strategies that improve P-12 students' access to, and skills in, using these resources. This shows how the cross-cutting themes of Diversity and Technology converge (CAEP, 2020).

Technology in the InTASC Progressions

Educator Preparation Providers already ensure that candidates develop an understanding of the InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards at the appropriate progression level by program completion. EPPs are encouraged to become familiar with the how technology is woven throughout the progressions and the minimal expectations for teacher candidates at the end of their training. Teacher candidates are prompted to think about the purposeful integration of technology through the following InTASC standards:

- **Standard 3 (Learning Environments):** The teacher promotes responsible learner use of interactive technologies to extend the possibilities for learning locally and globally. The teacher knows how to use technologies and how to guide learners to apply them in appropriate, safe, and effective ways. The teacher provides opportunities for learners to use interactive technologies responsibly.
- **Standard 4 (Content):** The teacher uses supplementary resources and technologies effectively to ensure accessibility and relevance for all learners.
- **Standard 5 (Application of Content):** The teacher understands how to use digital and interactive technologies for efficiently and effectively achieving specific learning goals.

- **Standard 6 (Assessment):** The teacher continually seeks appropriate ways to employ technology to support assessment practice both to engage learners more fully and to assess and address learner needs.
- **Standard 7 (Planning for Instruction):** The teacher integrates technology resources into instructional plans.
- **Standard 8 (Instructional Strategies):** The teacher engages learners in using a range of learning skills and technology tools to access, interpret, evaluate, and apply information. The teacher understands how content and skill development can be supported by media and technology and knows how to evaluate these resources for quality, accuracy, and effectiveness. The teacher helps learners use a variety of sources and tools, including technology, to access information related to an instructional objective. S/he helps students learn to evaluate the trustworthiness of sources and to organize the information in a way that would be clear to an authentic audience. The teacher is committed to exploring how the use of new and emerging technologies can support and promote student learning.
- **Standard 9 (Professional Learning and Ethical Practice):** The teacher advocates, models, and teaches safe, legal, and ethical use of information and technology including appropriate documentation of sources and respect for others in the use of social media. The teacher accesses information and uses technology in safe, legal and ethical ways. The teacher follows established rules and policies to ensure learners access information and technology in safe, legal and ethical ways.
- **Standard 10 (Leadership and Collaboration):** The teacher uses technology and other forms of communication to develop collaborative relationships with learners, families, colleagues and the local community (CCSSO, 2013, p. 21 - 46).

“Learning environments can be created in varied settings, and the traditional classroom environment itself can be stretched to become more experiential and technology-rich. Technology can engage learners with experts and fellow learners around the world, providing access to authentic problems and real-world applications The development of technology-enriched learning environments can enable learners to pursue their individual curiosities and become active participants in setting their own educational goals, managing their own learning, and assessing their own progress” (CCSSO, 2013, p. 50).

Recommendations and Resources for EPPs

ONE

Advancing Educational Technology in Teacher Preparation: Policy Brief: The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) produced this policy brief in December, 2016. "As schools of education provide meaningful integration of technology into teacher preparation programs, and provide sustained professional development for faculty, EPPs must work to ensure that every new teacher is prepared to select and use the most appropriate tools to support transformative teaching and learning" (USDOE, 2016, p. 5).

> **Mission:** Our students deserve to have teachers, including novice teachers, who are fully prepared to meet their needs. In today's technology rich world, that means educators need to be prepared to meaningfully incorporate technology into their practice immediately upon entering the classroom. Our nation's motivated and committed pre-service teachers deserve to be trained by faculty using technology in transformative ways that thoughtfully support and measure learning gains.
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> Faculty at schools of education across the country should operate with a common language and set of expectations for effective and active use of technology in Prekindergarten-grade 12 (P-12) and at postsecondary education levels. Further, schools of education should work with P-12 schools and school districts to provide meaningful opportunities for pre-service teachers, in-service teachers, school and district leadership, and faculty to co-learn and collaborate to better understand and use technology as a tool to transform teaching and learning experiences for learners of all ages. Given the rapid pace at which technology evolves, faculty need regular opportunities to both refresh their capacity and share innovative tools and strategies with other professors and teachers in the field to ensure their technology use is contributing to learning and achievement.
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> The U.S. Department of Education believes it is important that all programs responsible for pre-service teacher training prepare all graduates to effectively select, evaluate, and use appropriate technologies and resources to create experiences that advance student engagement and learning.1 We call upon leaders of teacher preparation programs to engage in concerted, programmatic shifts in their approach to pre-service teacher preparation (USDOE, 2016, p. 4).

Purpose: The purpose of this policy brief is to:

- Identify key challenges and solutions to the effective integration of technology in teacher preparation;
- Provide guiding principles on how to move the field toward effective integration of technology in teacher preparation programs; and
- Identify areas of opportunity and collaboration for stakeholders across the field (USDOE, 2016, p. 6).

Four Guiding Principles: The four guiding principles developed by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Technology (OET) are:

- Focus on the active use of technology to enable learning and teaching through creation, production, and problem-solving.

