



Decatur County Schools

PROUD  
TRADITION

THE BEARCAT WAY

PROMISING  
FUTURE

Decatur County Schools

2015-2016

**HiQ Criteria and Requirements  
For Teachers & Paraprofessionals**  
(A Guide for Educator Quality in Decatur County Schools)

*This document includes the Georgia Implementation Guidelines, a document that combines The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) guidelines established by the United States Department of Education (USDOE) with the certification rules created by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC). This policy guide (revised from ESEA/NCLB Title II, Part A, LEA Handbook) is designed to assist LEA administrators in determining if their teachers and paraprofessional are "highly qualified". In addition, this addresses Georgia HOUSSE documents, and required remediation and notification.*

Prepared by: Dr. Linda B. Lumpkin  
Assistant Superintendent  
Human Resources

# **THE GEORGIA IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES**

## Criteria for “Highly Qualified” Teachers and Paraprofessionals

### **4.1 The Georgia Department of Education**

The DOE is the designated State Education Agency (SEA) for receiving and administering Title II, Part A Improving Teacher Quality State Grants. The DOE provides resources (like the Portal) and support to LEAs so that Federal, state and local Title II, Part A goals may be met. A network of Title II, Part A Education Program Specialists is available to provide information about Title II, Part A requirements, assist with data needs and local planning, and support teacher preparation and professional development initiatives. The DOE website provides information, resources, and links for Georgia’s school administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, teacher educators, and parents.

### **4.2 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 teacher quality and, as such, is the agency in charge of establishing and enforcing professional teaching standards and certifying and licensing teachers. The GaPSC provides resources to LEAs (Like HiQ and Project EQ) so that Federal, state and local Title II, Part A goals may be met.

### **4.3 Required Notification: Right to Know - ESEA Sec. 1111(h)(6)(A-B)**

#### **Parent’s Right to Request a Teacher’s and a Paraprofessional’s Qualifications**

By law, LEAs are required to notify parents that they may request information regarding the teacher’s or the paraprofessional’s professional qualifications, including the following:

- Whether the teacher/paraprofessional has met the Georgia Professional Standards Commission certification requirements for the grade level and subject area(s) in which the teacher provides instruction;
- Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which Georgia qualifications or certification criteria have been waived;
- The college major and any graduate certification or degree held by the teacher;
- Whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

LEAs must:

- Notify parents in a format that is understandable and will ensure that all parents have the opportunity to receive the information. To the extent practicable, the notification should be provided in a language that parents may understand. This may include, but is not limited to a LEA or school handbook, a letter mailed home, inclusion in a newsletter, posting on a website, and/ or a school-wide email.
- Ensure the notification or document that contains the notification must include the principal’s contact information, the school or LEA name, the date/ month and year of notification.
- Maintain records that document the dissemination of the right to know in multiple forms to the parents of all students.

**20 Day Parent Notification Letter (If a teacher or long-term substitute who is not “highly qualified” has taught a student for four or more consecutive weeks.)**

LEAs are required to notify parents if a teacher who is not “highly qualified” is teaching their child a core academic content course. Parental notification is required if a teacher who is not “highly qualified” teaches their child for four consecutive weeks or more. This includes notification when students are taught for four or more consecutive weeks by single or multiple substitute teachers in instances where there is no teacher of record and/ or in the absence of the teacher of record (sick or maternity leave, etc.). Parental notification is not required for teachers who are not teacher of record for core academic subjects. Parent notification is not required for paraprofessionals who are not “highly qualified.” Effective 2006 – 2007, the parent notification requirement applies to teachers who teach core academic content subjects in Title I and Non-Title I schools and programs.

Letters, at a minimum, must include the following:

- The date of the communication (Month, Date, Year);
- The name and contact information of the school;
- The name, position, and contact information for someone the parent can contact with questions;
- The name of the teacher or substitute who is not highly qualified; and
- The name of the course/ core academic subject in which the teacher or substitute is not highly qualified.

LEAs must:

- Notify parents via standard mail;
- To the extent practicable, the notification should be provided in a language that parents may understand; and
- Maintain records documenting letters were mailed. Note: Evidence that letters were mailed to parents may include, but is not limited to, a copy of address labels, class roster/list with notation of date mailed, one or more returned letters, postage meter receipt, etc.

