



# **Georgia Professional Standards Commission**

## **DECISION OPTIONS**

**Effective January 1, 2022**

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# APPROVAL REVIEW DECISION OPTIONS

## Approval Reviews of Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) and All Programs

**Developmental Approval Reviews** (for new EPPs and their proposed programs):

- **Developmental Approval of the EPP and all Programs is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended all six standards are met.**
  - A **Progress Report** may be required if AFIs or stipulations were cited.
  - The next review, the First Continuing Approval Review, will be scheduled three to four years from the semester of the Developmental Approval Review.
- **Provisional Approval of the EPP and all Programs is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended one or two standards are not met.**
  - Depending on which standard(s) are not met:
    - A **Progress Report** will be required, and a **Focused Review** may be required within two years if the unmet standard(s) have not been reclassified as met after the submission of two or more Progress Reports, or
    - A **Focused Review** may be required within one year, and a Progress Report will be required in the interim.
    - The Commission may specify candidates are not to be enrolled until after the Focused Review.
- **Denial of Approval of the EPP and all Programs is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended multiple standards are not met and stipulations and AFIs in other standards were cited, indicating there are pervasive problems that limit the capacity of the EPP to prepare effective educators.**
  - The EPP may not begin offering programs.
  - The EPP may reapply for approval by submitting the Intent to Seek Approval Form one year after the review.

**First Continuing Approval Review Decision Options for EPP** (Conducted three to four years after Developmental Approval to allow Developmental EPPs and programs time to implement the proposed requirements, enroll candidates, and collect data on the effectiveness of the EPP and the programs):

Decision options for Continuing Approval Reviews are utilized for First Continuing Reviews.

**Continuing Approval Review Decision Options** (for EPPs and all programs, conducted every seven years):

- **Continuing Approval of the EPP and all Programs is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended all six standards are met for the EPP and all programs.**
  - A [Progress Report](#) may be required if AFIs or stipulations were cited.
  - The next Continuing Approval Review will be scheduled seven years from the semester of the Continuing Approval Review.
- **Continuing Approval with Conditions of the EPP and all Programs is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended one or more standards are not met.**
  - A [Progress Report](#) will be required.
  - A [Focused Review](#) may be required if the unmet standard(s) have not been reclassified as met after the submission of two or more Progress Reports.
- **Continuing Approval with Probation of the EPP and all Programs is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended multiple standards are not met and stipulations in other standards were cited, indicating there are pervasive problems that limit the capacity of the EPP to prepare effective educators.**
  - One or more Progress Reports will be required.
  - If Progress Reports do not indicate satisfactory progress and therefore, do not result in the reclassification of standards to met, a [Probationary Review](#) will be required.
  - The Commission may require the EPP to pause enrollment in programs.
  - Within sixty (60) days after the decision is rendered, candidates must be notified of probationary approval status and any resulting implications for their progression through or completion of programs.

**Focused Review Decision Options for EPP** (only unmet standards reviewed):

- **Approval (Developmental or Continuing, whichever is appropriate) of the EPP and all Programs is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended the standard(s) under focused review are met.**
  - A [Progress Report](#) may be required if AFIs were cited.
  - For **Developmental Approval**, a First Continuing Approval Review will be scheduled three to four years from the semester of the Focused Review.
  - For **Continuing Approval**, the next approval review will be scheduled seven years following the semester in which the previous Continuing Approval Review occurred.
- **Revocation of Approval of the EPP and all Programs is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended the standard(s) under focused review remain unmet or one or more stipulations were cited** (for Focused reviews following Developmental reviews).
  - If candidates were allowed to enroll in program(s), those enrolled prior to revocation of approval may continue for a specified period of time to complete programs and seek certification; however, no new candidates may be enrolled as of the date of the revocation.
  - The EPP may reapply by submitting the Intent to Seek Approval Form after one year from the review.