- Build sustainable, program-wide systems of professional learning for higher education instructors to strengthen and continually refresh their capacity to use technological tools to enable transformative learning and teaching.
- Ensure pre-service teachers' experiences with educational technology are program-deep and program-wide, rather than one-off courses separate from their methods courses.
- Align efforts with research-based standards, frameworks, and credentials recognized across the field (USDOE, 2016, p.9).

TWO

Technology Infusion as a Goal - Technology Integration vs. Technology Infusion: What's the Difference (Borthwick, Foulger & Graziano, 2020)?

As EPPs strive to adjust their teaching and learning models, technology cannot be viewed as an option or add-on. It must be seen as a necessity across the curriculum. Program-deep and program-wide learning expectations including frequent practice with technology applications by teacher candidates are required.

An infusion approach, where technology is addressed throughout an entire teacher preparation program—from beginning to end—brings methods courses, practica, student teaching, and even liberal arts and sciences content faculty and PK-12 mentors into this framework for scaffolding candidate development.

Technology Integration: Any learning experience where technology is seamlessly used by educators (PK–20) and/or learners within the context of a learning process and in a manner that enhances the experience and/or outcome in some way(s). A PK–12 example of technology integration might include sixth graders using probes during their science class to import data to a spreadsheet, then analyzing the data and generating a bar graph to report their findings. An example of technology integration in a preparation program might include teacher candidates enrolled in a language arts methods course working in small groups to research reading strategies, then compiling and sharing best practices with their classmates through a digital presentation.

Technology Infusion: A program-deep and program-wide approach within a teacher preparation program to help teacher candidates learn how to leverage technology in their future teaching (i.e., in PK–12 classrooms). Throughout an infused program, teacher candidates experience:

- A course-specific and developmentally appropriate technology integration curriculum (e.g., as part of a science methods course, candidates learn how to effectively use probes in their PK–12 science classroom);
- Technology integration models that emulate best practices (e.g., teaching strategies of their instructors, PK–12 mentors who excel with technology integration in the classroom, and video-based PK–12 teaching scenarios that showcase the application of technology integration theory and practice); and
- Developmentally appropriate and iterative practice, feedback, and reflection about teaching with technology (e.g., lesson planning exercises, practice teaching experiences, formal practicums, and student teaching) (Borthwick et al., 2020, p. 6).

THREE

Teacher Educator Technology Competencies (TETCs): These were developed to support the redesign of teaching in teacher education programs so that ALL teacher educators are prepared to model and integrate technology in their teaching. Teacher candidates who receive consistent and appropriate experiences with technology throughout their teacher education programs will be more prepared to integrate technology into their own classrooms (Foulger, Graziano, Schmidt-Crawford, & Slykhuis, 2017).

There are 12 Teacher Educator Technology Competencies (TETCs):

1. Teacher educators will design instruction that utilizes content-specific technologies to enhance teaching and learning.
2. Teacher educators will incorporate pedagogical approaches that prepare teacher candidates to effectively use technology.
3. Teacher educators will support the development of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of teacher candidates as related to teaching with technology in their content area.
4. Teacher educators will use online tools to enhance teaching and learning.
5. Teacher educators will use technology to differentiate instruction to meet diverse learning needs.
6. Teacher educators will use appropriate technology tools for assessment.
7. Teacher educators will use effective strategies for teaching online and/or blended/hybrid learning environments.
8. Teacher educators will use technology to connect globally with a variety of regions and cultures.
9. Teacher educators will address the legal, ethical, and socially-responsible use of technology in education.
10. Teacher educators will engage in ongoing professional development and networking activities to improve the integration of technology in teaching.
11. Teacher educators will engage in leadership and advocacy for using technology.
12. Teacher educators will apply troubleshooting skills to resolve technology issues (Foulger et al., 2017, p.432-433).

Note: List of current Teacher Educator Technology Competencies (TETCs) can be found at http://site.aace.org/tetc

The TETCs represent diverse perspectives from an array of teacher educators, and were supported by the following organizations:

- The United States Department of Education Office of Educational Technology (US DoE)
- International Society of Technology in Education (ISTE)
- Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education (SITE)
- Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)
- National Technology Leadership Coalition (NTLC)
- American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE)

FOUR

National Education Association's (NEA) Guide to Teaching Online Courses: This guide is the product of collaboration among a number of organizations committed to ensuring the quality of online instruction to secondary students in the United States. It is intended as a guide for policymakers, administrators, educators, and others engaged in selecting, hiring, training, and supporting teachers to provide quality online instruction to students, or in making policy choices affecting online education. It is designed to provide an overview of the development of an effective online education system, focusing particularly on the skills teachers need to teach effectively online, the professional development necessary to acquire those skills, and the models schools need to evaluate and improve online teaching. It is critically important that school systems and school administrators contemplate such issues before launching online courses or enrolling significant numbers of their students in such courses. Crucial lessons from decades of offline instruction are applicable, and the body of new and instructive information about the unique nature of online education is growing every day (NEA, n.d., p. 2).