**4.4 Principal Attestations - ESEA Sec. 1119(i)(1)**

All LEA principals are required to attest annually as to the highly qualified status of staff. In Georgia, Title I, Part A and Title II, Part A require the same form. Principals should complete this form at the opening of school and no later than October 1. This date supports principals in identifying staff who are not highly qualified for their current year’s teaching assignment(s) so that the leader may make informed decisions regarding staffing, notify parents in a timely manner in accordance with Federal law, and develop remediation plans in a timely manner. Forms should be completed fully and kept on file by the LEA.

**4.5 Highly Qualified Teacher and Paraprofessional Hiring and Placement Training**

All LEA Principals should be trained annually on what the Federal government and state of Georgia consider highly qualified. Specifically, LEA Federal programs grant managers should train principals about how Highly Qualified relates to each grant and what the Federal government requires. Staff paid for by Title I, Part A and Title II, Part A, such as class size reduction teachers or paraprofessionals, must be highly qualified. In addition, paraprofessionals should perform their work under the direct supervision (close and frequent proximity) of a highly qualified teacher. The LEA is responsible for the maintaining documentation that this training has occurred. This

documentation should, at a minimum, include a dated agenda with any related materials and participant sign-in.

#### **4.6 Remediation Plans**

LEAs are required to develop a remediation plan for each non-highly qualified core academic teacher, each core academic teacher who holds a CA (Core Academic), O (One Year Supervised Practicum), CP (Clinical Practice), NNT (Non-professional Non-renewable), IT (Intern Teacher), or IN4T (Induction Pathway 4) IN4T certificate, and each non-highly qualified paraprofessional. The remediation plan should be developed in collaboration with the teacher or paraprofessional and the principal and/or human resources personnel. The remediation plan should be developed at the time of hire or job assignment. Written documentation indicating the progress made by each teacher or paraprofessional must be maintained by the LEA. LEAs should have written procedures that identify by position(s) the person(s) who will have the responsibilities for ensuring the process is implemented completely, accurately and in a timely manner. The position of the person responsible for maintaining the documentation should also be included.

Plans, at a minimum, must include the following:

- The name of the teacher;
- The placement for which the teacher or paraprofessional is not highly qualified;
- The date of the development of the plan;
- Signatures of teacher/ paraprofessional and the principal and/or human resources personnel; and
- Timelines and target dates that will enable:
  - The non-highly qualified teacher or paraprofessional to attain highly qualified status as soon as possible,
  - The teacher who holds a CA, O, CP, NNT, IT, or IN4T certificate to complete the non-traditional certification program as soon as possible.

#### **4.7 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 ESEA includes but is not limited to, falsifying, misrepresenting or omitting:

- Professional qualifications of teachers reported as “highly qualified”;
- Information notifying parents that they may request information regarding the teacher’s professional qualifications;
- Information notifying parents if a teacher who is not “highly qualified” is teaching their child a core academic content course;
- Information submitted to Federal and state governmental agencies; and
- Information submitted in the course of professional practice.

## **4.8 Core Academic Subjects and Other Definitions – ESEA Sec. 9101(II)**

### **Core academic subjects include:**

- **Elementary (P-5):** Reading, language arts, mathematics, broad-field science, broad-field social science, foreign languages, visual arts, music, band, chorus
- **Middle Grades (4-8):** Reading, language arts, mathematics, broad-field science, broad-field social science, foreign languages, visual arts, music, band, chorus
- **High School (6-12):** English, reading, mathematics, broad-field science (example: physics, biology, chemistry, earth space science. Refer to CAPS at [www.gapsc.com/Certification/CAPS.aspx](http://www.gapsc.com/Certification/CAPS.aspx) for complete list of core subjects under broad field science): history, political science, geography, economics, foreign languages, visual arts, music, band, chorus

(Note that dance, drama, anthropology, sociology, psychology, international relations, health, and physical education are not considered core academic subjects in Georgia.)

### **Teachers who Teach Core Academic Subjects**

All teachers who teach core academic subjects listed in 4.8 must be “highly qualified” to teach the subject. This includes remedial, extended day, evening-school, credit recovery programs, connection, advanced placement, International Baccalaureate, after-school, intersession or summer school classes. Also special education, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), technical/vocational, health/physical education and any other teacher who is the teacher of record for any of the core academic subjects must be “highly qualified” to teach the assigned core academic subject.