- **Continuing Approval with Probation of the EPP and all Programs is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended the standard(s) under focused review remain unmet or stipulations were cited** (for Focused reviews following Continuing Approval Reviews).
  - A [Probationary Review](#) will be required within two years.
  - A [Progress Report](#) will be required in the interim.
  - The Commission may require the EPP to pause enrollment in programs.
  - Within sixty (60) days after the decision is rendered, candidates must be notified of probationary approval status and any resulting implications for their progression through or completion of programs.

### **Probationary Review Decision Options (all standards reviewed)**

- **Continuing Approval of the EPP and all Programs is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended all standards are met.**
  - A [Progress Report](#) may be required if AFIs and/or stipulations were cited.
  - The next approval review will be scheduled seven years following the semester in which the previous Continuing Approval Review occurred.
- **Revocation of Approval of the EPP and all Programs is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended one or more standards are unmet.**
  - Candidates who were enrolled in program(s) prior to revocation of approval may continue for a specified period of time to complete programs and seek certification; however, no new candidates may be enrolled as of the date of the revocation.
  - The EPP may reapply by submitting the Intent to Seek Approval Form after one year from the review.

### **Approval Reviews of Initial Teaching/Service/Leadership Programs**

*These decision options apply to reviews of programs when the entire EPP is being reviewed and when the programs are being reviewed apart from an EPP.*

### **Developmental Approval Review Decision Options for Programs**

- **Developmental Approval is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended both program standards are met.**
  - A [Progress Report](#) may be required if AFIs or stipulations were cited.
  - A First Continuing Approval Review will be scheduled for three to four years from the semester of the Developmental Approval Review.
- **Denial of Approval is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended one or both of the program standards are not met.**
  - The EPP may reapply by submitting the Intent to Seek Approval Form after one year from the review.

## First Continuing Approval Review Decision Options for Programs

- **Continuing Approval is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended both of the program standards are met.**
  - A [Progress Report](#) may be required if AFIs or stipulations were cited.
  - The next review of the approved program will occur in conjunction with the EPP's next Continuing Approval Review.
  
- **Continuing Approval with Probation is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended one standard is not met.**
  - A [Probationary Review](#) of both program standards will be required.
  - A [Progress Report](#) may be required.
  - Depending on the severity of the findings, the Commission may pause enrollment in the program.
  - Within sixty (60) days after the decision is rendered, candidates must be notified of probationary approval status and any resulting implications for their progression through or completion of programs.
  
- **Revocation of Approval is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended both of the program standards are not met.**
  - Candidates who were enrolled in program(s) prior to revocation of approval may continue for a specified period of time to complete programs and seek certification; however, no new candidates may be enrolled as of the date of the revocation.
  - The EPP may reapply by submitting the Intent to Seek Approval Form after one year from the review.

## Probationary Review Decision Options for a Program

- **Continuing Approval is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended both standards are met.**
  - A [Progress Report](#) may be required if AFIs or stipulations were cited.
  - The next review of the approved program will occur at the time of the EPP's next Continuing Approval Review.
  
- **Revocation of Approval is the appropriate choice when the review team recommended one or both of the program standards are not met.**
  - Candidates who were enrolled in program(s) prior to revocation of approval may continue for a specified period of time to complete programs and seek certification; however, no new candidates may be enrolled as of the date of the revocation.
  - The EPP may reapply by submitting the Intent to Seek Approval Form after one year from the review.

## Progress Report Decision Options

### **Progress is Satisfactory; Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulations Removed.**

This decision indicates evidence was presented confirming the AFIs and/or stipulations have been corrected. If the AFIs and/or stipulations were associated with an unmet standard, and sufficient progress has been made toward addressing the deficiencies that led to the unmet standard, the unmet standard may be reclassified as met. After unmet standards are reclassified to met, the Commission may change approval status to Developmental Approval or Continuing Approval to indicate all standards are met.

### **Incremental Progress is Evident; Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulations Remain.**

This decision indicates plans were presented which may lead to correction of AFIs, stipulations, and/or not met standards; however, evidence was not included confirming they have been corrected. The Commission will ask for one or more subsequent Progress Reports and evidence that the areas identified have been corrected.

