

Georgia Professional Standards Commission



**House Select Committee on Education
Strategy and Practices Presentation
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Contact Information

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Georgia Professional Standards Commission

Background

- Separate Agency-3 areas of responsibility
- Licensure
- Education Preparation Programs
- Ethics

Ethics Division

- 14 employees
- Receive about 115 complaints per month
- Any resident of Georgia can file a complaint
- Must be in writing and signed
- Can be submitted electronically

Complaints

- All complaints submitted to Commission with identifying information redacted
- Staff make recommendation to investigate, remand, or no probable cause
- If no probable cause is recommended, Commission views entire complaint rather than synopsis
- If vote is to investigate, case is assigned

Cases Investigated

- An investigator can complete 5-6 cases per month
- Investigation includes interviewing witnesses, the accused educator, and writing a detailed result of the evidence including a list of witnesses interviewed
- Complex cases and sensitive cases take longer

Code of Ethics

- Actually a Code of Conduct
- 11 Standards
- Use to have 10 standards but we had a little issue with testing so we added an 11th standard
- Standard 9-required reporting
- Usual protocol is for Human Resources or Superintendent to file formal complaint

Other Responsibilities

- Proactive
- Make presentations to Colleges of Education majors
- Professional organizations
- Regional Education Service Agencies
- School systems/school
- Provide resources on website

Georgia Assessment for Certified Educators (GACE)

- As part of acceptance into College of Education, candidate must take entry level GACE ethics test which exposes them to the code of Ethics and has learning modules which must be completed
- Upon graduation, a candidate must successfully complete the exit level GACE ethics test as part of requirements to obtain a Georgia teaching certificate

NASDTEC

- National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education
- Maintains Clearinghouse
- Known as Multi-State Educator Lookup System (MELS)
- Membership fee for Georgia Professional Standards Commission is \$4,000
- Maintains a database of disciplinary actions reported by NASDTEC members

Responsibilities

- Ethics Division- responsible for reporting all Georgia educators who have had license suspended, revoked, denied, or invalidated
- Technology Division-downloads Clearinghouse database to Georgia database monthly
- Certification-enters SSN of candidates into application process
- Application-flagged if record at NASDTEC

Concerns

- Human Errors-incorrect information entered-especially transposed numbers in SSN or Date of Birth or misspelling of name (Holly, Holli, Hollie, Holley)
- Agency not entering a suspension, etc. into database
- Educator requests certificate from another state while investigation is ongoing because it is not reported to Clearinghouse until final decision

Georgia

- Any employee who is hired by a school system is required to have a national background check (FBI Criminal History)
- Any candidate for a Georgia certificate is required to complete an application and answer a personal affirmation question (copy in handout)

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