### **New Teacher Definition**

A new teacher is one who is a beginning teacher and is defined as a teacher in a public school who has been teaching less than a total of three complete school years.

### **Veteran Teacher Definition**

A veteran teacher is one who is not new to the profession and is defined as a teacher in a public school who has been teaching a total of three or more complete school years.

### **In-field Assignments**

The assignment of educators to positions for which they have been prepared and certified (in-field) is essential for providing the best possible educational programs for the children and youth of Georgia. It is the responsibility of the local LEA to assure that personnel assigned to teaching positions hold appropriate Georgia certification and are assigned only within the field (subject area) and grade level associated with the certificate held for each assignment during the school day. The Certification/Curriculum Assignment Policies System (CAPS) informs administrators what certification is required for teachers to teach courses on the Georgia Department of Education approved course list. Administrators are encouraged to use CAPS in determining infield assignments. Note: Highly qualified requirements may include criteria beyond in-field (certification) requirements.

### **Certification/Curriculum Alignment Project (CAPS)**

The Certification/Curriculum Alignment Project (CAPS) identifies certification (in-field) required for teachers to teach a state approved course. Note: Highly qualified requirements may include criteria beyond in-field (certification) requirements.

### **Teachers who Teach Core Academic Content Outside Their Field of Certification**

Teachers who teach core academic content outside their field of certification are not “highly qualified.”

- These teachers should be assigned to teach in their field(s) of certification the entire school day
- Or**
- They should pass the required content assessment for the subjects they teach. In certain situations, HOUSSE may be used to establish “highly qualified” status. Guidance on appropriate situations in which the HOUSSE may be used to establish “highly qualified” status is provided in Section 4.14.

### **State Approved Content Assessment**

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/>.

## **4.9 “Highly Qualified” Teacher Requirements**

### **Traditionally Prepared New Teachers**

To be considered “highly qualified” to teach in the State of Georgia, traditionally prepared new teachers must:

- Hold a bachelor’s degree or higher from a GaPSC accepted, accredited institution of higher education;
- Hold a valid Georgia teaching certificate;
- Have evidence of subject matter competence in the subjects they teach by:
  - an academic major **OR** the equivalent (minimum of 15 semester hours for middle grades; minimum of 21 semester hours for secondary);
  - **AND** a passing score on the State approved, required content assessment for the area/subjects they teach;
- Have a teaching assignment that is appropriate for the field(s) listed on the Georgia teaching certificate.

### **Non-Traditionally Prepared New Teachers**

To be considered “highly qualified” to teach in the State of Georgia, non-traditionally prepared new teachers must:

- Hold a bachelor’s degree or higher from a GaPSC accepted, accredited institution of higher education;
- Hold a valid Georgia teaching certificate;
- Have evidence of subject matter competence in the subjects they teach by:
  - an academic major **OR** the equivalent (Elementary – passing score on state approved assessment; Middle Grades - 15 semester hours; Secondary Grades – 21 semester hours)
  - **OR** a passing score on the State approved appropriate core academic content assessment (GACE). Note that for Elementary, the GACE is required prior to program admission. (see \* below as the test must be passed within three years)

All completers of non-traditional programs must pass the State approved program content assessment upon program completion. However, the GaTAPP paths of One Year Supervised Practicum (OYSP) and Core Academic (CA) require passing the state approved content assessment upon admission. Teachers must have a teaching assignment that is appropriate for the field(s) listed on the Georgia teaching certificate.

*\* A non-traditionally prepared teacher who holds a valid, non-renewable teaching certificate with either the major or concentration or passing score on the required content assessment in the core academic area/subject he/she teaches is considered "highly qualified," if he/she is participating in a non-traditional certification program in which the teacher: (1) receives, before and while teaching, high-quality professional development that is sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction; (2) participates in a program of intensive supervision that consists of structured guidance and regular ongoing support for teachers or in a teacher mentoring program; (3) assumes functions as a teacher for a period not to exceed three years; and (4) demonstrates satisfactory progress toward full certification as prescribed by the State. Any teacher having a teaching assignment for a non-core academic area/subject(s) is not required to meet highly qualified requirements and must complete and receive the appropriate Georgia clear, renewable professional certificate by the end of the validity period for his/her certificate.*

### **Veteran Teachers**

To be considered "highly qualified" to teach in the State of Georgia, veteran teachers must:

- Hold a bachelor's degree or higher from a GaPSC accepted, accredited institution of higher education;
- Hold a valid Georgia teaching certificate;
- Have evidence of subject matter competence in the subjects they teach by:
  - a passing score on the State approved, required content assessment for the area/subjects they teach
  - **OR** meet the requirement of the "high objective uniform state standard of evaluation" (HOUSSE), as adopted by the GaPSC. The HOUSSE instrument is applicable only to veteran teachers who are 1) multi-subject special education teachers who are the teacher of record for multi-subjects, 2) retired teachers returning to service, 3) life certificated teachers, or 4) regular education teachers for whom English is a second language and who are employed in Dual Immersion Schools and deliver all core academic content in a language other than English.
- Have a teaching assignment that is appropriate for the field(s) listed on the Georgia teaching certificate.

Additional options may be available to veteran teachers in the following situations:

- Teachers from out-of-state with appropriate experience;
- Teachers holding middle grades concentrations obtained by coursework before July 1, 2006;
- Teachers holding special education content concentrations obtained by coursework before August 31, 2006.

(For GaPSC certification information, see <http://www.gapsc.com>)

### **Teachers in Charter Schools, Charter LEAs, or Strategic Waivers School Systems**

To be considered "highly qualified" to teach in a Georgia public charter school, charter LEA, or Strategic Waivers School System, teachers of core academic content subjects must meet all requirements as outlined in this guidance (Item 4.9) except the requirement of holding a valid Georgia teaching certificate in the assigned teaching field provided that the terms of the approved charter contract or Strategic Waivers School System contract allow the LEA/school to waive Georgia educator certification. If the approved charter does not allow a waiver for State

certification, teachers must meet ALL requirements of “highly qualified” teachers as outlined in this document, including educator certification issued by the GaPSC.

“Highly Qualified” Requirements For Charter Schools, Charter LEAs, and Strategic Waivers School Systems that Require Certification

*Teachers must:*

1. Hold a bachelor’s degree or higher from a GaPSC accepted, accredited institution of higher education\*;
2. Hold a valid Georgia teaching certificate;
3. Have evidence of subject matter competence in the subjects they teach by:
  - a. an academic major **OR** the equivalent (Elementary – passing score on state approved assessment; Middle Grades - 15 semester hours; Secondary Grades – 21 semester hours)
  - b. **OR** a passing score on the State approved, required content assessment for the area/subjects they teach ( see \*\* below as the test must be passed within three years)
  - c. **OR** meet the requirement of the “high objective uniform state standard of evaluation” (HOUSSE), as adopted by the GaPSC. The HOUSSE instrument is applicable only to veteran teachers who are 1) multi-subject special education teachers who are the teacher of record for multi-subjects, 2) retired teachers returning to service, 3) life certificated teachers, or 4) regular education teachers for whom English is a second language and who are employed in Dual Immersion Schools and deliver all core academic content in a language other than English.
  - d. Have a teaching assignment that is appropriate for the field(s) listed on the Georgia teaching certificate.

*\* The bachelor degree or higher must be from a GaPSC accepted, accredited institution of higher education. For degrees earned outside the United States, the institution from which the educator holds the degree must be credentialed by a GaPSC accepted credential agency as outlined in Rule 505-2-21.*

*\*\* Any teacher hired by a charter school, charter LEA, or strategic waivers school system that requires teachers to be certified who hold a CA, O, CP, NNT, IT, or IN4T teaching certificate with either the major or concentration or passing score on the required content assessment in the core academic area/subject he/she teaches is considered “highly qualified,” if he/she is participating in a non-traditional certification program in which the teacher: (1) receives, before and while teaching, high-quality professional development that is sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction; (2) participates in a program of intensive supervision that consists of structured guidance and regular ongoing support for teachers or in a teacher mentoring program; (3) assumes functions as a teacher for a period not to exceed three years; and (4) demonstrates satisfactory progress toward full certification as prescribed by the State. Any teacher having a teaching assignment for a non-core academic area/subject(s) is not required to meet highly qualified requirements and must complete and receive the appropriate Georgia clear, renewable professional certificate by the end of the validity period for his/her certificate.*

“Highly Qualified” Requirements for Charter Schools, Charter LEAs and Strategic Waivers School Systems that DO NOT Require Teacher Certification

