Georgia’s Systems of Continuous Improvement
Special Education Teacher Professional Qualifications/ESSA In-Field

Federal Professional Qualification Requirements - ESSA

ESSA requires SEAs and LEAs to ensure that teachers meet state certification requirements. *ESSA Sections 1111(g)(2)(J), 1112(c)(6)*

**Traditional Georgia LEAs**

Georgia law authorizes GaPSC to establish certification requirements. Special Education teachers **MUST** follow all GaPSC certification requirements and State Board of Education rules.

*O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-200, 20-2-984, GaPSC Rules*

**Special Education Teacher Issues Grades**

In compliance with Georgia State Board Rule, special education teachers who issue grades **MUST** hold GaPSC special education certification aligned with teaching assignment (general, adapted, visual impairment, etc.) *AND* **MUST** hold content certification for the subject and grade level bands for which the teacher is assigned (K-5), (4-8), (6-12) and in accordance with the LEA’s PQ Requirements. *AND* **MUST** have a clearance certificate.


**Special Education Teacher Does 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 teaching assignment (general, adapted, visual impairment, etc.) *AND* **MUST** have a clearance certificate.


**Charter & Strategic Waiver LEAs**

**Special Education Teacher Issues Grades**

In compliance with Georgia State Board Rule, special education teachers who issue grades **MUST** hold GaPSC special education certification aligned with teaching assignment (general, adapted, visual impairment, etc.) *AND* **MUST** have a clearance certificate.


**Special Education Teacher Does 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 teaching assignment (general, adapted, visual impairment, etc.) *AND* **MUST** have a clearance certificate.


**ESSA In-Field Reporting**

GaDOE will use GaPSC in-field rules to determine ESSA In-Field qualifications for special education teachers that align with each teacher’s teaching assignment for special education and content. ‘Out-of-Field’ will be reported for the entirety of the school year using Certification Records, 2 CPI and 3 Student Class data collections cycles.

**20 Day Notifications for Special Education Teachers**

- **Does not issue grades** – notifications must be disseminated if the teacher does not hold special education certification
- **Issues grades** – notifications must be disseminated if the teacher does not hold special education certification and/or content certification in accordance with the LEA’s Professional Qualification requirements.

**WHO DO LEAS CALL WITH QUESTIONS ABOUT EDUCATOR QUALIFICATIONS?**

- **OUT-OF-FIELD & PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS:**
  - GaDOE Staff, professionalqualifications@doe.k12.ga.us
  - Certification:
    - GaPSC Portal, mail@gapsc.com
  - Special Education:
    - GaDOE Special Education Staff, Assigned District Liaisons
    - Charter & Strategic Waiver Questions:
      - Policy Division Staff, lerste@gadoe.k12.ga.us

Georgia Department of Education
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