



GaPSC Quarterly Highlights

4th Quarter, 2021

The mission of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) is to build the best prepared, most qualified, and most ethical education workforce in the nation. This document highlights progress and actions of this state agency during fourth quarter 2021.

A Message from Matt Arthur

Our focus on supporting a viable educator pipeline continued throughout 2021, and we thank you for your commitment to this shared work and for your trust you put in the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) as an educational partner.

I am taking this opportunity to introduce you to Ashok Deb, GaPSC's new Information Technology Director. Ashok comes to us from the Department of Defense where he served as Chief Enterprise Data Architect. Prior to that he was with Georgia State University where he served as Information Technology Manager. Ashok has over 20 years of hands-on experience in software development, user interface design, database architecture, application modernization, and project management. In addition, he has successfully managed delivery of critical technical projects involving multiple state agencies in Georgia. We are glad to welcome Ashok to his new role.

If you missed learning about our new Division Director of Ethics, Laurin Vonada, please access our January 14, 2022, [GaPSC Connection](#) issue.

In fourth quarter 2021, we made significant progress on our streamlining and enhancement initiatives, all aimed at supporting the educator workforce. Below are examples included in this report along with many others.

- [Suggested Guidelines for Ethical Use of Social Media and Ethical Remote Learning](#) were released.
- The [GaPSC Webcast Series](#) became available, consisting of 29 separate webcast about the work of the agency.
- GaPSC held its 27th annual [Certification and Program Officials Conference](#), offering over 21 concurrent sessions.
- Ethics modules for paraprofessionals were completed by Georgia's RESAs, in collaboration with GaPSC.
- The 2021 Teacher Preparation Program Effectiveness Measures (TPPEMs), were released on the TPPEM public [dashboard](#), with most educator preparation providers (EPPs) earning the highest ratings of either Level 3 or Level 4.
- We continued our focus on assisting with recruitment and support of educators from under-represented groups by working with deans and faculty at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) through the HBCU Collaborative, as well as our focus on recruiting and supporting military veterans and spouses of veterans.
- We further expanded our professional learning, outreach, and technical assistance events.

In the 2021 calendar year, GaPSC:

- Reached 8,956 EPP and P-12 representatives through professional learning presentations.
- Answered 59,459 certification calls.
- Responded to 98,794 certification emails.
- Completed 105,759 certification cases.
- Continued approval for 296 existing preparation programs, approved 30 new endorsement programs, and approved eight new initial preparation programs. Work was conducted on new or continuing approval reviews for a total of 40 program providers.

We remain strongly committed to providing outstanding service to our educators, school districts and schools, EPPs, educational partners, and others, and we appreciate your input.

Let's keep working together, and I hope your 2022 is healthy and happy.

Matt

COVID-19 Updates

Although there were no new COVID-19 policy or guidance changes during fourth quarter, ongoing support for those previously implemented measures remained.

- At this time, GaPSC does not plan to implement additional COVID-19 flexibility measures.
- All GACE Prometric and non-Prometric test sites (i.e., colleges, universities, RESAs) remained open during fourth quarter. Current Prometric test site closure status is available [here](#), and test takers can access the status of non-Prometric test sites through their ETS accounts. COVID-19 safety protocols for GACE testing remain in place and are included [here](#). Test takers who encounter any difficulty in securing a testing slot or need any other assistance should contact ETS at gace_inquiries@ets.org.

Please continue to monitor the GaPSC website for any [COVID-19 updates](#).

Policy Changes

A summary of Certification and Educator Preparation rule amendments adopted by the Commission on September 9, 2021, which became effective October 15, 2021, is available in the [GaPSC's 3rd Quarter Highlights](#).

Following are substantive policy changes initiated and adopted by the Commission during fourth quarter, which became effective January 1, 2022.

- The certification rule [505-2-.90 CAREER AND TECHNICAL SPECIALIZATIONS](#) was amended to add a specialization in Health Information Technology.
- Modifications were made to the certification rule [505-2-.173 READING ENDORSEMENT](#) to revise the certificate types issued, update formatting, and clarify the grade level at which reading may be taught by a Reading Endorsement holder.
- Changes were made to the educator preparation rule [505-3-.01, REQUIREMENTS AND STANDARDS FOR APPROVING EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROVIDERS AND EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS](#), focusing on:
 - Addressing the 2021 SB88 requirements for the preparation of teachers of reading to include the development of fundamental reading skills, including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension.
 - Updating program admission requirements for consistency with revised approval standards effective academic year 2022-23, and including more flexibility options for EPPs with regard to GPA and the Program Admission Assessment (PAA).
 - Revising requirements for embedded endorsement programs.
 - Changing and clarifying the types of organizations eligible to seek GaPSC approval.
 - Clarifying requirements for clinical experience settings.
 - Updating approval review procedures for EPPs seeking or maintaining CAEP accreditation.
- The ethics rule [505-6-.01 THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS](#) was amended to add to definitions and to expound on standards.

Enhancements

The following are examples of fourth quarter GaPSC actions aimed at enhancing the quality of our services:

- To further assist with recruitment and support of educators from under-represented groups, GaPSC continued its work with deans and faculty at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) through the HBCU Collaborative. Building on prior work, this initiative is focused on preparation program effectiveness outcomes, and exploring new strategies and practices to promote increased program enrollment and completion.

During a recent HBCU Collaborative, the group engaged in collaborative dialogue with leaders from local Atlanta area school districts to talk about how to make their programs more attractive, and to discuss any gaps in preparation local district leaders notice from teachers prepared at HBCUs. The HBCU Collaborative has grown in attendance and educator preparation candidates are starting to attend the convenings and engage in conversations.

