

## **ESSA PQ & IN-FIELD IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE**

### **THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND RELATED REPORTING UNDER ESEA/ESSA**

*Created 11.21.2017, Current Version Updated 06.08.18*

*Note: This document is a draft. It is considered a **living document** that will be revised as needed. However, it is an authoritative document that can guide local education agencies (LEAs) in their efforts to implement Georgia requirements. This document reflects the most recent federal and state updates and changes available. The most current document will be posted to the Georgia Department of Education website on the [Professional Qualifications and Related Reporting Requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act \(2015\)](#) webpage.*

*The contents of this handbook were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement.*

## UPDATES

	<b><u>UPDATES</u></b>
03.08.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 3 Removal of paraprofessionals as subject to in-field; Addition of DIP</li> <li>• Section 6 Clarity of Title</li> <li>• Section 7.a Clarification of requirements – Federal, State and Local</li> <li>• Section 7.e.3 Removal of second paragraph in alignment of GaPSC Rules</li> <li>• Section 7.f clarification of collection cycles; reflection of time reported in of out-of-field; clarification of reporting requirement</li> <li>• Section 7.i clarification of collection cycles; reflection of time reported in of out-of-field</li> <li>• Section 8.a.2-4 further clarification between PQ and ESSA-In-Field</li> <li>• Section 8.f GNETS clarification</li> <li>• Sections 8.h-8.o Clarification of requirements</li> <li>• Section 9 added in-field clarification for paraprofessionals</li> <li>• Section 11 added in-field clarification</li> <li>• Section 12 clarified title</li> <li>• Section 13 added clarification and content to 13.b; updated GaTAPP funding information in 13.l; removed the original 13.w question</li> <li>• Section 13 added a new 13.w FAQ on reviewing credentials</li> <li>• Throughout – grammar and formatting</li> </ul>
03.26.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 10 Clarification of PQ/ESSA In-Field Requirements for Substitute Teachers</li> </ul>
06.08.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 3 Updated to include graphic and stakeholders</li> <li>• Section 7.b Updated Reporting Requirements; Eliminate original section 12</li> <li>• Section 7.e.2 Non-Renewable Certificates – Gifted and ESOL</li> <li>• Section 7.e.3 Induction and Supplemental Induction Certificates</li> <li>• Section 7.f Further clarification of Data Sources and Use</li> <li>• Section 7.g Charter Waiver Codes</li> <li>• Sections 8.a.4, 8.b.3 to reference new section 8.l Adapted versus Traditional PE</li> <li>• Section 8.j Pre-K Regular and Special Education Requirements</li> <li>• Section 8.h AP/IB</li> <li>• Sections 8.h and 8.i Coding Gifted and ESOL Service Delivery Models</li> <li>• Section 8.o 3 Party Employees through Contracts, Virtual Schools, MOUs</li> <li>• Section 8.q Work-Based Learning and Move on When Ready (MOWR)</li> <li>• Section 10 Substitutes</li> <li>• Section 12 Relocate reporting to section 7.b. Repurpose Section 12 to include Considerations for Developing LEA PQ Requirements – eliminate 13.b</li> <li>• Section 13.c Hearing Impaired Interpreter &amp; Residential Coordinator Requirements</li> <li>• Section 13.x Evaluating a transcript for In-Field Equivalent Credentials</li> <li>• Section 13.y How to update</li> </ul>

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## 1. The Georgia Department of Education

(O.C.G.A. §20-2-240; SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.36)

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) is the designated state education agency (SEA) for receiving and administering grants. The GaDOE provides resources and support to local education agencies (LEAs) so that federal, state and local requirements may be met. A network of GaDOE specialists is available to provide information about Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requirements, to assist with data needs and local planning, and to support teacher preparation and professional development initiatives. The [Professional Qualifications and Related Reporting Requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act \(2015\)](#) webpage of the GaDOE website provides information, resources, and links for Georgia's district and school administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, teacher educators, institutions of higher education, parents, and the community at large.

## 2. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission

(O.C.G.A. §20-2-984)

Under state law, the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) is the state entity responsible for establishing teacher qualifications and, as such, is the agency in charge of establishing and enforcing professional teacher preparation standards and certifying and licensing teachers. The GaPSC provides resources to LEAs so that federal, state and local requirements may be met.

## 3. Georgia Professional Qualifications & In-Field Reporting under ESSA

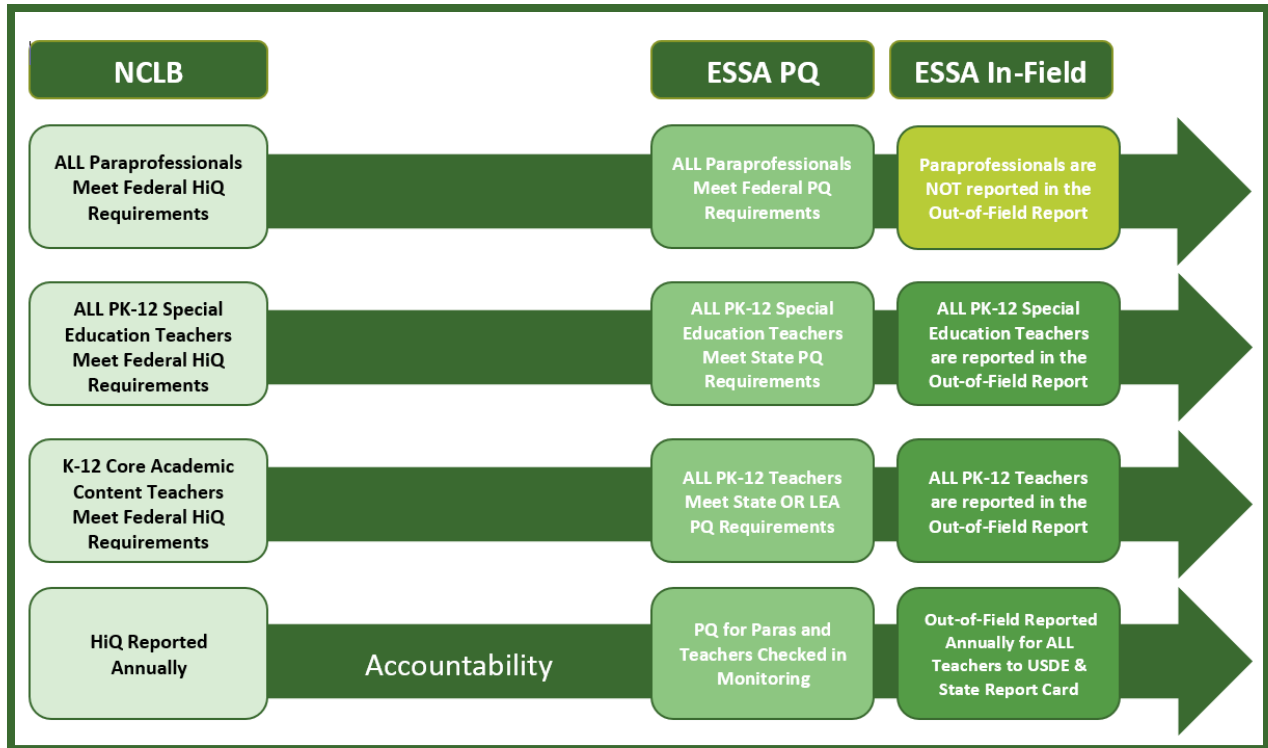
(see citations below)

The NCLB "highly qualified" requirement has been replaced by two different, but comparable requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA):

- Professional Qualifications - applies to ALL teachers and paraprofessionals in grades PK-12
- ESSA In-Field Reporting - applies to ALL teachers in grades PK-12

### Why change the name from HiQ to PQ?

First, highly qualified is gone. Teachers do not have to meet federal requirements. ESSA says SEAs and LEAs MUST ensure teachers meet state certification requirements. It also says that LEAs must notify parents when teachers do not meet professional qualification requirements. In Georgia we wanted to distinguish between NCLB and ESSA requirements. In addition, with increased flexibility in Georgia, not all teachers have to be certified. The term *professional qualifications* captures federal, state and local requirements.



Under Sec. 1111 of Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, SEAs and LEAs must ensure teachers meet state certification or licensure requirements or, if applicable, must meet the requirements set forth in a state’s public charter school law.

The Georgia Professional Standards Commission determines state certification requirements in Georgia. However, under O.C.G.A. §20-2-80 / SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.33 (strategic waiver) and O.C.G.A. §20-2-2065/ SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.07 (charter), Georgia LEAs may submit applications to waive provisions of Title 20 Education Law including certification requirements as determined by the GaPSC. While certification waivers vary from LEA to LEA, a review of current applications on file reflects waivers of teacher certification (§20-2-200), Professional Learning (PL) for certification renewal (§20-2-201), paraprofessional certification (§200-2-204), alternative certification (§200-2-206) and substitute teacher certification (§200-2-216). In order for the GaDOE to ensure that LEA teachers meet state certification requirements, all LEAs must outline LEA professional qualification requirements that align either with GaPSC requirements, approved charter or strategic waiver applications or a combination of the two. This is submitted annually in the District Improvement Plan (DIP) section of the Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP). LEAs may update professional qualification requirements at any time in accordance with charter and strategic waiver applications. (LEAs needing to update PQ requirements must contact Title II, Part A staff). LEAs may not waive federal professional qualification requirements for paraprofessionals or state professional qualification requirements.