### **Progress is Unsatisfactory.**

If the Commission determines satisfactory progress has not been made in addressing AFIs and/or stipulations, the decision options are:

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

## Changes in Accreditation Status

GaPSC has sole authority for the review and approval of Georgia educator preparation providers and programs. EPPs must be regionally accredited to qualify for GaPSC approval and they must maintain regional accreditation to maintain GaPSC approval. If regional accreditation of a GaPSC-approved EPP is revoked, GaPSC approval will also be revoked. Candidates enrolled in programs as of the date of GaPSC revocation of approval will be eligible for certification upon completion of the program and all applicable certification requirements. Effective on the date of revocation, the EPP must cease enrollment in programs leading to Georgia educator certification.

Although national accreditation is not required of Georgia EPPs, some are or were accredited by NCATE/CAEP and GaPSC previously accepted national accreditation in lieu of provider approval. If national accreditation of an EPP is revoked or if an accredited EPP elects not to continue accreditation, GaPSC will render a decision regarding EPP approval to offer educator preparation programs.

## Changes in Program Quality

Preparation program quality is monitored between approval reviews via the Preparation Program Effectiveness Measures (PPEMs). Although the primary purpose of PPEMs is program improvement, an important secondary purpose is accountability. Currently available only for teacher preparation programs, PPEMs assess how well Georgia program providers prepare teachers for the classroom and they are comprised of a mixture of in-program measures and outcome measures. EPPs and programs are rated on a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 as the highest rating and an indicator of Exemplary performance.

Commissioners are informed of PPEM ratings annually, after they are made available at [www.gapsc.com/EducatorPreparation/ppems.aspx](http://www.gapsc.com/EducatorPreparation/ppems.aspx). EPPs are expected to achieve a Level 3 (Effective). EPPs rated at Level 2 (Acceptable) must submit a plan describing the actions in which faculty and staff will engage to improve program and overall EPP performance. After a second consecutive year of a Level 2 rating, EPPs must submit an updated action plan and obtain peer technical assistance. GaPSC staff monitor the implementation and impact of action plans and provide continued technical assistance as needed. EPPs performing at Level 1 (Low Performing) are monitored by GaPSC staff and must submit an action plan for moving to effective. In subsequent years if performance remains at Level 1, action plans must be updated with progress made and improvement efforts must involve peer technical assistance. If an EPP performs at Level 1 for a fourth consecutive year, the Commission will require a Focused Review of Standards 1 and 4. After the Focused Review, using the [Focused Review](#) decision options, the Commission will determine if approval should be maintained or revoked.

## Non-Compliance

### 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 of the issue(s) at the next appropriate meeting. 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:

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

Failure to meet GaPSC 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):

- Submission of documentation/Progress Report to the Commission; and/or
- 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. See [Probationary Review Decision Options](#).

### **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, potentially followed by Revocation, for the educator preparation provider and all educator preparation programs.

### **Violation of GaPSC Procedures**

Failure to comply with GaPSC procedures (e.g., reporting in TPMS/NTRS) will, depending upon the severity of the situation, result in one or more of the following actions.

- Warning letter
- Submission of documentation/Progress Report

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

## **Commission Review Process**

Prior to Commission review, all reports are examined by the Educator Preparation and Certification Committee (EPCC), a standing committee of the Commission. Members of the EPCC recommend approval actions to the Commission and Commission decisions are final.

In the following instances, the Evaluation Review Panel (ERP), a ten-member panel comprised of trained reviewers, examines reports prior to their examination by the EPCC and recommends approval actions:

- An approval review team recommends one or more standards are not met, or cites stipulations.
- A Progress Report is submitted.
- A Focused Review or a Probationary Review occurs.
- A Deferral of an approval review is requested.

## **Definitions of Key Terms**

- **Areas for Improvement (AFIs):** A statement written by a review team that identifies an area for growth from the evidence (or lack of evidence) for a component or a standard.
- **Stipulations:** A statement written by a review 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.