



# **Georgia Professional Standards Commission**

## **Pedagogy-Only Program Guidance Rule 505-3-.06, effective April 15, 2025**

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# Table of Contents

<a href="#">Introduction</a> .....	3
<a href="#">Guideline 1: Eligible and Ineligible Certification Fields</a> .....	3
<a href="#">Guideline 2: Admission Requirements</a> .....	5
<a href="#">Guideline 3: Standards for Pedagogical Knowledge</a> .....	6
<a href="#">Guideline 4: Clinical Practice and Field Experience Requirements</a> .....	6
<a href="#">Guideline 5: Requirements for Program Completion</a> .....	6
<a href="#">FAQs</a> .....	8

## Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for EPPs as they design and in accordance with GaPSC Educator Preparation [Rule 505-3-.06 Pedagogy-Only Program](#). The Pedagogy-Only program is designed to prepare individuals for teacher certification at the post-baccalaureate level who have demonstrated content expertise and desire to add pedagogical knowledge and skills. The program can be offered as a non-degree (certification-only) or degree-granting program.

Following are five guidelines to support EPPs in understanding Rule 505-3-.06, as well as frequently asked questions (FAQs) to provide further clarification.

## Guidance

### Guideline 1: Eligible and Ineligible Certification Fields

As described in Rule 505-3-.06, the Pedagogy-Only Program can be offered only to candidates seeking certification in the fields listed below.

#### Eligible Fields

##### **Middle Grades Fields (4-8)**

- Middle Grades Language Arts
- Middle Grades Mathematics
- Middle Grades Science
- Middle Grades Social Science

##### **Secondary Fields (6-12)**

- Economics Education
- English Education
- Geography Education
- History Education
- Mathematics Education
- Political Science Education
- Science Education

- Speech Education

### **Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education Fields**

- Agriculture Education (6-12)
- Business Education (6-12)
- Family and Consumer Sciences Education (6-12)
- Healthcare Science (6-12)
- Marketing Education (6-12)
- Engineering and Technology (P-12)
- Career and Technical Specializations (6-12) (This field is further classified by multiple areas of specialization [currently 25], which are listed in GaPSC Certification [Rule 505-2-.90 Career and Technical Specializations.](#))
- Computer Science (P-12)

### **P-12 Fields**

- Art Education
- Dance Education
- Drama Education
- English to Speakers of Other Languages Education
- World Languages Education (This field is further classified by specific language specializations [currently 19], which are listed in GaPSC Certification [Rule 505-2-.57 Teaching Fields.](#))
- Health and Physical Education
- Music Education

After an EPP is approved to offer the Pedagogy-Only program, all eligible fields of certification are displayed in the [www.gapsc.com list of approved programs](http://www.gapsc.com/list-of-approved-programs). Therefore, each eligible field listed above, as well as the areas of specialization associated with the Career and Technical Specializations and World Languages Education fields will be listed. This detailed listing of eligible fields is helpful to prospective educators.

### **Ineligible Fields**

The following fields may not be offered in a Pedagogy-Only program:

- Birth Through Kindergarten (Rule 505-3-.13)
- Elementary Education (Rule 505-3-.14)
- Middle Grades Reading (Rule 505-3-.19)
- Reading Education (Rule 505-3-.51)

- All Special Education fields (Rules 505-3-.54 through 505-3-.60)

These fields may not be offered in a Pedagogy-Only program because they represent a substantial body of inter-disciplinary pedagogical knowledge and skills applied to varied content areas. In addition, the adoption of Rule 505-3-.03 Foundations of Reading, Literacy, and Language, substantially changed expectations for the field of Middle Grades Reading, which now includes the same standards as those required of Elementary Education and Special Education General Curriculum-Elementary Education programs and requires a specialized body of reading knowledge beyond the foundational courses normally offered in the Pedagogy-Only setting. For this reason, Rule 505-3-.06 amendments adopted by the Commission in March 2025 and effective April 2025, removed Middle Grades Reading from the list of eligible fields.

## **Guideline 2: Admission Requirements**

As Pedagogy-Only Programs provide only pedagogical knowledge and skills, and not content knowledge, candidates must provide evidence of expertise in the field of certification sought prior to enrolling. Although demonstration of content knowledge can be accomplished through one of three following options, it is important to note that regardless of which of the three ways candidates demonstrate content expertise, they must hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree from a GaPSC-accepted, accredited institution of higher education.

1. A major in the field of certification sought earned in conjunction with a bachelor's or higher degree from a GaPSC-accepted, accredited institution of higher education;
2. A passing score on the Georgia state-approved content assessment in the field of certification sought; or
3. Evidence of successful completion of a specified number of semester hours of content area coursework earned in conjunction with a bachelor's or higher degree or through additional coursework from a GaPSC-accepted, accredited institution of higher education. The number of semester hours of content area coursework required for secondary (6-12) and P-12 fields (excluding Reading and Special Education) is twenty-one (21) semester hours. For Middle Grades (4-8) fields, fifteen (15) semester hours of coursework is required in one of the content areas of Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, or Social Science. Candidates must demonstrate depth and breadth in the content of their field of certification sought.

As a reminder, all admission requirements for initial teaching programs described in Educator Preparation [Rule 505-3-.01 Requirements and Standards for Approving Educator Preparation Providers and Educator Preparation Programs](#), are required for admission to Pedagogy-Only Programs.

### **Guideline 3: Standards for Pedagogical Knowledge**

Because candidates demonstrate their understanding of the content prior to enrolling in a Pedagogy-Only Program, EPPs must offer a preparation program described in program planning forms, catalogs, syllabi, and key assessments addressing the Georgia Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS) as specified in Rule 505-3-.06, the applicable program content and curriculum requirements specified in Rule 505-3-.01 (paragraph (3) (e) 4.), and the applicable components of [Georgia Standards for the Approval of Educator Preparation Providers and Educator Preparation Programs \(2024\)](#).