Regardless of charter or strategic waiver status, all LEA teachers and paraprofessionals must hold a Clearance Certificate (O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-82, 20-2-211.1, 20-2-2065, SBOE Rules 160-4-9-.07 and 160-5-1-.33, GaPSC Rule 505-2-.42).



Under July 2017 edits to SBOE Rules 160-4-9-.05, 160-4-9-.06, 160-4-9-.07 and 160-5-1-.33, LEAs may not waive certification requirements for Special Education Teachers. In accordance with guidance received from OSEP January 2018, state rules are as binding.

All LEAs should be reminded that ability to waive certification under charter and strategic waiver does not remove LEA obligation to abide by federal, state and local rules, regulations, court orders and statutes relating to civil rights and labor laws. LEAs are encouraged to work with the LEA's human resources staff and legal counsel to ensure all obligations are met.

*Each of these requirements is explained further in this implementation guide.*

Stakeholders - Who supports PQ/ESSA In-Field implementation at the LEA Level?



Superintendent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knows that PQ requirements impact many district and school positions and must be consistently implemented.</li> <li>• Recognizes that each LEA in Georgia has its own unique PQ requirements.</li> <li>• Understands that waiving certification may impact LEA funding, budgeting and public reporting.</li> </ul>
Finance Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensures the LEA maximizes the use of Federal and State resources.</li> <li>• Knows how certification requirements impact budgeting. This includes funding related to Training and Experience and funding/ budgeting to support educator preparation and credentialing.</li> </ul>
HR Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensures that IDEA/ESSA/ GaDOE/LEA requirements for paraprofessionals and teachers have been met.</li> <li>• Maintains equivalent qualification documentation to support CPI charter/ SWSS assertions.</li> <li>• Knows how PQ may impact teacher recruitment and training.</li> <li>• Works with Title I Director to ensure documentation of notifications.</li> </ul>
Data Collections Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensures that all CPI and Student Class data is entered accurately.</li> <li>• Uses CPI CHW codes only for teachers for whom certification is waived.</li> <li>• Coordinates with HR and Title I to verify that CPI entry aligns with approved CLIP: District Improvement Plan PQ requirements.</li> </ul>
Principals/ Assistant Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes that each LEA in Georgia has its own unique PQ requirements.</li> <li>• Supports paraprofessionals/ teachers in meeting Federal, State and Local requirements.</li> <li>• Ensures hiring and scheduling/ job assignments align with LEA PQ requirements.</li> <li>• Coordinates with HR and Title I the publication of Right to Know notifications</li> <li>• Disseminates required 20 Day notifications if a teacher does not meet State and/or LEA PQ</li> </ul>
Title I Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submits LEA PQ requirements in the CLIP: District Improvement Plan</li> <li>• Ensures that ESSA requirements have been met for monitoring purposes: qualifications and notifications.</li> <li>• Coordinates with HR and Title I the publication of Right to Know notifications</li> <li>• Coordinates with HR and Title I to verify that CPI entry aligns with approved CLIP: District Improvement Plan PQ requirements.</li> </ul>
Special Education Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verifies IDEA/ ESSA/ GaDOE requirements for special education paraprofessionals and teachers have been met for monitoring purposes: qualifications and notifications.</li> <li>• Recognizes that PQ requirements and in-field reporting may impact teacher assignments, recruitment and training.</li> </ul>
Paraprofessionals/ Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes that each LEA in Georgia has its own unique PQ requirements.</li> <li>• Knows that additional qualifications may be required by the employing LEA.</li> <li>• Understands that PQ/ESSA In-Field is based on educator qualifications and job assignment (course/ grade level).</li> <li>• Realizes 20 Day Notifications are required if a teacher does not meet State and/ or LEA PQ requirements. 20 Day Notifications are not required for paraprofessionals.</li> </ul>

#### 4. Code of Ethics for Educators in Georgia

(O.C.G.A. §20-2-984.1, GaPSC Rule 505-6-.01)

The Ethics Division of the GaPSC is responsible for enforcing the Code of Ethics for Educators in Georgia. Standard 4 of the Code states “An educator shall exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice.” Unethical conduct as it relates to ESSA includes but is not limited to, falsifying, misrepresenting or omitting:

- Professional qualifications of leaders, teachers, and paraprofessionals;
- Information notifying parents that they may request information regarding teachers’ and paraprofessionals’ professional qualifications;
- Information notifying parents if a teacher has not met state or local professional qualification requirements as determined by the LEA;
- Information submitted to federal and state governmental agencies; and,
- Information submitted in the course of professional practice.

#### 5. Required Notification: Right to Know

(ESSA Sec. 1112(e)(1)(A))

In Georgia, in accordance with ESSA, all LEA schools/programs are required to notify parents at the beginning of each school year of their ‘Right to Know’ the professional qualifications of their student’s classroom teachers and paraprofessionals.

#### **Requirements for Content of the Right to Know Notification**

- LEA notifications MUST use the language of the law.

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Students Succeeds Act, parents may request the following information:

1. Whether the student’s teacher—
  - has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
  - is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and,
  - is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
2. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

- In Georgia, notifications must occur within 30 calendar days from the start of school or upon enrollment.
  - For verification purposes, notifications must contain the month/year of dissemination or, if included in another document, the primary document must contain a date. Or, if the primary document is not dated, records may also include supplemental documentation that contains the month/year of notification dissemination.
  - For verification purposes, the name of the LEA and/ or school must be included.
- In Georgia, LEAs are required to notify parents in all LEA schools or programs.
- Responses to requests must be provided in a timely manner.

- Maintain records of annual notification(s) from all LEA schools or programs.

### **Best Practices for the Right to Know Notification**

ESSA does not prescribe the exact method of dissemination for notifications. In Georgia, the following are considered best practices when notifying parents:

- Develop written procedures for compliance, which include a timeline and person, by position, responsible for verifying notification content, verifying dissemination of notification, and maintaining notification documentation.
- Notify parents in multiple formats in order to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to receive the information. This may include, but is not limited to, a LEA or school handbook, a letter mailed home, inclusion in a newsletter or brochure, posting on a website, and/or a schoolwide email.
- Notify parents, to the extent practicable, in a language that they may understand.
- Ensure the notification includes school/program/LEA name and a point of contact by position.

## **6. Required Notification: 20 Day Notification of Professional Qualifications**

*(ESSA Sec. 1112(e)(1)(B)(ii))*

In Georgia, in accordance with ESSA, all LEA schools/ programs are required to provide timely notice to parents when students have been assigned or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet applicable state certification or licensure requirements (*including professional qualifications developed by the LEA in alignment with an approved charter or strategic waiver application*) at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned. In Georgia, notification requirements apply to all teachers in all LEAs and schools/programs within each LEA. Notifications must be made within ten business days following the four consecutive weeks.

### **Requirements for Content of the 20 Day Notification of Professional Qualifications**

- In compliance with the requirements of the Every Students Succeeds Act, parents must be notified of a teacher’s professional qualifications under the following circumstances:
  - **Regular Education Teachers in Traditional LEAs-** When students have been assigned or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet applicable ESSA ‘in-field’ state certification requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.
  - **Regular Education Teachers in Charter/ Strategic Waiver LEAs-** When students have been assigned or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet LEA professional qualification requirements (in alignment with approved Charter/SWSS application and CLIP/DIP) at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.
 

*Note: It is possible for a teacher to meet charter/ strategic waiver LEA professional qualification requirements and not meet EAA in-field requirements. In this circumstance, 20 Day Notification is not required.*
  - **Special Education Teachers in all LEAs-** LEAs should use the following criteria to determine when to send 20 Day Notifications for special education teachers:

- **Special education teachers who do not issue grades-** 20 Day Notifications must be disseminated if the teacher does not hold special education certification.
- **Special education teachers who issue grades-**
  - Special Education Certification- 20 Day Notifications must be disseminated if the teacher does not hold special education certification, and/or
  - Content Certification or Equivalent- the teacher does not hold certification or ESSA in-field equivalent (that aligns with approved CLIP/DIP PQ) for the subject area and grade level band in which the teacher issues grades.
- **Clearance Certificates-** Clearance certificate requirements are not subject to 20 Day Notifications.
- **Paraprofessionals and Substitute Teachers-** 20 Day Notifications are not required for paraprofessionals and substitute teachers.
  - Paraprofessionals- ESSA does not include paraprofessionals as educators for whom 20 Day Notifications must be sent.
  - Substitutes- O.C.G.A. § 20-2-216/ GaPSC Rule 505-20-.20 requires LEAs hiring and assigning substitutes to ensure substitutes meet state certification requirements or to hire substitutes who most closely meet the requirements for teacher certification and who are available to serve as substitute teachers.
- In Georgia, notifications must occur within ten business days following the four consecutive weeks.
  - For verification purposes, notifications must contain:
    - Day/Month/Year of notification;
    - Name of the teacher who has not met professional qualification requirements;
    - Name of the LEA and/ or school/program; and,
    - Statement that the teacher has not met state certification OR LEA charter/strategic waiver professional qualification requirements for the grade level(s) and/or subject area(s) in which the teacher is assigned. Grade level and/or subject area must be identified.
  - In Georgia, notification requirements apply to ALL teachers in LEA schools/programs.
  - Maintain records of all notifications.