*Teachers must:*



1. Hold a bachelor's degree or higher from a GAPSC accepted, accredited institution of higher education\*;
2. Have evidence of subject matter competence in the subjects they teach by:
  - a. An academic major **OR** the equivalent (Elementary – passing score on state approved assessment; Middle and Secondary Grades - 21 semester hours)
  - b. **OR** a passing score on the State-approved, required content assessment for the area/subjects they teach\*\*;
  - c. **OR** meet the requirement of the “high objective uniform state standard of evaluation” (HOUSSE), as adopted by the GaPSC. The HOUSSE instrument is applicable only to veteran teachers who are 1) multi-subject special education teachers who are the teacher of record for multi-subjects, 2) retired teachers returning to service, 3) life certificated teachers, or 4) regular education teachers for whom English is a second language and who are employed in Dual Immersion Schools and deliver all core academic content in a language other than English.
3. Have a teaching assignment that is appropriate for the core academic area/subject(s) in which the teacher serves as the teacher of record **AND** in which the teacher validates their “highly qualified” status with an appropriate major, **OR** the equivalent of the major, **OR** a passing score on the State approved, required content assessment for the area/subjects they teach, **OR** HOUSSE requirements, which is applicable to veteran teachers who are 1) multi-subject special education teachers who are the teacher of record for multi-subjects, 2) retired teachers returning to service, or 3) life certificated teachers.

*\*The bachelor's degree or higher must be from a GaPSC accepted, accredited institution of higher education. For charter school teachers who hold degrees earned outside the United States and are employed after November 1, 2010, the institution from which the educator holds a degree must be credentialed by a GaPSC accepted credential agency listed at [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com).*

*\*\* Effective March 6, 2007, the only assessment accepted by the GaPSC are the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE) for fields in which there is a GACE. The GaPSC will not accept Praxis tests taken after March 5, 2007. Educators who passed either the Teacher Certification Tests (TCT) or the Praxis content tests in the appropriate field when these were the required assessment tests also fulfill the content assessment requirement.*

*Teachers with Induction- Pathway 1, 2 or 3, Professional, Lead Professional, and Advanced Professional Certificates*

Teachers who hold Induction (I)- Pathway 1, 2 or 3, Professional (SR), Lead Professional (LP), and Advanced Professional (AP) certificates are considered “highly qualified” if they have completed a state-approved program from a GaPSC accepted, accredited institution of higher education, have passed the content assessment, and have an appropriate teaching assignment. Teachers who hold Supplemental Induction Teaching (SIT) certificates are considered “highly qualified” if they have passed the content assessment and have an appropriate teaching assignment.

**Teachers with Life Certificates—(D)**

Teachers who hold life certificates (D) are fully certified and are considered “highly qualified” if they have a major, passed the State required content assessment (GACE, Praxis II or TCT), and have an appropriate teaching assignment. Those who hold a life certificate and have not passed a content assessment must pass the appropriate content assessment or meet the HOUSSE

requirement in order to be considered “highly qualified.” Retired life certificate holder re-entering the teaching profession may utilize HOUSSE to establish their “highly qualified” status.

**Teachers with International Exchange Certificates—(X)**

Teachers who hold International exchange certificates are considered “highly qualified” provided the teachers have a major or the equivalent of a major (minimum of 15 semester hours for middle grades; minimum of 21 semester hours for secondary) in the core academic content area in which the teacher serves as the teacher of record, and have passed the appropriate State approved content assessment, and have a teaching assignment that is appropriate for the field(s) listed on the Georgia teaching certificate.

**Teachers with GaTAPP Path Certificates – (I, A, CP, CA, O)**

Teachers who hold one of the GaTAPP path certificates (Intern [I], ADAC [A], Clinical Practice [CP], Core Academic [CA], and OYSP [O]) are considered “highly qualified” if they meet the requirements for Non-Traditionally Prepared New Teachers. Teachers who hold either an I, A, CP, CA, or O certificate in Special Education who serve as the teacher of record in core academic subject areas must demonstrate subject matter competence by meeting the requirements of Traditionally Prepared New Teachers and have an appropriate teaching assignment to be considered “highly qualified.”

