

GaPSC Approval Decision Options
Adopted and Effective July 13, 2017

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I. Approval Reviews

A. Developmental Review Decision Options

A Developmental Review is conducted for the purpose of verifying that a new educator preparation provider (EPP) and/or proposed educator preparation programs have the capacity to meet the Georgia Standards (2016), and are ready to enroll students and prepare them for meeting state certification requirements.

1. **Developmental Approval** - Indicates the educator preparation provider and/or educator preparation program(s) meet the six Georgia Standards (2016) and the educator preparation provider may begin offering the program(s) and enrolling candidates. Areas for improvement may be cited in the GaPSC Site Visitor Report, indicating minor concerns warranting the educator preparation provider's attention. In its subsequent Preparation Approval Annual Report (PAAR) or in a Progress Report, the Commission may require the educator preparation provider to describe progress made in addressing the area(s) for improvement cited. Stipulations may also be cited in the GaPSC Site Visitor Report, and these indicate more significant concerns to be addressed by the provider through a Progress Report. The next approval review, the First Continuing Approval Review, is scheduled in three to four years from the semester of the Developmental Review.
2. **Provisional Approval** - Indicates the educator preparation provider and/or preparation program(s) have not met one or more of the Georgia Standards (2016) or stipulations have been cited that warrant more significant monitoring. Although educator preparation provider/preparation program(s) are approved and may enroll candidates, the provider must satisfy provisions by meeting the unmet standard(s) and/or addressing stipulations within a specified period of time. If Provisional Approval is granted and depending upon the severity of the unmet standard(s) and/or stipulations, the Commission will require the actions described in either of the options described below or a combination of the two.
 - i. **Option 1:** submission of one or more Progress Reports addressing the unmet standard(s) and/or stipulations within a minimum of six months after the approval decision; and/or
 - ii. **Option 2:** a Focused Review addressing the unmet standard(s) and/or stipulations within two years of the semester the Provisional Approval decision was granted.

After one or more Progress Report(s) are submitted according to Option 1, the Commission will decide to either grant Developmental Approval or require a Focused Review within one year of the semester in which the Progress Report was submitted. Focused Review decision options are described in item D, below.

3. **Denial of Approval** - Indicates the educator preparation provider and/or educator preparation program(s) do not meet one or more of the Georgia Standards (2016) and have pervasive problems limiting capacity to offer quality professional education program(s) that adequately prepare candidates to meet state certification requirements.

B. First Continuing Approval Review Decision Options

A First Continuing Approval Review is conducted for the purpose of determining whether performance data indicate a program is meeting standards, and that candidates are meeting performance expectations delineated in state standards. The First Continuing Approval Review typically occurs three to four years after an educator preparation provider and/or preparation programs are granted Developmental Approval.

After a First Continuing Approval Review, the GaPSC will apply the decision options listed below for Continuing Approval Reviews.

C. Continuing Approval Review Decision Options

A Continuing Approval Review is conducted periodically (typically every seven years) for verifying the educator preparation provider and educator preparation program(s) continue to meet the Georgia Standards (2016).

1. **Continuing Approval** - indicates the educator preparation provider and preparation programs meet each of the six Georgia Standards (2016). Areas for improvement may be cited, indicating minor concerns warranting the provider's attention. In its subsequent Preparation Approval Annual Report (PAAR) or in a Progress Report, the Commission may require the educator preparation provider to describe progress made in addressing the areas for improvement cited in the Site Visitor Report. Stipulations may also be cited in the Site Visitor Report, indicating significant concerns, and the Commission may require the educator preparation provider to submit a Progress Report describing progress made in addressing the stipulations. If Continuing Approval is granted, the next approval review will be scheduled for seven years following the semester of the previous Continuing Approval Review.
2. **Continuing Approval with Conditions** - indicates the educator preparation provider and preparation program(s) have not met one or more of the six Georgia Standards (2016) and/or one or more stipulations have been cited. The educator preparation provider and program(s) maintain approval; however, the provider must submit evidence of meeting the unmet standard(s) and/or addressing stipulations within a specified period of time.

If Continuing Approval with Conditions is granted, the Commission will require the actions described in either Option 1 or Option 2, or a combination of the two.

- i. **Option 1:** submission of one or more Progress Reports addressing the unmet standard(s) and/or stipulations within a specified period of time after the approval decision; and/or
- ii. **Option 2:** a Focused Review on the unmet standard(s) and/or stipulations within two years of the semester the Continuing Approval with Conditions decision was granted.

After one or more Progress Reports are submitted according to Option 1, the Commission will decide to either grant approval or require a Focused Review within one year of the semester in which the Progress Report was submitted. After a Focused Review occurs, the Commission will decide to either grant Continuing Approval or revoke approval.