Online teaching shares much with face-to-face teaching, but it also has a unique set of skills and requirements if educators are to teach well online. Just as every student deserves a highly qualified teacher in a brick and mortar classroom, **every student engaged in online learning deserves a highly qualified teacher**.

Professional development training should provide teachers with training and practice in the following areas:

- Appropriate communications. Online teachers must develop an appropriate online "voice" because students do not have the advantage of facial expressions or body language.
- Appropriate and timely feedback. Because online courses do not always have a "scheduled meeting time" that would allow teachers to address specific student concerns in a joint setting, teachers should reply promptly to student questions. Teachers should complete grading and give feedback on assignments in a timely manner, as well. Professional development should stress these requirements and provide teachers with the tools to meet them.
- Facilitated discussions. Teachers must be trained to be effective online facilitators and need to practice this skill while in training. In delivery, mentors need to monitor facilitation and provide feedback to the instructor.
- Facilitation of teamwork and multimedia projects. The barriers to effective group-work are multiplied by the distance barriers of online teaching. Therefore, teachers must develop effective strategies to use small group activities in their courses. They need to provide students with ways of forming teams when proximity or friendship are no longer the criteria for selecting team members.
- Adaptation of curriculum and materials. So that online teachers will be fully prepared to meet students' needs, they should be trained to adjust course materials and curricula in order to maximize effective learning.
- Adaptation of online tools to support effective instruction. In order to maximize the effectiveness of the online instructional environment, teachers should be proficient in the selection and use of a variety of online instructional tools, including synchronous and asynchronous communication methods, text-based and multimedia-rich documents and simulations and hands-on laboratories (NEA, n.d., p.11).

By modeling effective online course design and delivery, pre-service teachers can best gain the necessary skills they will need to become effective 21st century teachers. At a minimum, pre-service training for online teaching should include:

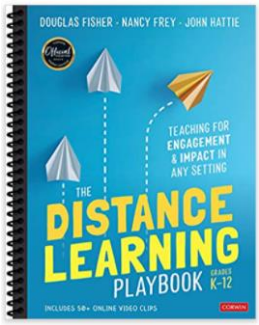
- Evaluating Internet resources for validity of content
- Respecting and enforcing copyright concerns, including Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization (TEACH) Act provisions
- Identifying outstanding educational websites for both teacher and student reference
- Issues of accessibility and Section 508 compliance, including adaptive software for the physically, visually and hearing impaired
- Employing appropriate *etiquette* and observing Acceptable Use Policies
- Learning to develop lesson plans that foster Internet research skills in students (NEA, n.d., p. 12-13).

Pre-service teachers should also take at least one required online course on pedagogy and practice in online courses. The elements of the course should include:

- Practice in and discussion of the relative merits of asynchronous versus synchronous discussions
- Instruction and practice in facilitating online discussions
- Instruction and practice in *community building* exercises, including small group collaborative assignments
- Student as Instructor experience, where pre-service students have the opportunity to design and deliver course content
- Meta-cognitive analysis of online group projects, including the examination of the process as well as the product
- Creation of original online lessons for teams of colleagues to complete and provide feedback
- Research on online instruction in the pre-service teacher's academic discipline and on the learning and behavioral characteristics of the grade level of the students the novice teacher will instruct
- Experience with and research into different delivery platforms, and examination of the pros and cons of each
- Experience with self-paced d*emos* of courses
- Auditing professional development training for online instructors
- Student-teaching opportunities in online classes–a 15-week commitment in which a student learns course content, is mentored by an experienced online instructor, and with constant supervision by a *master teacher* of record, has the opportunity to *practice teach* online (NEA, n.d., p. 13).

FIVE

If there is no room in the curriculum to add another course, EPPs might consider having candidates complete a book study. ***The Distance Learning Playbook Grades K-12 - Teaching for Engagement and Impact in any Setting*** by Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey, and John Hattie would be an excellent study.



SIX

During the summer of 2020, University of Phoenix collaborated with their learning management system (LMS) partner, BlackBoard, to create an Alliance for Virtual Learning. They brought together industry thought leaders in the K-12 virtual learning space (many of whom have been active in K-12 Online learning for over a decade) and created a series of free webinars called ***The Virtual Teaching Academy (VTA***) to help K-12 teachers and leaders adapt to the new virtual learning landscape.

The VTA landing page to access all session recordings, decks, and closed captioning is here: https://go.blackboard.com/virtual-teaching-academy

Over 6,000 educators from across the nation have joined. The webinar recordings and PPT slides will live on the site so others can attend and learn. Review the topics covered and feel free to offer these as resources to teacher candidates, districts, and schools seeking extra guidance. The goal is to provide additional resources to K-12 schools and teacher candidates.

SEVEN

Additional Resources:

National Center for Systemic Improvement – Removing Barriers to Effective Distance Learning by Applying the High-Leverage Practices - NCSI Resource Library (wested.org)

National Center for Learning Disabilities – Distance Learning Toolkit
Distance_Learning_Toolkit.pdf (ctfassets.net)

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