

## TIERED CERTIFICATION

**NOTE: “It is important to note that tiered certification is not tied to compensation. The GaDOE will continue to use certificate levels to determine placement on the salary schedule.”**

The Georgia Standards Professional Commission  
*Understanding the 2014 Educator Certification Rule  
Changes July 2014*

### **The 4-Tiered Certification Structure**

1. Pre-service
2. Induction
3. Professional (Standard Professional and Performance-Based Professional)
4. Advanced Professional and Lead Professional

### **The Pre-Service Certificate**

This tier is intended for educator candidates completing field experiences or student teaching in Georgia schools. It must be requested on behalf of the candidate by the university providing the educator preparation program.

**This certificate will not be issued until July 1, 2015. Only those educator candidates who will be participating in field experiences or student teaching in Georgia schools on or after July 1, 2015, need apply.**

### **Requirements**

In order to qualify for the Pre-Service certificate, an applicant must meet the following requirements:

- Enrollment in an educator preparation program leading to initial certification;
- Successful background check
- Completion of the Georgia Educator Ethics Exam (a passing score is not required for this certificate).

### **Validity**

The Pre-Service certificate is valid for as many as 5 years, and may be extended at the request of the educator preparation provider. It is invalidated upon program completion, or if the candidate withdraws, transfers, or is removed from the program. A former candidate who re-enrolls in an

educator preparation program may be issued a new 5-year Pre-Service certificate at the request of the provider. A current background check is required in this case.

## Notes

- The Pre-Service certificate is **not** required for employed Postbac and MAT students. It **is** required for non-employed Postbacs and MAT students.
- The Pre-Service certificate is **not** a professional educator certificate. It allows the holder to participate in supervised field experience, clinical practice, student teaching, or residency work in Georgia schools;
- If you have already completed the student teaching portion of an educator preparation program, or if you will complete it outside of the state of Georgia, you need not apply for a Pre-Service certificate.

(Certificates of Eligibility - this is not one of the Tiers - Applicants who have completed an educator preparation program and meet all other requirements for certification will receive a Certificate of Eligibility if not employed by a Georgia School. This Certificate of Eligibility will demonstrate to potential employers that the applicant will qualify for certification if hired. The certificate is issued by the PSC at the request of the Program Provider after graduation and is valid for 5 years. If an individual's Certificate of Eligibility expires without being replaced by an Induction certificate, the individual may receive a new Certificate of Eligibility upon reapplication to the PSC. The Certificate of Eligibility is invalidated upon issuance of the Induction certificate.)

## The Induction Certificate

You must be employed by a Georgia School System at the time that you apply for this certificate in order to be eligible for full certification.

## Requirements

- Completion of a GaPSC-approved educator preparation program. Passing score on the GACE Program Admission Assessment, or exemption.
- Induction level or higher passing score on the appropriate GACE content assessment.
- As of January 1, 2015, a passing score on the Georgia Educator Ethics Assessment.
- As of September 1, 2015, a passing score on edTPA, the GaPSC-approved content pedagogy assessment. Submit a copy of your official score report with your application package;
- Completion of a course in identifying and educating exceptional children. This course should be documented on an official transcript submitted with your application package.

## **Validity**

In most cases, the Induction certificate is valid for 3 years. The Induction certificate may be renewed, at the request of an employing Georgia School System, in the following situations:

- An Induction educator who receives more than one unsatisfactory annual evaluation by the building administrator (principal)
- will not be eligible for a Professional certificate until further experience is earned. An educator in this situation must work with his/her educator preparation provider to address the deficiencies in his/her performance. Once the educator preparation provider documents these steps on an updated Approved Program Completion Form, the educator may apply for a second Induction certificate;
- An educator who does not work for all of the 3 years of the Induction certificate, or one who does not convert to a Professional certificate as soon as the Induction certificate expires, may not meet the experience requirements for a Professional certificate. In this case, the educator may apply for a second Induction certificate in order to earn the required experience to move to the next tier.

## **The Professional Certificate**

### **Requirements for the Standard Professional Certificate**

- At least 3 years of experience within the last 5 years.
- Effective July 1, 2017 Professional level passing score on the appropriate GACE content assessment.
- Employment within a Georgia school district. If you are not employed at the time of application but you meet all other requirements for a Professional certificate, you will be issued a Certificate of Eligibility that may be converted to a Professional certificate upon employment.

### **Requirements for the Performance-Based Professional Certificate**

- At least 3 years of experience within the last 5 years. Educator experience in Georgia public school systems is transmitted electronically to the GaPSC.
- At least 2 Proficient or Exemplary TKES annual performance ratings earned within the last 5 years.
- Effective July 1, 2017 Professional level passing score on the appropriate GACE content assessment.
- Employment within a Georgia school system. If you are not employed at the time of application but you meet all other requirements for a Professional certificate, you will be issued a Certificate of Eligibility that may be converted to a Professional certificate upon employment.

## **Advanced Professional and Lead Professional**

Please refer to the PSC website at one of the following links:

[http://www.gapsc.com/Commission/policies\\_guidelines/Downloads/2014EducatorCertificationRuleChanges.pdf](http://www.gapsc.com/Commission/policies_guidelines/Downloads/2014EducatorCertificationRuleChanges.pdf)

<http://www.gapsc.com/Certification/TieredCertification/tieredCertification.aspx>

\* If you need this document in another format, please email Kathy Moody or call 706-864-1757 \*