If Continuing Approval is granted, the next approval review will be scheduled for seven years following the semester in which the Continuing Approval Review occurred. This scheduling maintains the educator preparation provider's original approval review cycle.

3. **Continuing Approval with Probation** - indicates the educator preparation provider and/or preparation program(s) do not meet one or more of the standards, and have pervasive problems limiting capacity to offer quality programs that adequately prepare candidates to meet state certification requirements.

If Continuing Approval with Probation is granted, the Commission may require the educator preparation provider to cease enrollment in applicable programs, and the GaPSC will schedule an approval review within two years of the semester in which the probationary decision was rendered. This review process will mirror that of a Developmental Review. The provider, as part of this approval review, must address all of the Georgia Standards in effect at the time of the Probationary Review and decision options will mirror those associated with a Developmental Review. The EPP will undergo a review in three to four years.

D. Focused Review Decision Options

A Focused Review is conducted for an educator preparation provider and/or educator preparation program(s) as a result of GaPSC decisions of Provisional Approval, Approval with Conditions, or Approval with Probation. Only standards which were unmet during the review are addressed during a Focused Review. After a Focused Review, approval is either granted at the appropriate level or it is revoked.

1. **Approval**, either developmental or continuing depending upon the status of the provider when a Focused Review decision was rendered, is granted if the previously unmet standards are found to be met and/or stipulations have been addressed during the Focused Review.

If **Developmental Approval** is granted, a First Continuing Approval Review will be scheduled for three to four years following the semester in which the Focused Review occurred.

If **Continuing Approval** is granted, the next approval review will be scheduled for seven years following the semester in which the previous Continuing Approval Review occurred. This scheduling maintains the original approval review cycle.

2. **Provisional Approval or Approval with Probation** may be granted after a Focused Review if the previously unmet standards are found to be met with multiple areas for improvement or stipulations, or if one or more previously unmet standards is found to be unmet. If approval status prior to the Focused Review was developmental, Provisional Approval will be granted. If approval status prior to the Focused Review was continuing, Approval with Probation will be granted.

If **Provisional Approval** is granted after a Focused Review, the Commission will prescribe provisions, or requirements, which must be met within a specified period of time. Requirements may include an additional review or site visits by GaPSC staff, the submission of Progress Reports including action plans addressing detailed steps the provider will take to address the unmet standard, stipulation(s), and/or area(s) for improvement. If the deficiencies are satisfactorily addressed during the time allotted by the Commission, a First Continuing Approval Review will be scheduled for three to four years following the semester in which the Focused Review occurred. If the Commission deems

the deficiencies are not fully addressed within the time allotted, approval will be revoked.

If **Approval with Probation** is granted, the Commission may require the EPP to cease enrollment in applicable programs and will prescribe provisions, or requirements, which must be met within a specified period of time. Requirements may include an additional review or site visits by GaPSC staff, the submission of Progress Reports including action plans addressing detailed steps the provider will take to address the not met standard, stipulation(s), and/or area(s) for improvement. If the deficiencies are satisfactorily addressed during the time allotted by the Commission, the next approval review will be scheduled for seven years following the semester in which the previous Continuing Approval Review occurred. This scheduling maintains the provider's original approval review cycle. If the Commission deems the area(s) for improvement, stipulation(s), or unmet standard are not fully addressed within the time allotted, approval will be revoked.

3. **Approval may be revoked** if the previously unmet standards are found to be unmet during the Focused Review. After approval is revoked, candidates who were enrolled in preparation program(s) prior to revocation of approval may complete the programs within a specified period of time jointly established by the EPP and GaPSC staff and be recommended for certification; however, no new candidates may be enrolled as of the date of the revocation.

E. Probationary Review Decision Options

A Probationary Review is conducted after a GaPSC decision of Approval with Probation has been granted for an educator preparation provider or preparation program(s), indicating that one or more standards are not met and pervasive problems limit the provider or program's capacity to meet standards. The Probationary Review process mirrors the Developmental Review process; all of the Georgia Standards (2016) are applied to the provider and/or programs on probation. Candidate performance data are not required. After a Probationary Review, approval is either granted at the appropriate level or it is revoked.

1. **Developmental Approval** is granted if all standards are found to be met during the Probationary Review. If Developmental Approval is granted, the next approval review (First Continuing Approval Review) will be scheduled for three to four years after the semester of the Probationary Review.
2. **Approval is Revoked** if one or more standards are found to be unmet during the Probationary Review. After approval is revoked, candidates who were enrolled in preparation program(s) prior to revocation of approval may complete them within a specified period of time and be recommended for certification; however, no new candidates may be enrolled as of the date of the revocation.