### **Best Practices for the 20 Day Notification of Professional Qualifications**

ESSA does not prescribe the exact method of dissemination for notifications. In Georgia, the following are considered best practices when notifying parents:

- Develop written procedures for compliance, which include a timeline and person, by position, responsible for verifying notification content, verifying dissemination of notification, and maintaining notification documentation.
- Notify parents in a format that will ensure that all parents have the opportunity to receive the information.
- Notify parents, to the extent practicable, in a language that they may understand.
- Ensure the notification includes school/program/LEA name and a point of contact by position.

## **7. Definitions *(see citations below)***

### **7.a Professional Qualifications**

*(ESSA Sections 1111(g)(2)(J), 1112(c)(6); O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-82, 20-2-2065)*

This section outlines the requirements that teachers and paraprofessionals in traditional and charter/strategic waiver LEAs must meet:

- **Traditional LEAs-**
  - All Educators-GaPSC issued Clearance certificate.
  - Paraprofessionals- Federal NCLB requirements (reflected in GA certification requirements).
  - Special Education Teachers- State certification requirements as established by the GaPSC.
  - Teachers (other than special education teachers)- State certification requirements as established by the GaPSC.
  
- **Charter/ Strategic Waiver LEAs-**
  - All Educators-GaPSC issued Clearance certificate.
  - Paraprofessionals- Federal NCLB requirements (reflected in GA certification requirements).
  - Special Education Teachers- State certification requirements as established by the GaPSC.
  - Teachers (other than special education teachers)- The professional qualifications established by the LEA that align with approved charter/ strategic waiver application and CLIP/DIP.

## **7.b Reporting Requirements**

*(GaDOE FY18 CNA Data Guide, GaDOE ESSA Plan)*

Under ESSA and IDEA, Georgia reports a number of different variables outlined in the laws. These reports are submitted to USDE, to GOSA, and included in Equity Profiles. Further, Georgia uses this information to inform training and the work that comes from collaborative partnerships with other state agencies and external organizations.

The LEA Report Card (Section 1111) shall include the professional qualifications of all Georgia educators at the SEA, LEA and School level, including information (that shall be presented in the aggregate and disaggregated by high poverty compared to low-poverty schools) on the number and percentage of:

- Inexperienced teachers, principals, and other school leaders;
- Teachers teaching with emergency or provisional credentials (In Georgia, this may apply to teachers who hold a GaPSC-issued ‘W’, ‘N’, or ‘SI’.); and,
- Teachers who are not teaching in the subject or field for which the teacher is certified or licensed.

The Annual State Report (Section 1111) to the Secretary of the United States Department of Education shall include information on the professional qualifications of teachers in the State, including information on the number and the percentage of the following teachers:

- Inexperienced teachers.
- Teachers teaching with emergency or provisional credentials.

- Teachers who are not teaching in the subject or field for which the teacher is certified or licensed.
- The annual retention rates of effective and ineffective teachers, principals, or other school leaders. (Section 2104)

### **7.c Clearance Certificate**

*(GaPSC Rule 505-2-.42, O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-82, 20-2-211.1, 20-2-2065; GCIC Council Rules 140-2-04: Title 28, CFR, 50.12 (b))*

The Clearance certificate verifies that an educator employed in Georgia has successfully completed fingerprint and criminal background check requirements and has no convictions of any felony; any crime involving moral turpitude; any other criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, trafficking, sale or possession of a controlled substance or marijuana; or any sexual offense; and does not have a certificate or license that is currently revoked or suspended in Georgia or any other state. There are no academic requirements necessary to qualify for this certificate and it does not authorize the holder to be considered in-field for any position. All holders of this certificate are subject to the Georgia Code of Ethics for Educators (See GaPSC Rule 505-6-.01 THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS). In Georgia, ALL educators MUST have a Clearance certificate. This includes (paraprofessionals, teachers, and substitutes). While monitoring professional qualifications, GaDOE will check for clearance certificates for teachers and paraprofessionals. LEAs should coordinate with third-party contractors to ensure educators serving in the capacity of paraprofessionals, teachers and substitutes hold clearance certificates. LEAs and third-party contractors should follow OCGA, GaPSC Rule and GCIC Council rules and protocols related to the request of Clearance Certificates.

LEAs must submit this documentation through ExpressLane. Any questions should be directed from the LEA HR Department to the GaPSC Certification Division.

### **7.d Certificate Types**

*(GaPSC Rule 505-2-.02)*

Categories		Types	
Renewable	Non-Renewable		
Titles	Titles		
Standard Professional (SR) Performance-Based Professional (PR) Advanced Professional (AP) Lead Professional (LP) Life (D) Retired Educator (R)	Pre-Service (PS) Induction (IN) - (includes SI)* International Exchange (X) Non-Renewable Professional (N)* Waiver (W)*	Adjunct (J) Clearance (C) Educational Interpreter (EI) Leadership (L) Non-Instructional Aide (AIDE)	Paraprofessional (PARA) Permit (P) Service (S) Support Personnel (SP) Teaching (T)

\* Special Education teachers who hold a SI, N, or W may not meet Georgia professional qualification requirements depending on content verification.

*Note: A service certificate may not make a teacher ‘in-field’ for a course. LEAs should reference GaPSC certification rules and Certification/Curriculum Assignment Policies System (CAPS) system to determine GaPSC in-field requirements. GaPSC in-field requirements serve as the foundation for determining Georgia ESSA in-field requirements.*

## **7.e Emergency & Provisional Certificates**

*(GaPSC Rule 505-2-.04 (IN); IDEA §1412(14)(C); ESSA Sections 1111(g)(2)(J) and 1111(h)(1)(c)(ix))*

- **7.e.1 Waiver Certificate (W)**

*(GaPSC Rule 505-2-.13 (W))*

The Waiver certificate is issued at the request of an employing Georgia LEA and at the discretion of the GaPSC to educators who have not satisfied all certification requirements. Valid for a one (1)-year period, the Waiver certificate is non-renewable. Waiver certificates are identified by the code letter “W”.

In Georgia, a regular education teacher may hold a Waiver certificate if allowed under the Professional Qualifications of the LEA, but will be reported as out-of-field under ESSA in-field reporting. While the GaPSC is authorized to issue Waiver (W) certificates to special education teachers, special education teachers in Georgia who hold a GaPSC Waiver (W) certificate may not meet Georgia Professional Qualification requirements, may be reported as out-of-field, and will be reported as holding emergency or provisional certification under ESSA/IDEA reporting.

<b>Waiver GaPSC Certificate</b>	<b>Waiver GaDOE Approved Charter/ Strategic Waiver</b>
Issued by the GaPSC, a Waiver certificate (W) can be requested by a LEA for a teacher who does not meet certification requirements, but who is the most qualified candidate for employment.	Submitted by a LEA to the GaDOE, an approved charter waiver or strategic waiver application allows LEAs to waive the requirement for an educator to hold a certificate issued by the GaPSC.

*Note: This is consistent with highly qualified requirements under NCLB.*

- **7.e.2 Non-Renewable Certificate (N)**

*(GaPSC Rule 505-2-.09 (N))*

A Non-Renewable Professional (N) certificate may be issued at the request of an employing LEA to individuals in the following circumstances: (a) Georgia educators who do not meet renewal requirements; (b) Georgia educators who hold a valid renewable professional certificate in any field, but are assigned to teach in a field in which they do not meet certificate requirements; (c) Individuals who have not met certain requirements for renewable professional certification in a service field, as outlined in the individual service field rules; and (d) Educators assigned to work in a leadership position while completing a GaPSC-approved Tier I or Tier II Educational Leadership program.

In Georgia, a teacher may hold a Non-Renewable Professional (N) certificate if allowed under the Professional Qualifications of the LEA, but will be reported as out-of-field under ESSA/IDEA. While the GaPSC is authorized to issue Non-Renewable Professional (N) certificates to special education teachers, special education teachers in Georgia who hold a GaPSC Non-Renewable Professional (N) certificate do not meet Georgia Professional Qualification requirements, will be reported as out-of-field under ESSA, and will be reported



under ESSA/IDEA as holding emergency or provisional certification, even if the teacher meets the LEA's PQ. This also applies to (N) certificates issued in ESOL and Gifted.

*Note: IN1, IN2, IN3, and IN4 certificates should not be confused with the 'N' certificate.*

- **7.e.3 Induction and Supplemental Induction Certificates (SI)**  
(GaPSC Rule 505-2-.34 (SI))

If a teacher holds a IN1, IN2, IN3, or IN4 certificate, the teacher is considered to have met PQ and in-field requirements, regardless of passing the GACE, as long as the teacher is teaching in a course for which the teacher is certified according to CAPS.

New teaching fields may be added to Induction certificates as Supplemental Induction fields (SI). To add any new Supplemental Induction teaching field to an existing level four (4) or higher Induction teaching certificate (IN), an applicant must pass the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE) content assessment in the field at the Induction level or higher. Conversion of the supplemental teaching field to a professional certificate level will require passing the GACE content assessment for that teaching field at the Professional level. For the fields of Special Education General Curriculum/Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Education, conversion to a professional certificate will also require completion of a state-approved educator preparation program in the field.