**Teachers with Adjunct License - (J)**

A teacher holding an Adjunct License is considered “highly qualified” as long as the teacher has an appropriate teaching assignment. The Adjunct License is a type of certification document for the individual with (a) specific knowledge, skills, and experience in an engineering, medical, dental, pharmaceutical, veterinarian, legal, accounting, or arts profession, or any other professional position approved by the (GaPSC); or (b) instructional experience in a branch of the U.S. military (except for JROTC), or a GaPSC-accepted accredited college or university; and (c) who is eligible to provide instruction in the **core academic subjects in grades 6-12 only**. The Adjunct License is valid for 1 year and may be renewed by the LEA upon meeting the requirements for renewal, as specified by the LEA.

**Teachers with Non-Renewable Professional – (NT)**

Teachers who hold NT certificates are considered “highly qualified” if they have passed the State approved content assessment in the core academic subject area in which they serve as the teacher of record. Teachers who hold NT certificates in Special Education who serve as the teacher of record in core academic subject areas must demonstrate subject matter competence by meeting the requirements of Traditionally Prepared New Teachers and have an appropriate teaching assignment to be considered “highly qualified.”

**Teachers with Non-Renewable Non-Professional - (NNT or NT non-professional) or Induction Pathway 4 certificates**

Teachers who hold NNT (or NT non-professional) or Induction-Pathway 4 certificates are considered “highly qualified” if they are pursuing their initial professional teaching certification through an approved non-traditional educator preparation program if the teacher:

- Holds at least a bachelor’s degree;
- Has already demonstrated subject-matter competency in the core academic subject(s) the teacher will be teaching; **and**

- Is participating in a non-traditional route to certification program in which the teacher:
  - 1) Receives, before and while teaching, high-quality professional development that is sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction;
  - 2) Participates in a program of intensive supervision that consists of structured guidance and regular ongoing support for teachers or in a teacher mentoring program;
  - 3) Assumes functions as a teacher for a period not to exceed three years; **and**
  - 4) Demonstrates satisfactory progress toward full certification as prescribed by the State.

Any teacher having a teaching assignment for a non-core academic area/subject(s) is not required to meet “highly qualified” requirements and must complete and receive the appropriate Georgia Induction or Professional certificate by the end of the validity period of his/her certificate. Teachers who hold CA (Core Academic), O (One Year Supervised Practicum), CP (Clinical Practice), NNT (Non-professional Non-renewable), IT (Intern Teacher), or IN4T (Induction Pathway 4) certificates in Special Education who serve as the teacher of record in core academic content areas must demonstrate subject matter competence by passing the appropriate State approved content assessment.

**Teachers with Permits-(P)**

Teachers who hold a teaching permit are considered “highly qualified” by passing the State approved content assessment in the core academic content areas in which they serve as the teacher of record.

**Teachers with Waivers- (W)**

Teachers who hold waiver certificates in core academic content areas are not “highly qualified.”

*Quick Reference from Georgia Professional Standards Commission 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)	Pre-Service (PS) Induction (IN) Non-Renewable Professional (N) International Exchange (X) 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)

**4.10 “Highly Qualified” Requirements for Special Education Teachers**

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the reauthorized IDEA legislation of 2004 require special education teachers to be “highly qualified.” The requirement to be “highly qualified” applies to those serving as the teacher of record in one or more of the core academic content areas in which the teacher is primarily responsible for instructing students.

**Teachers Certified in Special Education General Curriculum**

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.

### **Teachers Certified in Special Education Adapted Curriculum**

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).

### **Teachers Certified in 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.

### **Consultative\* Special Education Teacher**

Educators who hold either a Special Education General Curriculum or Special Education Adapted Curriculum certificate and serve as a special education teacher providing consultative special education services along with a "highly qualified" classroom content teacher who is instructing students in core academic content.

*\*The term "consultative" is used to refer to the specific roles that special education teachers have when they are providing services in their area(s) of exceptionality(ies). The term incorporates references such as inclusion, mainstreaming, collaborative or co-teacher.*

### **Special Education Teacher of Record**

Teachers of record in special education must hold certification in Special Education General Curriculum and/or Special Education Adapted Curriculum and one or more of the core academic subject areas in which they are responsible for instructing students.

A teacher's content level expertise in the core academic content area(s) as evidenced in the concentration level listed on his/her certificate must be at or above the level of instruction prescribed by the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

### **Special Education Teacher of Record for Core Academic Content Areas**

Teachers who hold special education certification who serve as the teacher of record in one or more core academic content areas must meet the same requirements as all teachers of core academic content areas at the appropriate certification and instructional level(s) as indicated by the student's IEP.