II. Progress Report Decision Options

- A. Progress is Satisfactory; Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulations are Removed.** This decision indicates evidence was presented confirming the areas for improvement and/or stipulations have been corrected.
- B. Incremental Progress is Evident; Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulations Remain.** This decision indicates plans were presented which may lead to correction of

areas for improvement and/or stipulations; however, evidence was not included to confirm they have been corrected. The Commission will ask for one or more subsequent Progress Reports and evidence that the deficiencies have been corrected.

C. Progress is Unsatisfactory

If the Commission deems a Progress Report indicates satisfactory progress has not been made in addressing areas for improvement and/or stipulations, the decision options are:

1. **Progress is Unsatisfactory; One or More Additional Progress Report(s) are Required.** This decision indicates evidence was not presented to demonstrate the areas for improvement and/or stipulations have been addressed. The Commission will require one or more subsequent Progress Reports by specified dates.
2. **Progress is Unsatisfactory; a Focused Review is Required.** This decision indicates neither plans nor evidence were presented to indicate the areas for improvement and/or stipulations have been addressed. The Commission will require a Focused Review on the Standards for which the areas for improvement and/or stipulations were cited within two years.

III. Changes in National Accreditation Status and/or Failure to Meet Standards

A. National Accreditation Status

Georgia-based program providers must maintain GaPSC approval to offer programs leading to Georgia educator certification. Although NCATE/CAEP accreditation of the educator preparation provider is accepted by the GaPSC in lieu of GaPSC provider approval, the GaPSC has sole authority over the review and approval of educator preparation programs. If CAEP accreditation of the EPP is delayed, denied, or revoked, GaPSC will render a decision regarding EPP approval to offer educator preparation programs. National accreditation is not required of Georgia EPPs.

Candidates enrolled in educator preparation programs prior to revocation of approval may complete the programs within a specified period of time and be recommended for certification; however, new candidates may not be enrolled until provider and program approval is reinstated.

B. Failure to Meet Standards

All GaPSC-approved program providers must continue to meet standards between approval reviews. Through annual reports, the GaPSC collects candidate, program, and provider performance data from program providers. In addition, the GaPSC collects outcomes data regarding program completers through Preparation Program Effectiveness Measures. Should providers demonstrate a failure to meet standards, approval status may be changed by the Commission.

IV. Non-compliance

A. Rules

When GaPSC staff members become aware of a provider's confirmed, persistent and/or pervasive non-compliance with GaPSC rules, the Commission will be formally notified at the next appropriate meeting. Prior to bringing rules violations before the Commission, GaPSC staff will investigate the potential violation and gather pertinent documentation to determine if a violation is confirmed, and if the violation is persistent and/or indicative of pervasive violations of one or more rules.

For rules violations determined to be **non-persistent/non-pervasive**, staff will take the following actions:

1. Send a warning letter to include a description of the rule violation(s) and required corrective action steps; and/or
2. Require the submission of documentation, or a Progress Report describing and possibly including evidence of, the corrective actions taken.

Failure to meet staff requirements related to rules violations will result in escalation to the Commission and the actions described below.

For rules violations determined to be **persistent and/or pervasive**, Commissioners will decide to take one of the following actions, depending upon the severity of the violation(s):

1. Submission of documentation/Progress Report to the Commission;
2. One or more Technical Visits by staff followed by a Report to the Commission;
3. Submission of a report and a presentation to the Commission by the head of the educator preparation provider or his/her designee.

After one or more of the preceding actions have been taken, failure on the part of the provider to correct rules violations and meet Commission requirements will result in a change of approval status to Approval with Probation for the educator preparation provider and all preparation programs. The actions following a probationary decision are described in Section I, above.

B. Commission Decisions

Failure to comply with Commission decision requirements will, depending upon the severity of the situation, result in either a warning letter or a change of approval status to Probation for the educator preparation provider and all educator preparation programs.

C. Violation of GaPSC Procedures

Failure to comply with GaPSC procedures will, depending upon the severity of the situation, result in one or more of the following actions.

1. Warning letter
2. Submission of documentation/Progress Report
3. Technical Visit

Unaddressed or repeated violations will be reported to the Educator Preparation and Certification Standing Committee for further action and may eventually result in Probation.

V. Definition of Key Terms

A. Areas for Improvement (AFIs): A statement written by a site visit team that identifies a weakness in the evidence for a component or a standard.

B. Stipulations: A statement written by a site visit team that identifies a deficiency related to one or more components of a standard. A stipulation is of sufficient severity that a standard may be determined to be unmet.