While the GaPSC is authorized to issue Supplemental Induction (SI) certificates to special education teachers (including special education teachers who have not passed the GACE in P-12 adapted or general curriculum), special education teachers in Georgia who hold a GaPSC Supplemental Induction (SI) certificate may not meet Georgia Professional Qualification requirements, may be reported as out-of-field under ESSA and may be reported as holding emergency or provisional certification under ESSA/IDEA reporting.

### **7.f ESSA In-Field and Out-of-Field**

(ESSA Sections 1111(h)(1)(C)(ix), GaPSC Rule 505-2-.40)

In Georgia, 'in-field' is the assignment of educators to positions for which they have been prepared and certified (in-field). GaPSC in-field requirements serve as the foundation for determining Georgia ESSA in-field requirements. For example, in Georgia ESSA requirements for in-field are extended to qualifications that reflect equivalent content experience.

In Georgia, 'out-of-field' teachers are those who are not teaching in their field of certification or in the subject and/ or grade level(s) assigned; or, for charter/strategic waiver districts, teachers who are not teaching in a field in which they hold equivalent content qualifications. Because LEAs and schools may change teacher assignment(s) each year and during the school year, ESSA 'in-field' is verified at a point-in-time. For the purposes of ESSA reporting, 'out-of-field' will reflect the entirety of the school year using Certification Records and all three CPI and Student Class data collections cycles.

LEAs have the ability to 'update' student class information nightly; however, GaDOE has chosen to only utilize official data submissions in determining in-field. This means that LEAs may correct local reporting records, but not see an update in the in-field portal for several months. It is critical

to review data entry prior to submission. Data collection cycle information is available on the Data Collections webpage of the GaDOE website.

ESSA requires states to publicly report the number and percentage of teachers at the school level who are not teaching in the subject or field for which the teacher is certified. For LEAs that waive content area certification, teachers may demonstrate equivalent ESSA in-field qualifications by degree, coursework, content area test or CTAE credentials as reported in CPI.

*Note: It is possible to be ‘in-field’ under GaPSC rules, but ‘out-of-field’ under Georgia ESSA reporting. For example, a teacher holding a ‘N’ certificate in special education may meet GaPSC in-field requirements, but is considered ‘out-of-field’ for ESSA reporting purposes in the field of special education.*

### **7.g Subject Matter Equivalent for ESSA In-Field**

*(GaDOE Joint Guidance - Data Collections, Financial Review, Charter, GaPSC)*

In Georgia, ESSA in-field equivalents include:

- **Degree-**  
The teacher must hold a bachelor’s degree or higher from a GaPSC accepted, accredited institution of higher education in the subject area assigned; **OR**
- **Coursework-**  
The teacher must have a minimum of 21 semester/35 quarter hours in the subject area assigned. GaDOE follows GaPSC requirements for acceptable course grades; **OR**
- **State Approved Assessment-**  
The teacher must have a passing score on a GaPSC accepted content area test in the grade level and subject area assigned. The state-approved content assessment for Georgia is the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE). For GACE test administration, test preparation, and related GACE issues, visit the GACE website at <http://gace.ets.org/>; **OR**
- **CTAE Credentials-**  
The teacher must hold CTAE equivalent credentials determined in consultation with Title I Committee of Practitioners, GaPSC, and GaDOE CTAE Staff.

LEAs who waive certification for teachers and who report the teacher as “in-field” in CPI Charter Waiver fields 101 and 102 and who accept foreign credentials as equivalent documentation, must ensure that the documents have been reviewed by a GaPSC accepted agency. The current list of agencies can be found on the GaPSC website.

Certificate Field Code	Certificate Field	Comments
101	Academic Major	LEA Uses GaDOE Charter/SWSS Waiver to Meet ESSA In-Field and LEA PQ Requirements
102	Course Work (Minimum 21 semester hrs/35 quarter hrs)	LEA Uses GaDOE Charter/SWSS Waiver to Meet ESSA In-Field and LEA PQ Requirements
103	GACE	LEA Uses GaDOE Charter/SWSS Waiver to Meet ESSA In-Field and LEA PQ Requirements

105	In-Field by CTAE Equivalent Requirements	LEA Uses GaDOE Charter/SWSS Waiver to Meet ESSA In-Field and LEA PQ Requirements
104	Meets LEA PQ Requirements Does Not Meet ESSA In-Field Requirements	LEA Uses GaDOE Charter/SWSS Waiver to Meet LEA PQ Requirements; However, the Teacher Does Not Hold GaDOE In-Field Equivalent Credentials
106	Does Not Meet LEA PQ Requirements Does Not Meet ESSA In-Field Requirements	LEA Hires/Assigns the Best Available Teacher Who Does Not Meet LEA PQ Requirements. The Teacher Does Not Hold GaDOE In-Field Equivalent Credentials. No T & E funding.

**7.h CAPS**

*(GaPSC Rule 505-2-.40)*

Certification/Curriculum Assignment Policies System (CAPS), created by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission rule 505-2-.40 titled "IN-FIELD ASSIGNMENTS," is a web-based resource that aligns courses in the State-approved curriculum with the Georgia certificate(s) that are in-field to teach that course. The system allows a user to find a course and its appropriate certificates using four different search criteria: by choosing a subject area, entering a course number, entering an exact title or partial title, and/or choosing a grade level. CAPS also allows a user to choose a certificate field and display the courses for which that specific certificate is in-field. For additional information, visit CAPS at <https://www.gapsc.com/Certification/CAPS.asp>.

**7.i ESSA In-Field Application on www.gapsc.org**

In an effort to support LEAs in determining whether or not all LEA teachers and paraprofessionals meet ESSA in-field/ out-of-field requirements, the GaDOE will partner with the GaPSC to operate and maintain an application on [www.gapsc.org](http://www.gapsc.org). This application is usually available in January and uses October CPI and Student Class data collections and certification records. It will be updated in May following the March submission of CPI and Student Class data collections and updated in late summer following the final submission of CPI and Student Class. Final verification of ESSA in-field/ out-of-field status will occur at the close of the school year, will reflect the year in its entirety, and will use certification records, CPI and Student Class data collections and LEA edited records.

**8. Professional Qualification Requirements: Teachers**  
*(ESSA Sections 1111(g)(2)(J), 1112(c)(6); O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-152, 20-2-211.1, 20-2-984; 20-2-2065; SBOE Rules 160-4-7-.14; 160-5-1-.33; 160-4-9-.04; GaPSC Rules)*

**8.a Traditional LEAs**

*(O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-200, 20-2-211.1)*

ESSA requires SEAs and LEAs to ensure teachers meet state certification requirements. Georgia law authorizes GaPSC to establish certification requirements. All Georgia educators must hold a Clearance certificate.

- **8.a.1 Regular Education Teachers**

Regular education teachers in traditional LEAs must follow GaPSC certification requirements, State Board of Education rules and program-specific delivery model requirements.

- **8.a.2 Teachers Certified in Special Education General Curriculum**

- PQ: Special Education teachers in all LEAs must follow all GaPSC certification requirements, and State Board of Education rules. Special education teachers who hold a GaPSC issued ‘W’, ‘N’, or ‘SI’ certificate in special education may not meet Georgia professional qualification requirements.
- ESSA In-Field: Educators certified in Special Education General Curriculum are in-field to provide educational services for students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) indicates instruction using the general education curriculum and participation in the general statewide assessment in grades P-12.

- **8.a.3 Teachers Certified in Special Education Adapted Curriculum**

- PQ: Special Education teachers in all LEAs must follow all GaPSC certification requirements, and State Board of Education rules. Special education teachers who hold a GaPSC issued ‘W’, ‘N’, or ‘SI’ certificate in special education may not meet Georgia professional qualification requirements.
- ESSA In-Field: Educators certified in Special Education Adapted Curriculum are in-field to provide educational services for all students in grades P-12 with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) indicates instruction in an adapted curriculum leading to participation in the Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA).

*For PQ and In-Field requirements for provision of Health/ PE to Special Education Students, please reference Section 8.r.*

- **8.a.4 Teachers Certified in Specific Special Education Fields**

- PQ: Special Education teachers in all LEAs must follow all GaPSC certification requirements, and State Board of Education rules. Special education teachers who hold a GaPSC issued ‘W’, ‘N’, or ‘SI’ certificate in special education may not meet Georgia professional qualification requirements.
- ESSA In-Field: In accordance with the GaPSC In-Field statement for Specific Special Education Fields, educators certified in specific special education fields (such as deaf education, visual impairment and learning disorders, etc.) are issued certificates that are Consultative and may also be designated with one or more Special Education Academic content concentrations at a specified cognitive level. These educators are in-field to provide education services for students within the designated field, subject and cognitive level indicated on the educator’s certificate and only in accordance and compliance with the associated GaPSC certification rule. Certification rules should be consulted in each circumstance.

## **8.b Charter and Strategic Waiver LEAs**

*(O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-211.1, 20-2-2065; SBOE Rules 160-4-7-.14, 160-4-9-.04, 160-5-1-.33; GaPSC Rule 505-2-.42)*

ESSA requires SEAs and LEAs to ensure teachers meet state certification requirements.

Georgia law allows charter and strategic waiver systems to waive some provisions of Title 20, including certification; however, LEAs may not waive certification for Special Education teachers. All Georgia Educators must have a Clearance certificate.