### **Teachers Who Teach Core Academic Subjects for High School Credit**

Teachers (including special education teachers whose students are not assessed with the GAA) who teach core academic subjects for high school credit must hold the appropriate 6-12 certification for the subject field to be considered highly qualified.

**Certification Field 708 Special Education General Curriculum/ Early Childhood Education**  
Teachers who hold Field 708 Special Education General Curriculum/ Early Childhood Education on their Georgia teaching certificates are considered highly qualified to teach regular early childhood education (P-5) and special education early childhood education (P-5).

**GACE Assessments Related To Special Education:**

The following descriptors are presented as general guidelines only and assume the educator has met any additional certification requirements. Consult with the employing LEA and/or GaPSC Certification Division for individual certification requirements.

Both tests in the GACE assessments must be passed to meet the assessment requirement.

GACE 003 and 004 – Early Childhood Special Education General Curriculum (P-5)

- By passing the GACE 003 and 004 (Early Childhood Special Education General Curriculum), the educator can teach every core academic subject, as the teacher of record, in the regular P-5 classroom and/or teach special education students who are in the general curriculum through fifth grade.
- Only educators who complete an approved preparation program in Early Childhood Special Education General Curriculum can and must take the GACE 003 and 004 for initial certification. This field cannot be added to an existing certificate via testing.
- To teach the special education adapted curriculum, the educator must pass GACE 083 and 084 (Special Education Adapted Curriculum).

GACE 081 and 082 – Special Education General Curriculum (P-12)

- By passing GACE 081 and 082 (Special Education General Curriculum), the educator can serve as a consultative special education teacher for special education general curriculum in grades P-12, but not as the teacher of record.
- In addition to passing GACE 081 and 082, the educator must pass GACE 087 and 088 (Special Education Academic Content Concentrations) to serve as the teacher of record in the five concentration areas (language arts; reading; mathematics; social science; science) for special education students in grades P-8. The educator must pass the appropriate 6-12 GACE content assessment(s) to teach, as the teacher of record in core academic subject areas for special education students in grades 9-12.
- To teach the special education adapted curriculum, the above educator must pass GACE 083 and 084 (Special Education Adapted Curriculum).

GACE 083 and 084 – Special Education Adapted Curriculum (P-12)

- By passing GACE 083 and 084 (Special Education Adapted Curriculum), the educator can serve as a consultative special education teacher for students in the adaptive curriculum in grades P-12, but not as the teacher of record.
- In addition to passing GACE 083 and 084, the educator must pass the GACE 087 and 088 (Special Education Academic Content Concentrations) to teach, as the teacher of record, special education adapted curriculum students in grades P-12 in the five concentration areas (language arts, reading, mathematics, social science, science).

GACE 085 and 086 – Special Education Deaf Education (P-12)

- By passing GACE 085 and 086 (Special Education Deaf Education), the educator can serve as a consultative special education deaf education teacher in grades P-12, but not as the teacher of record.
- In addition to passing GACE 085 and 086, the educator must pass the GACE 087 and 088 (Special Academic Content Concentrations) to teach, as the teacher of record, special education deaf students in the five concentration areas (language arts, reading, mathematics, social science, science) in grades P-8. The educator must pass the appropriate 6-12 GACE content assessment(s) to teach, as the teacher of record in core academic content areas for special education deaf students in grades 9-12.

#### GACE 087 and 088 – Special Education Academic Content Concentrations

- To assist special education teachers who serve as the teacher of record in some, not all, core academic subjects, the Special Education Academic Content Concentrations GACE (Tests 087 and 088) may be taken as two separate assessments.

By passing the Special Education Reading, English Language Arts, and Social Studies GACE (087), an educator holding a Special Education Consultative certificate may add the special education academic content concentrations of Reading, English Language Arts, and Social Studies at the P-5 and 4-8 grade levels.

By passing one of the following GACE assessments, an educator holding a Special Education Consultative certificate may add the special education academic content concentration of Social Science 6-12: Economics (038, 039), Geography (036, 037), History (034, 035) or Political Science (032, 033). Adding the Sp.Ed. Social Science 6-12 certification field allows the special education teacher to be highly qualified to serve as the teacher of record in every special education social studies class 6-12.