### **Guideline 4: Clinical Practice and Field Experience Requirements**

GaPSC-approved EPPs shall ensure candidates complete clinical practice in the field of certification sought and at the appropriate grade level(s). Although a yearlong residency is preferable, the minimum clinical practice requirement is one semester. For candidates employed as a teacher of record while enrolled in the program, the field of certification sought must match the employment placement (e.g., Middle Grades Math teacher must be entered in TPMS as seeking Middle Grades Math certification), and clinical practice will be completed in the employment setting.

In addition, EPPs shall ensure that prior to the culminating clinical practice experience, candidates complete supervised field experiences consistent with the field of certification sought and at the appropriate grade levels. For candidates seeking certification in Middle Grades, field experiences are required in two (2) grade levels: 4-5 and 6-8. Candidates seeking certification in a P-12 field must complete field experiences in four (4) grade levels: PK-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12; and candidates seeking certification in a Secondary (6-12) field must complete field experiences in two (2) grade levels: 6-8 and 9-12.

### **Guideline 5: Requirements for Program Completion**

EPPs must ensure candidates beginning the program in Fall 2024 and afterwards will, by program completion, meet the standards specified in Educator Preparation [Rule 505-3-.03 Foundations of Reading, Literacy, and Language](#), appropriate for the field of certification sought. This requirement may not be met through a passing score on a GACE content assessment; therefore, additional coursework in reading may be needed.

Although some candidates will have passed the appropriate GACE Content Assessment prior to entering a Pedagogy-Only Program, those who have not must attempt it prior to program

completion. As a reminder, candidates seeking Middle Grades certification through a Pedagogy-Only Program are not required to complete the GACE Assessment in two fields because post-baccalaureate candidates are required to seek certification in only one field.

Candidates completing a Pedagogy-Only Program in Middle Grades must understand, use, and reflect on the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to young adolescent development and use that knowledge in their practice, as described in [Rule 505-3-.19 Middle Grades Education Program](#).

All candidates in Pedagogy-Only Programs are required to meet the exceptional child requirement. This includes three (3) or more semester hours of coursework in the identification and education of children who have special educational needs or the equivalent through a Georgia-approved professional learning program. This requirement may be met in a separate course, or content may be embedded in courses and experiences throughout the preparation program (see [Rule 505-2-.24 Special Georgia Requirements](#)). In addition, candidates in all fields must have a working knowledge of Georgia's framework for the identification of differentiated learning needs of students and how to implement multi-tiered structures of support addressing the range of learning needs.

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. Should EPPs approved to offer the Pedagogy-Only Program maintain approval for MAT programs in single fields (e.g., English Education, Mathematics Education)?

Offering MAT programs may be helpful in meeting the needs of candidates who need additional content coursework prior to enrolling in a Pedagogy-Only Program.

2. If an EPP decides to discontinue approval of single-field programs (e.g., English Education, Mathematics Education) and transfer candidates to a Pedagogy-Only Program, how should those candidates be listed in TPMS?

Withdraw the candidates from the original program and enter them into the Pedagogy-Only Program. E-mail [TPMS@gapsc.com](mailto:TPMS@gapsc.com) to alert GaPSC TPMS administrators of the plan to withdraw the candidates.

3. Are Pedagogy-Only Program candidates required to meet the exceptional child requirement?

Yes. The exceptional child requirement must be met in the Pedagogy-Only Program. The Certification Division must be able to identify that candidates earned a grade of B or higher in the course.

4. How should Pedagogy-Only Program candidates be entered in TPMS?

The EPP will select the approved program (Pedagogy-Only) and the appropriate certification field (e.g., English Education).

5. Might a candidate be employed as the teacher of record while completing clinical practice for a Pedagogy-Only Program?

Yes. Although employment is not a requirement for enrollment in a Pedagogy-Only Program, candidates may be employed as teachers of record while completing the program. The EPP must ensure the field of certification sought matches the employment placement.

6. Are Pedagogy-Only Program candidates employed as teachers required to complete grade band experiences?

Yes. Field experiences must occur outside candidates' classrooms in at least two settings with students with diverse learning needs and varied backgrounds.



7. What is required if a candidate employed as a teacher of record is re-assigned to teach in a different subject area?

Candidates enrolled in a Pedagogy-Only Program who are employed as the teacher of record in one subject and then assigned to teach a different subject can continue in the Pedagogy-Only Program if they have met the admission requirements for the new (second) field. When this happens, the EPP must withdraw the candidate from TPMS and re-enter the candidate in the program with the new (second) field of certification. If the candidate did not pass the GACE assessment prior to enrolling in the Pedagogy-Only Program, the assessment attempt in the new (second) field will be required for completion.

8. Must an EPP offer separate methods courses for all certification fields (e.g., Assessment for Mathematics Teachers)?

No. Instead of offering individual content methods courses, EPPs might offer a course in assessment and require assignments that are customized for candidates, based on their field of certification.

9. Might candidates complete the Pedagogy-Only Program in two different fields?

No. Candidates must be prepared in one teaching field, focusing on that particular field during all field and clinical experiences.

10. What is the difference between a Pedagogy-Only Program that leads to a master's degree and one that is considered a "certification-only program?"

Since both require the bachelor's degree for admittance, the master's degree program allows a candidate to obtain certification while completing a higher degree in the field. The master's degree also typically includes research coursework, deepened theory concepts, and more credit hours than a certification-only program. The certification-only program allows a candidate to obtain certification, but the degree level does not change.