Georgia LEAs who waive GaPSC certification must establish LEA professional qualification requirements for teachers. Under ESSA this assists GaDOE and LEAs in ensuring teachers meet state certification requirements. It also assists LEAs in determining whether or not the LEA must notify parents if teachers do not meet professional qualifications established by the LEA (notifications for special education teachers are dependent on state professional qualification requirements). When establishing professional qualifications, LEAs must identify the subject areas, educational service areas and grade level bands for which certification requirements will be waived.

- **8.b.1 Regular Education Teachers**

Regular education teachers in Georgia LEAs who waive GaPSC certification must follow LEA-established professional qualification requirements.

- **8.b.2 Special Education Teachers Who Do Not Issue Grades**

In compliance with Georgia State Board Rule, special education teachers who do not issue grades must hold GaPSC special education certification aligned with the teacher's assignment (general, adapted, visual impairment, etc.) and must have a Clearance certificate.

- **8.b.3 Special Education Teachers Who Issue Grades**

In compliance with Georgia State Board Rule, special education teachers who issue grades must hold GaPSC special education certification aligned with the teacher's assignment (general, adapted, etc.) and must hold content certification OR the equivalent for the subject and grade level bands for which the teacher is assigned (K-5), (4-8), (6-12) and in accordance with the students' IEPs and must have a Clearance certificate.

*For PQ and In-Field requirements for provision of Health/ PE to Special Education Students, please reference Section 8.r.*

### **8.c Special LEAs: Department of Juvenile Justice**

*(O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-211.1, 49-4A-12(c)(1); GaPSC Rule 505-2-.42)*

Teachers teaching at the Department of Juvenile Justice must meet state certification requirements and must hold a Clearance certificate unless otherwise granted in writing by the State School Superintendent to the State Commissioner.

### **8.d Special LEAs: Department of Corrections**

*(O.C.G.A. § 42-2-5.1)*

- **8.d.1 Regular Education Teachers**

Teachers teaching at the Department of Corrections (DOC) must meet professional qualification requirements as determined by the Department of Corrections. Teachers teaching Department of Corrections' courses that do not align with State-approved curriculum will not

be reported in the ESSA In-Field application on [www.gapsc.org](http://www.gapsc.org) for in-field/ out-of-field purposes.

- **8.d.2 Special Education Teachers**

In each fiscal year in which DOC accepts IDEA funds, DOC special education teachers must hold GaPSC certification in special education.

- **8.d.3 Charter Schools Serving DOC Students**

Teachers teaching at the Department of Corrections as a part of a charter school are not considered part of the ‘Special School District’ established in O.C.G.A. and must meet Georgia professional qualification requirements as established by the charter school.

### **8.e Special LEAs: Georgia DOE State Schools**

*(SBOE Rule 160-4-7-.14; O.C.G.A. § 20-2-211; GaPSC Rule 505-2-.42)*

Teachers who teach in the Georgia Department of Education State Schools (Atlanta Area School for the Deaf, Georgia Academy for the Blind, and Georgia School for the Deaf) must follow GaPSC certification requirements and State Board of Education rules. All teachers must hold a Clearance certificate.

### **8.f GA Network for Educational & Therapeutic Support (GNETS) Programs**

*(SBOE Rule 160-4-7-.15)*

- **8.f.1 PQ and In-Field for GNETS Operated by LEAs**

Teachers teaching in GNETS programs operated by LEAs must meet the same requirements as Special Education Teachers in the LEA that hired the teacher and reports the teacher in CPI. GNETS teachers must hold a Clearance certificate. GNETS teachers who facilitate the use of technology-based programs are not required to meet professional qualifications if they are not issuing grades. Compliance will be monitored during GaDOE monitoring of LEAs.

- **8.f.2 PQ and In-Field for GNETS Operated by RESAs**

Teachers teaching in GNETS programs operated by RESAs, must meet the same requirements as Special Education Teachers in the RESA or LEA that hired the teacher and reports the teacher in CPI. GNETS teachers must hold a Clearance certificate. GNETS teachers who facilitate the use of technology-based programs are not required to meet professional qualifications if they are not issuing grades. Compliance will be monitored no less than every four years.

### **8.g Alternative Schools**

*(O.C.G.A. § 20-2-211.1; SBOE Rule 160-4-8-.12; GaPSC Rule 505-2-.42)*

Teachers who teach in alternative schools and who issue grades must meet GaPSC certification requirements and/or the professional qualification requirements established by the LEA. All teachers in alternative schools must hold a Clearance certificate. Alternative schools in Georgia include Performance Learning Centers, Evening Schools, Crossroads Programs, and educational settings defined by SB 618, and programs/schools for neglected, delinquent, or at-risk children. Alternative school teachers who facilitate the use of technology-based programs are not required to meet professional qualifications if they are not issuing grades.

### **8.h Gifted**

*(O.C.G.A. § 20-2-152; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38; Ga PSC Rules 505-2-.98, 505-2-.167; GaDOE Charter School Requirements for Serving Gifted Students; GaDOE Gifted Resource Manual)*

- PQ: Teachers who teach gifted classes must meet the professional qualifications established by the LEA. LEAs must continue to meet civil rights obligations.
- ESSA In-Field: To be considered in-field for ESSA reporting purposes, teachers who teach gifted classes must hold Gifted Endorsement or a Gifted (P-12) certificate.

### **8.i English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)**

*(O.C.G.A. § 20-2-156; GaPSC Rules 505-2-.97, 505-2-.166, 505-2-.184; SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.02; GaDOE ESOL Program Guidance)*

- PQ: Teachers who teach ESOL classes must meet the professional qualifications established by the LEA. LEAs must continue to meet civil rights obligations. (Guidance and applicable investigation reports are available through the Office of Civil Rights.)
- ESSA In-Field: To be considered in-field for ESSA reporting purposes, teachers who teach ESOL classes must hold ESOL Endorsement, an ESOL (P-12) certificate, hold a degree in ESOL or have completed 21 semester hours of ESOL coursework.

### **8.j Pre-Kindergarten Programs**

*(Non-Regulatory Guidance: Early Learning in the Every Student Succeeds Act; O.C.G.A. 20-2-211.1; GaPSC Rules 505-2-.54, 505-2-.159, 505-2-.42)*

- PQ: Professional Qualification requirements apply to pre-kindergarten teachers and paraprofessionals to the extent that the pre-k program is part of the LEA. Teachers who teach pre-k must meet the professional qualifications established by the LEA and must hold a Clearance certificate. According to the GaPSC 'In-Field' Rule, pre-kindergarten teachers are not required to hold certification.
- ESSA In-Field: In-Field requirements apply to pre-kindergarten teachers and paraprofessionals to the extent that the pre-k program is part of the LEA. To be considered In-Field under ESSA, pre-kindergarten teachers must have demonstrated content area expertise.

### **8.k Elementary School Teachers**

*(O.C.G.A. § 20-2-984; O.C.G.A. 20-2-2065; GaPSC Rule 505-2-.55)*

- PQ: Regular education teachers teaching Early Childhood Education must meet LEA professional qualification requirements.
- ESSA In-Field: Teachers teaching Early Childhood Education may teach one segment per day of art and music and still be considered In-Field for ESSA Reporting Purposes.

## **8.l In-School Suspension Programs**

*(GaPSC Rules 505-2-.40, 505-2-.42; SBOE Rule 160 -4-8-.12; O.C.G.A. §20-2-211.1)*

- PQ: Teachers who teach students in in-school suspension programs are not required to meet professional qualifications because in-school suspension is typically short-term; however, they must hold a Clearance certificate.
- ESSA In-Field: Because in-school suspension is typically short-term, the student's primary teacher(s) reported in Student Class is subject to in-field reporting requirements, not the teacher who is assigned to in-school suspension.

## **8.m Hospital Homebound**

*(GaPSC Rule 505-2-.40 505-2-.42; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.31; O.C.G.A. §20-2-211.1)*

- **8.m.1 Less than 20 Consecutive Days**
  - PQ: Teachers who teach students in hospital/homebound programs are not required to meet professional qualifications because students in these programs are typically not absent from school for more than twenty consecutive days.
  - ESSA In-Field: Teachers who teach students in hospital/homebound programs are not required to meet ESSA In-Field requirements because students in these programs are typically not absent from school for more than twenty consecutive days.
- **8.m.2 More than 20 Consecutive Days**
  - PQ: If a student is absent for twenty consecutive days or more, a teacher who meets the state/LEA's professional qualifications requirements must be assigned. All LEA teachers must hold a Clearance certificate.
  - ESSA In-Field: If a student is absent for twenty consecutive days or more, a teacher must be assigned. This teacher is subject to ESSA In-Field reporting requirements.

## **8.n Teachers Who Facilitate the Use of Technology-Based Programs**

*(CPI Guidance; O.C.G.A. § 20-2-211.1; GaPSC Rule 505-2-.42)*

Please see GaDOE Data Collections Data Element Detail Publications for the most current data reporting protocols.