- The paperless certification process that became effective July 1, 2021, continued to benefit educators, districts, and schools. As a result, the number of paper applications received between 7/1/21 and 12/31/21, decreased by 88% from those received between 7/1/20 and 12/31/20. This environmentally-friendly system is designed to streamline certification processes while adding convenience and flexibility for educators and prospective educators applying for certification. More about paperless certification is available [here](#).
- The [GaPSC Webcast Series](#) was released, which offers a broad menu of 29 specific, separate webcasts to meet the needs of prospective educators (teacher, leadership, and service fields), practicing educators, EPPs, and other audiences. The content is focused on addressing the identified needs of our users to help proactively address the reasons for many calls and emails received, as well as to advocate for the profession and enhance awareness of GaPSC services and policies.
- In November 2021, updates were made to the public [Preparation Program Effectiveness Measures \(PPEM\) Dashboard](#), which displays the 2021 Teacher Preparation Program Effectiveness Measures (TPPEMs) for state-approved program providers. This tool is designed to first give program providers and their faculty access to data to inform improvement; second, hold them accountable for the quality of teachers they produce; and third, provide transparency to the public, including the K-12 education community, about the quality of teachers produced by each provider. The ultimate goal of the PPEM is to improve student learning in Georgia through raising the quality of the teachers responsible for their education. Additional PPEM information, along with the dashboard, is accessible on our website [here](#).
- Six of the nine P-20 Regional Collaboratives convened during fourth quarter. Designed to strengthen partnerships, P-20 Regional Collaboratives serve as a valuable tool for recruiting educators and developing strategies for retaining them, and they serve as an important venue for bringing together colleges of education, P-12 educators and leaders, and RESAs to improve education in each region. Additional P-20 Collaboratives are scheduled for Spring 2022. Schedules and agendas, as well as virtual meeting information, are available [here](#).
- To help navigate risks and avoid ethical missteps, GaPSC published suggested guidelines to proactively guide educators' professional decision-making for appropriate, ethical use of social media and in remote learning environments. While these guidelines are not meant to be inclusive of all considerations, they do offer guidance school districts and EPPs may find helpful in working with pre-service candidates and practicing educators, and are available [here](#).
- Paraprofessionals are great assets to education and need to know, understand, and apply Georgia's Code of Ethics for Educators to their daily practice. Toward this aim, paraprofessional ethics modules were developed by Georgia's RESAs in collaboration with GaPSC. The modules will be available through each RESA in Spring 2022. These instructional learning tools are aimed at preventing missteps that address each of the ten standards in the [Code of Ethics for Educators](#). Best practices, examples of violations, discussion questions, and scenarios, many of which are based on Georgia ethics cases, are included. Each RESA will work with its individual school districts regarding availability and implementation of the paraprofessional ethics modules.
- GaPSC's 27th Annual Certification and Program Officials Conference was held in October and offered 21 concurrent sessions, delivered by over 55 presenters, on current topics related to certification, educator preparation, ethics, assessment, and educational leadership. Matt Arthur, GaPSC's Executive Secretary, delivered the keynote address. Over 345 school district, EPP, and RESA personnel, and others participated in this annual event. A list of each session, along with session materials, is available [here](#).
- In addition to presentations at national and statewide convenings, including the GaPSC Certification and Program Officials conference, GaPSC staff provided multiple professional learning and technical assistance events to assist school districts and schools as they work with their in-service educators, and EPP faculty as they work with their

pre-service educator candidates. Over 2,181 EPP and P-12 representatives took advantage of these learning and support opportunities during fourth quarter. Below are examples of these initiatives:

Examples of GaPSC Support and Professional Learning Events 4th Quarter, 2021

Ethics

School District Presentation on Social Media Investigations
One Regional Presentation on Ethics Updates
Two Assistant Principle Academy Presentations
Two Aspiring Leaders Presentations

Certification

Webinar for LUAs on Certification Renewal
New HR Certification Orientation

Educator Preparation

One HBCU Collaborative Convening
One GaTAPP Coordinators' Meeting
Six P-20 Regional Collaborative Convenings
Site Visitor Chair Training

Assessment

Two Virtual Professional Learning Community (VPLC) Convenings
Performance Assessment for School Leaders (PASL) Candidate Help Session
Assessment Advisory Panel Meeting

- Development continued on the GACE for the new field of Literacy Specialist. A diverse and representative standard setting committee will convene in March 2022, to recommend a passing standard for this new assessment to the Commission. The assessment will become the state-approved assessment for the field of Literacy Specialist beginning July 1, 2022.
- Preparations continued for the virtual "At Home" option for the Paraprofessional Assessment launching in May 2022, which will function much like the PAA "At Home" testing option. Both assessments will continue to be offered at GACE test sites.

Please refer to [1st](#), [2nd](#), and [3rd Quarter](#) GaPSC Highlights for additional enhancements.

Support by the Numbers

During fourth quarter of calendar year 2021, GaPSC:

- Answered 7,195 certification calls, totaling 59,459 year to date (YTD).
- Responded to 10,010 certification emails, totaling 98,794 YTD.
- Opened 15,628 certification cases, totaling 102,580 YTD.
- Completed 17,583 certification cases, totaling 105,759 YTD.
- Completed 356 ethics cases, totaling 1,787 YTD.

Between October 1 and December 31, 2021, GaPSC continued approval for 37 existing programs and approved four new initial preparation programs. During this quarter, work was conducted on new or continuing approval reviews for a total of four program providers.

During calendar year 2021, GaPSC continued approval for 296 existing preparation programs, approved 30 new endorsement programs, and approved eight new initial preparation programs. Work was conducted on new or continuing approval reviews for a total of 40 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](#).

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