- **8.n.1 Technology Based Instruction where Courseware/Software is Issuing Grades**
  - PQ: Teachers who facilitate the use of technology-based programs, computer assisted programs that provide self-pacing, and pre/post-testing or courses delivered through distance learning technologies, are not required to meet professional qualifications if they are not issuing grades; however, they must hold a Clearance certificate.
  - ESSA In-Field: Teachers who facilitate the use of technology-based programs, computer assisted programs that provide self-pacing, and pre/post-testing or courses delivered through distance learning technologies, are not subject to in-field requirements if they are not issuing grades; however, they must hold a Clearance certificate.
- **8.n.2 Blended Learning where Teacher is Issuing Grades**
  - PQ: Teachers who facilitate blended learning which leverages both technology- based and face-to-face instructional approaches and who issue grades are subject to state professional



qualifications for special education teachers and LEA professional qualifications for regular education teachers; all educators must hold a Clearance certificate.

- ESSA In-Field: Teachers who facilitate blended learning which leverages both technology-based and face-to-face instructional approaches and who issue grades are subject ESSA In-Field reporting; all educators must hold a Clearance certificate.

### **8.o Teachers Employed by Third-Party Contract, MOU, Staffing Agencies**

*(CPI Guidance; O.C.G.A. § 20-2-211.1.; GaPSC Rule 505-2-.42)*

- PQ: Teachers teaching in LEAs under third-party contract/ staffing agencies must meet the same certification/ professional qualification requirements established by the State/ LEA for LEA employed teachers.
- ESSA In-Field: Teachers teaching in LEAs under third-party contract/ staffing agencies are subject to ESSA In-Field reporting requirements.

### **8.p College or University Faculty Members**

*(O.C.G.A. §20-2-211.1)*

- **8.p.1 College or University Faculty Members Employed by the LEA**
  - PQ: A faculty member must meet the professional qualifications of the LEA if the LEA directly employs him or her.
  - ESSA In-Field: A faculty member is subject to ESSA In-Field reporting requirements if the LEA directly employs him or her.
- **8.p.2 College or University Faculty Members Not Employed by the LEA**
  - PQ: If a LEA (1) pays tuition to an institution of higher education to permit students to take academic courses at the college or university, or (2) acquires the teaching services of the college or university faculty member at the LEA's school through a contract or memorandum of understanding with that individual's institution of higher education, then the faculty member is not an employee of the LEA and is not subject to the professional qualification requirements of the LEA.
  - ESSA In-Field: If a LEA (1) pays tuition to an institution of higher education to permit students to take academic courses at the college or university, or (2) acquires the teaching services of the college or university faculty member at the LEA's school through a contract or memorandum of understanding with that individual's institution of higher education, then the faculty member is not an employee of the LEA and is not subject to ESSA In-Field reporting requirements.

### **8.q Work-Based Learning (WBL) and Move on When Ready (MOWR) Teachers**

- PQ: Students enrolled in Work-Based Learning and Move on When Ready courses typically engage in educational activities with non-LEA staff. If not employed directly by the LEA, the WBL/MOWR educator is not subject to PQ.
- ESSA In-Field: Students enrolled in Work-Based Learning and Move on When Ready courses typically engage in educational activities with non-LEA staff. If not employed directly by the LEA, the WBL/MOWR educator is not subject to In-Field.

### **8.r Teachers Teaching Health/ PE to Special Education Students**

There are several options for serving student with disabilities taking health and PE courses. All students with disabilities should be scheduled in accordance with the student’s IEP. Options include 1) no special services, 2) additional supportive services in a regular course, 3) co-teaching/collaborative direct services in a regular course, or 4) direct services through ‘Adapted PE’ in a regular course.

Adapted PE (defined in FTE Data Element Detail) - This is a specially designed physical education program that is developed for a student with a disability and documented on the IEP. This is a direct service.

<b>Regular Education Health and PE taught by PE Teacher (No Additional Teacher)</b> (.0' Course Code)	SWD with IEP that states student receives "Additional Supportive Services"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PE teacher with content certification</li> <li>Inclusion Codes '4' (paraprofessional), '5' (interpreter), and '7' (assistive personnel)</li> </ul>
	SWD with no PE services in the IEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PE teacher with content certification</li> <li>No Inclusion Code</li> </ul>
<b>Regular Education Health and PE taught by PE Teacher (Additional Teacher)</b> (.9' Course Code)	SWD with IEP that states Co-teaching or Collaborative model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PE teacher with content certification</li> <li>Special education teacher with special education certification</li> <li>Inclusion Code '9'</li> </ul>
<b>Regular Education Health and PE taught by Special Education Teacher (Small Group Special Education Class)</b> (.8' Course Code)	SWD with IEP that states small group Adapted PE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary teacher must hold special education certification</li> <li>No Inclusion Code</li> </ul>

A Special Education Teacher will appear In-field for a regular education Health/PE course in which the educator is providing students direct services through ‘Adapted PE’ if the teacher holds either Special Education General or Adapted Curriculum and all the students in the course are coded in ‘Student Class’ with a ‘primary area’. Verification of this direct service alignment with student IEPs will occur during Cross-Functional or program specific monitoring.

## **9. Professional Qualification Requirements: Paraprofessionals/Non-Instructional Aides**

### **9.a Paraprofessionals Employed by the LEA**

*(O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-204, 20-2-211.1, GaPSC Rule 505-2-.18, CPI Definitions)*

A paraprofessional is an individual with instructional duties who provides instructional support.

The State of Georgia ensures that it has professional standards for all paraprofessionals working in any school, including qualifications that were in place on the day before the date of enactment of the Every Student Succeeds Act. In Georgia, a paraprofessional employed by a Georgia LEA, must meet one of the following requirements:

- Degree

Hold an associate's degree or higher in any subject from a Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC)-accepted accredited institution; **OR**

- **Coursework**  
Have completed two (2) years of college coursework (sixty [60] semester hours), at a grade of 'C,' or higher at a GaPSC- accepted accredited institution; **OR**
- **State Approved Assessment**  
Have passed the GACE Paraprofessional Assessment. If eligibility is established through the assessment, the applicant must also hold a minimum of a high school diploma or GED equivalent.

All LEA paraprofessionals must hold a Clearance certificate.

### **9.b Paraprofessionals Employed by Third-Party Contract or Staffing Agencies**

*(CPI Guidance; O.C.G.A. §20-2-211.1)*

Paraprofessionals teaching in LEAs under third-party contract/ staffing agencies must meet the same certification/ professional qualification requirements established by the NCLB/Georgia for LEA employed paraprofessionals. For CPI purposes, data collections staff advise that LEAs should report only third-party contract employees that are providing direct instruction or special education services.

All LEA paraprofessionals must hold a Clearance certificate.

### **9.c Non-Instructional Aide**

*(O.C.G.A. §20-2-211.1, GaPSC Rule 505-2-.17, CPI Definitions)*

Individuals who work solely in non-instructional roles, such as aides, food service, cafeteria or playground supervision, personal care services, and non-instructional computer assistance.

Non-Instructional Aides are not required to meet professional qualification requirements under ESSA. Non-Instructional aides However, all educators employed a LEA must hold a Clearance certificate.

### **9.d ESSA In-Field Reporting**

Paraprofessionals are not subject to ESSA In-Field Reporting.

## **10. Professional Qualification Requirements: Substitutes**

*(O.C.G.A. § 20-2-216/GaPSC Rule 505-20-.20/GaDOE Rule 160-5-1-.05)*

Georgia Law and GaPSC Rule require LEAs hiring and assigning substitute teachers and substitute paraprofessionals:

- Ensure substitutes meet state certification requirements, **OR**
- Hire substitutes who most closely meet the requirements for certification and who are available to serve as substitute teachers and paraprofessionals.

It is possible for LEAs to comply with O.C.G.A. certification requirements for substitutes without employing a substitute who is certified. In addition, because the law does not outline minimum qualifications for “substitutes who most closely meet the requirements for certification”, substitutes will not be monitored by GaDOE for compliance with professional qualifications.

- **Short Term Substitute Teachers**

- Student Class Data Element Definition: A substitute teacher is an employee hired when there is a vacant position of less than 20 days.
- Professional Qualifications – Not Applicable
- ESSA In-Field Reporting – Not Applicable

- **Long Term Substitute Teachers**

- CPI 2018 Data Element Definition: A long-term substitute is an employee hired directly by the district. This person typically has an hourly service agreement to “fill in” for a vacant permanent position for a period of four (4) consecutive weeks (20 consecutive school days) or more. Long-term substitute teachers are the sole "teachers of record" and there are no teachers under contract for the classes. Reports on long-term substitutes should not include persons substituting for teachers under contract who are away temporarily and expected to return, such as teachers on medical or maternity leave.
- Professional Qualifications – Not Applicable
- ESSA In-Field Reporting – Applicable (including clearance certificates)

## **11. Professional Qualification Requirements: Private Schools**

*(2 CFR Part 200.403(c), Title I Equitable Services 2003 B-52, B-54)*

### **11.a Private School Teachers Employed by a Private School**

Private school teachers employed by a private school are subject to professional qualification or ESSA In-Field reporting requirements.

### **11.b Title I Funded LEA Employees Providing Equitable Services in Private Schools**

- PQ: Teachers and paraprofessionals employed by LEAs using Title I funds in order to provide equitable services to private school students, must meet the same professional qualifications requirements as teachers and paraprofessionals employed by the LEA to serve public school students. Private school teachers who are employed by the LEA to provide equitable services outside of contract hours must meet the same professional qualifications requirements as teachers and paraprofessionals employed by the LEA to serve public school students. All staff employed by LEAs MUST have a Clearance certificate.
- ESSA In-Field: Teachers and paraprofessionals employed by LEAs using Title I funds in order to provide equitable services to private school students are not subject to ESSA In-Field Reporting requirements.

### **11.c Title I Tutors in Private Schools**

Title I tutors are not required to meet professional qualification or in-field reporting requirements under ESSA; however, LEAs using federal funds to support tutors are reminded that 2 CFR Part 200 states costs must be consistent with policies and procedures that apply uniformly to both federally-financed and other activities of the non-federal entity. It is recommended that LEAs ensure tutors employed by the LEA for equitable services in private schools meet the same

requirements as tutors employed by the LEA for services in public schools. All staff employed by LEAs, including tutors, MUST have a Clearance certificate.

#### **11.d Third-Party Contractors Employed by the LEA to Provide Equitable Services**

Third-Party contractors employed by the LEA to provide equitable services are not subject to professional qualification or ESSA In-Field reporting requirements. Only teachers and paraprofessionals who are directly employed by the LEA must meet professional qualification and ESSA In-Field reporting requirements.

### **12. Considerations for LEAs Developing Professional Qualifications (PQ)**

#### **LEA-developed PQ requirements can be reviewed and updated as needed.**

*Explanation: LEAs may find they need to establish qualifications that take into account teacher shortage areas and subject areas targeted for innovation. LEAs may update and revise professional qualifications during the year. LEAs should contact their assigned Title II, Part A Specialist of their intention to do so and upload a revised copy to the attachments tab in the GaDOE portal.*

#### **PQ requirements may impact student achievement.**

*Explanation: LEAs who waive certification and do not require experience in the subject in which a teacher is assigned may face circumstances where students do not have access to pertinent information. Conversely, flexible professional qualifications may allow LEAs to employ innovative practices and attract candidates, particularly in STEM/STEAM/CTAE, whom LEAs may not have otherwise been able to employ.*

#### **PQ requirements may impact climate.**

*Explanation: LEAs who establish less or more stringent requirements for existing employees and/or new employees may encounter fewer challenges or more challenges related to climate.*

#### **PQ requirements may impact scheduling.**

*Explanation: While LEAs must make staffing decisions based on fiscal and human capital, knowing state monitoring and reporting requirements may guide LEAs in determining how to assign teachers.*

#### **PQ requirements may impact supervising student teaching.**

*Explanation: In accordance with [GaPSC Educator Preparation Program Requirements](#), a student teacher must be under the direct supervision of a certified teacher.*

#### **PQ requirements may impact a LEA's federal program monitoring results.**

*Explanation: LEAs who set stringent requirements, may hire a candidate who does not meet standard LEA requirements. If monitored, LEA's who employee individuals that do not meet State/LEA professional qualification requirements will be issued findings.*

#### **PQ requirements may impact staffing decisions at the LEA's charter schools.**

*Explanation: LEA authorized charter schools must follow the LEAs PQ. LEAs may wish to establish PQ that honors the flexibility granted in the charter school's approved charter.*

**PQ requirements may impact a LEA’s candidate pool.**

*Explanation: Setting certain requirements may broaden or narrow a LEA’s candidate pool.*

**PQ requirements may impact a LEA’s budget.**

*Explanation: Teachers not eligible for CPI Charter Waiver (CHW) Codes 101-104 under ESSA in-field or PQ, will not receive Training and Experience funding.*

**PQ requirements may impact a candidate’s personal finance.**

*Explanation: LEAs may require candidates to enroll and personally finance GaTAPP participation/ GACE fees.*

**PQ requirements may impact the length of time it takes for a teacher to become fully certified and may impact a teacher’s future opportunities.**

*Explanation: LEAs that waive certification may prolong the time prior to requesting an induction certificate, thus prolonging the length of time it takes to get a teacher fully certified. In turn, this may impact a teacher’s mobility within Georgia and across state lines, placement on a salary schedule, and future retirement.*

**PQ requirements may impact the civil rights of the students being served.**

*Explanation: There are several documented [Office of Civil Rights](#) investigations and reports where lack of certification requirements or insufficient certification requirements were determined not to provide education opportunities in accordance with students’ civil rights needs.*

**PQ requirements may impact whether or not a LEA is required to disseminate 20 Day Notifications of Professional Qualifications.**

*Explanation: LEAs who set stringent requirements, may hire a candidate who does not meet standard LEA requirements. This warrants the dissemination of a 20 Day Notification of Professional Qualifications to parents.*

**13. Professional Qualification/ ESSA In-Field Requirement FAQs**

**13.a What is the timeline for teachers to meet the professional qualifications and in-field/ out-of-field requirements?**

ESSA professional qualification requirements are effective July 1, 2017. Georgia professional qualification requirements follow ‘effective dates’ as specified in law or rule. Beginning in FY18, LEAs are required to include the professional qualifications of the LEA in the District Improvement Plan.

**13.b Section Temporarily Removed**

**13.c Do Professional Qualifications apply to all teachers and paraprofessionals?**

Federal law requires SEAs and LEAs to ensure all teachers and paraprofessionals in Title programs meet state certification requirements. In Georgia, this requirement extends to all teachers and paraprofessionals in all public schools/ programs.

- Do EIP teachers need to meet PQ requirements? Yes
- Do RTI teachers need to meet PQ requirements? Yes
- Do CTAE teachers need to meet PQ requirements? Yes

- Do health/ PE teachers need to meet PQ requirements? Yes
- Do dual immersion teachers need to meet PQ requirements? Yes
- Do special education teachers serving in a co-teaching classroom and not issuing grades need to meet PQ requirements? Yes
- Do ESOL teachers need to meet PQ requirements? Yes
- Do Gifted teachers need to meet PQ requirements/ Yes
- Do teachers working in Extended Learning Time (ELT) programs need to meet PQ requirements? Yes
- Do assistant principals/ principals need to meet PQ requirements? No
- Do translators need to meet PQ requirements? No
- Do non-instructional aides need to meet PQ requirements? No
- Do parent involvement coordinators need to meet PQ requirements? No
- Do Hearing Impaired Interpreters and State Schools Residential Coordinators need to meet PQ requirements? No

**13.d Do teachers with Life Certificates (D) meet Professional Qualification and ESSA In-Field requirements? (GaPSC Rule 505-2-.12)**

Teachers who hold Life certificates (D) are fully certified and are considered in-field under ESSA if they are assigned to teach in a content area and grade level band that corresponds with the certificate.

**13.e May a LEA continue to use the HOUSSE rubric for Special Education, Life, and Dual Immersion teachers?**

No. The HOUSSE rubric was used if a veteran met all the requirements to be fully certified in Georgia, but did not meet either the content or testing requirement to be considered “highly qualified” under ESEA/NCLB. ‘Highly qualified’ is no longer required under ESSA- the HOUSSE rubric has been eliminated. Teachers must meet state certification requirements or state/LEA professional qualification requirements.

**13.f May a LEA continue to use the HiQ consultative model for serving students in alternative schools/ programs and GNETS?**

No. LEA teachers must meet State and/or LEA professional qualification requirements.

**13.g How can a LEA ensure that teachers meet both professional qualifications and ESSA in-field/ out-of-field requirements?**

In Georgia, LEAs are encouraged to make hiring, assignment, and retention decisions based on local needs in alignment with Georgia law and SBOE rules. However, LEAs that desire to ensure teachers meet both professional qualification requirements and ESSA in-field/ out-of-field requirements should consider establishing professional qualifications that take subject matter competency into consideration either by requiring certification or the GaDOE accepted equivalent.

**13.h If a current/prospective teacher or paraprofessional does not meet State or LEA professional qualification requirements should the LEA terminate employment or avoid hiring? Could employing an individual that does not meet PQ impact federal funds?**

LEAs are solely responsible for all hiring and retention decisions and for taking into account all possible repercussions. While ESSA tasks SEAs and LEAs with ensuring teachers and

paraprofessionals meet state certification requirements, it does not remove or inhibit a LEA's ability to independently make the best possible staffing decisions.

ESSA Section 8530 prohibits the USDE Secretary from withholding funds related to teacher certification. Similarly, the GaDOE will not withhold funds for failure to meet state certification law; however, LEAs may face monitoring findings for a lack of compliance. Corrective action may include the review, analysis/revision and submission of hiring and assignment procedures to ensure future compliance with state certification as required under ESSA.

**13.i Are LEAs required to train stakeholders (ex: Local BOE/Governance Teams, Superintendent, HR, Program Directors, Principal Supervisors, Principals/Assistant Principals, and Teachers) annually on ESSA PQ and ESSA In-field Reporting?**

No, but best practice would suggest that LEAs provide stakeholder groups with relevant training. New employees may benefit from in-depth training. Employees who have already been trained may benefit from a general review and updated information. It is the belief of GaDOE that all affected employees should have access to relevant information.

Several resources are available to LEAs for training including, but not limited to:

- LEA Professional Qualifications/ESSA In-Field Decision Guide  
A resource recommended for any person who needs a high-level view of PQ (i.e. Local BOE/Governance Teams, Superintendent, teachers, including first year teachers and staff new to the LEA or a change in job roles, paraprofessionals)
- Professional Qualifications/ESSA In-Field Quick Guide  
A resource recommended for LEA staff who have worked or will work with PQ (i.e. HR, Program Directors, Principals/Assistant Principals)
- Special Education Teacher Professional Qualifications/ESSA In-Field  
A resource recommended for LEA staff who have worked or will work with PQ and special education staffing (i.e. LEA Program Directors or school program contacts, and school administrators in charge of scheduling)

**13.j Are remediation plans required and monitored for LEA teachers and paraprofessionals who do not meet PQ?**

No, but LEAs are encouraged to support teachers and paraprofessionals who do not meet the professional qualifications required by the State or LEA.

**13.k How does a Charter/Strategic Waiver LEA determine if a teacher meets professional qualifications when the teacher has earned a degree or completed coursework outside the country?**

There is no single regulatory agency that approves U.S. foreign credential review agencies. For PQ purposes, LEAs must have on file foreign credential reports from a GaPSC-accepted agency identified on the GaPSC web site at [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com). These "foreign credential reports" are independent reviews prepared by GaPSC-recognized agencies, and include English translation of such information as course titles, grade, semester hours earned, U.S. equivalency of degree earned, course-by-course evaluations, etc. As fees and procedures vary from agency to agency, it is suggested that LEAs contact the organizations of their choice for additional information on the specific services and charges (See GaPSC Rule 505-2-.29 for additional information).



### **13.l Can Title I and Title II federal funds be used to meet PQ requirements?**

\*\*\*NEW\*\*\* In accordance with written guidance received from USDE in early 2018, there are circumstances in which LEAs could use Title II, Part A funds to support job-embedded PD through Alternative Certification Programs. Complete guidance is available on the GaDOE website.

GACE – If aligned with prioritized needs and not required by SEA or LEA for current assignment, Title II, Part A funds may be used to provide teacher, paraprofessional, principal, or other school leader advancement and professional growth opportunities with an emphasis on leadership opportunities and multiple career paths. For example, Title II, Part A could be used to pay for the requisite credentials (including the GACE) to assist paraprofessionals and teachers in career growth opportunities beyond base certification such as:

- Paraprofessionals to become teachers
- Teacher to teach in additional subject areas, including special education teachers adding content area
- Teacher to add endorsements for lateral movement such as: Gifted, ESOL, Online Teaching, Reading, Intervention Specialist, Work-Based Learning, STEM
- Teacher to add endorsements to support other educators such as: Teacher Leader, Coaching, Teacher Support and Coaching
- Teacher to become administrator

A reminder that the acquisition of the credentials should be completed prior to assignment.

*Note: While Title II, Part A historically funded alternative certification under NCLB in order to meet federal requirements, a change to state requirements under ESSA has brought up questions of supplanting. USDE has been contacted to provide further guidance as to the allowability of paying for alternative certification (and related expenses – staff, materials, registration) in scenarios in which certification is required by the state or LEA.*

### **13.m Can Title I schoolwide schools that consolidate federal and local funds use consolidated funds to pay for the GACE and Alternative Certification for base certification?**

Yes, to the extent that the expenditure meets the needs of the school and the school ensures it is able to meet the federal purposes and intents of contributing programs.

### **13.n Will the GaDOE or the GaPSC verify HiQ status?**

No. Highly Qualified is no longer required by and reported to the United States Department of Education.

### **13.o Can LEAs keep HiQ in current job postings?**

LEAs are always encouraged to hire the most qualified and effective teachers and leaders; however, ‘highly qualified’ as a designation is no longer required under ESSA.

### **13.p What if staff other than a teacher (i.e. media specialist teaching library science) is assigned to teach a class?**

Staff assigned to teach courses to students must meet state and/or LEA professional qualification requirements. Staff must hold appropriate certificate or equivalent to be considered in-field under ESSA reporting.

**13.q Can Title II, Part A be used to pay for required notifications (Right to Know/ 20 Day)?**

No. Title I can be used to pay for required notifications for Title I schools. IDEA may be used to pay for required 20 Day notifications for special education teachers in non-Title I schools. Other non-federal funds should be used to pay for required notifications in non-Title I schools.

**13.r Are 20 day notifications of professional qualification required when a teacher is out for an extended time on sick leave/FMLA?**

No, 20 day notifications of professional qualifications are only required when a teacher does not meet the minimum professional qualifications established by a LEA. However, LEAs may want to consider notifying parents when a teacher is out for an extended period of time as a professional courtesy and best practice.

**13.s. How should LEAs handle 20 Day Notifications of Professional Qualifications when the contents of one student's IEP warrants teaching credentials that vary from the remaining students? Am I required to send the 20 Day Notification of Professional Qualifications to the parent of that one student or am I required to send the letter to the parents of all of my students in that class?**

If a LEA has a teacher teaching a course to students who require varying credentials of the teacher, the LEA needs to send a notification only to students whose IEP warrants teaching credentials for which the teacher is not certified.

In terms of best practices, LEAs might consider sending a notification to all students stating what the course is, what the teacher is certified in, the state requirements and an explanation of which certification the teacher does not hold. The letter might also include a statement that if a parent has a question about whether or not this impacts his/ her individual student, the parent should contact the LEA/school staff for a response.

**13.t Would a teacher employed by a LEA that waives certification for ECE P-5 be considered in-field under ESSA if the educator has taken and passed the ECE GACE assessment?**

Yes, the teacher will be “in-field” under ESSA if the teacher is reported under the CHW code 103 on CPI. However, taking and passing the ECE GACE will not add the ECE field to existing certificates. Please consult GaPSC Educator Preparation Rules for details.

**13.u. How can a teacher take the ECE GACE without completing a program?**

Educators not enrolled in an educator preparation program may request eligibility to take the ECE GACE through their MyGAPSC account.

Educators actively enrolled in an educator preparation program must have their eligibility to test in their field(s) of preparation granted by their program provider.

**13.v Is a special education teacher who holds the IN4T certificate professionally qualified if they have passed the GACE assessments?**

Special education teachers who hold an IN4T meet GaDOE professional qualification requirements whether or not they have passed the GACE assessment. However, special education teachers holding a SI in special education must have taken and passed the test to meet professional qualifications.

### **13.w When reviewing a teacher’s credentials to determine if equivalent requirements are met, what should an LEA look for?**

For the purposes of reviewing credentials for reporting ESSA In-Field, GaDOE asks LEAs to use their best judgment and follow these general guidelines:

- Is the college/ university accredited according to GaPSC recognized agencies? (found on their website)
- If a transcript is translated – was it translated by a GaPSC accepted agency? (found on their website)
- Are all courses identified by the LEA completed at a ‘C’ grade or higher?
- Are all courses identified by the LEA in alignment with the topic/ Ed Prep/ certification descriptions?

### **13.x Evaluating a transcript for In-Field Equivalent Credentials**

GaDOE staff working with In-Field do not have formal guidance for evaluating a transcript for In-Field Equivalent Credentials. As we audit records, we ask LEAs to use their best judgment and ensure the answer to the following questions is ‘yes’:

- Is the college/ university accredited according to GaPSC recognized agencies? (links to GaPSC recognized accrediting agencies can be found on the GaPSC website)
- If a transcript is translated/evaluated – was it translated by a GaPSC accepted agency? (Acceptable translation agencies are listed on the GaPSC website)
- Are all courses identified by the LEA as supporting documentation completed at a ‘C’ grade or higher?
- Are all courses identified by the LEA in alignment with the topic/ Ed Prep/ certification descriptions?

### **13.y How should LEAs update their Professional Qualifications?**

LEAs submit their Professional Qualifications annually with their official application for federal funds, the CLIP (Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan). If an LEA needs to update during the year, the PQ Coordinator should email the Federal Programs Director, copying the LEA Superintendent and assigned GaDOE PQ/ In-Field Staff asking for the CLIP to be reopened for the purpose of revising PQ. The LEA may then edit the requirements and resubmit the CLIP. This can be done at any time for any reason. To minimize updates it is strongly encouraged that LEAs involve all relevant stakeholders in the development of the LEA’s professional qualifications. In addition, following edits, LEAs should make all relevant stakeholders aware of updates.

## **14. Contact Information**

### **Who do LEAs contact with questions about educator qualifications?**

- Certification- GaPSC Portal ([mail@gapsc.com](mailto:mail@gapsc.com))  
<https://www.gapsc.com/Certification/Home.aspx>

- Out- of -Field and PQ- GaDOE Title II, Part A Staff (TitleIIA@doe.k12.ga.us)  
[http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Teacher-and-Leader-Effectiveness/Pages/Professional-Qualifications-\(PQ\).aspx](http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Teacher-and-Leader-Effectiveness/Pages/Professional-Qualifications-(PQ).aspx)
- Charter Flexibility: GaDOE Charter Division Staff  
<http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Charter-Schools/Pages/default.aspx>
- Strategic Waiver Flexibility: GaDOE Policy Division Staff  
<http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Policy/Pages/IE2.aspx>
- Special Education Services: GaDOE Special Staff -Assigned District Liaison  
<http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/default.aspx>
- ESOL Services: GaDOE Title III Staff – Assigned Program Specialist  
<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Title-III.aspx>
- Gifted Services: GaDOE Gifted Staff – Program Manager  
<http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Curriculum-and-Instruction/Pages/Gifted-Education.aspx>
- Dual Immersion: GaDOE World Lang./ Global Workforce Initiatives – Program Specialist  
<http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Curriculum-and-Instruction/Pages/World-Languages-and-International-Education.aspx>