By passing the Special Education Mathematics and Science GACE (088), an educator holding a Special Education Consultative certificate may add the special education academic content concentrations of Mathematics and Science at the P-5 and 4-8 grade levels.

Other options for educators in special education for adding academic content concentrations in order to serve as the teacher of record in a given content area includes:

- Passing the appropriate middle or secondary content area GACE assessments;
- Passing the GACE 001 and 002 (Early Childhood Education), only for those teachers who hold a clear, renewable special education curriculum certificate to add the academic concentrations;
- A teacher's content level expertise in the core academic content area(s) as evidenced in the concentration level listed on his/her certificate must be at or above the level of instruction prescribed by the student's Individualized Education Plan.

Table: Test Options for "Highly Qualified" Special Education Teachers in Core Academic Content Areas\*  
 \*Teacher's Content Level Expertise in the Core Academic Content Area(s) must be at or above the level of instruction prescribed by the student's IEP

GACE Options for currently certified Special Education Teachers	Early Childhood (P-5)		Middle Grades (4-8)		Secondary (6-12)		
	General Curriculum Assessment	Adapted Curriculum Assessment	General Curriculum Assessment	Adapted Curriculum Assessment	General Curriculum Assessment Regular Diploma	Adapted Curriculum Assessment or Non-standard GHSGT Sp. Ed. Diploma	General Curriculum Assessment High School Certificate
Early Childhood Education (001) (002)	X	X		X		X	
Early Childhood Special Education General Curriculum (003) (004)	X	X		X		X	
Middle Grades Mathematics (013)	X	X	X	X		X	
Middle Grades Science (014)	X	X	X	X		X	
Middle Grades Social Studies (015)	X	X	X	X		X	
Middle Grades Language Arts (011)	X	X	X	X		X	
Middle Grades Reading (012)	X	X	X	X		X	
Special Education Academic Content Concentrations (to teach multi-subjects including language arts, social studies and reading) (087)	X	X	X	X		X	
Special Education Academic Content Concentrations (to teach multi-subjects including math and science) (088)	X	X	X	X		X	
6-12 Math (022) (023)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6-12 Biology (026) (027)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6-12 Chemistry (028) (029)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6-12 Physics (030) (031)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6-12 Science (024) (025)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6-12 Political Science (032) (033)^	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6-12 History (034) (035)^	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6-12 Economics (038) (039)^	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6-12 Geography (036) (037)^	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6-12 English (020) (021)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
P-12 Reading (117) (118)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Special Education GACE	General Curriculum (081) (082)		Adapted Curriculum (083) (084)		Deaf Education (085) (086)		

\*\*TCT and Praxis II Test scores may be used as appropriate

^Passing any one social science content area GACE will yield a SpEd Social Science 6-12 field (see GaPSC Rule 505-3-.29)

### **Long-Term Substitute Teachers**

Teachers who are long-term substitutes must meet the same “highly qualified” requirements as all core academic content teachers **OR** hold a Certificate of Eligibility in the field in which they are assigned as a substitute to be considered “highly qualified.” This includes substitutes serving when there is no teacher under contract and when a contracted teacher is on extended leave.

### **Long-Term Substitute Paraprofessionals**

Paraprofessionals who are long-term substitutes must meet the same “highly qualified” requirements as all paraprofessionals in order to be considered “highly qualified.” This includes substitutes serving when there is no paraprofessional employed in the position and when an employed paraprofessional is on extended leave.

### **College or University Faculty Members**

A faculty member must be “highly qualified” if the LEA directly employs him or her. If, however, a LEA (1) pays tuition to an institution of higher education to permit students to take core 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 a 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 “highly qualified” teacher requirements.

### **4.12 Requirements for “Highly Qualified” Paraprofessionals – ESEA Sec. 1119 (c-d)**

ESEA requires that all paraprofessionals who work in a program supported by Title I, Part A funds (Schoolwide Program or Targeted Assistance Program) be “highly qualified.” “Highly qualified” paraprofessional requirements do not apply to those working in pre-kindergarten classrooms unless the position is funded by Title I, Part A. Georgia requires **all** paraprofessionals be “highly qualified.”

### **Requirements for Paraprofessionals**

All paraprofessionals must have:

- Completed at least 2 years of study at an institution of higher education; or
- Obtained an associate’s (or higher) degree; or
- Met a rigorous standard of quality and can demonstrate, through the Georgia state- approved paraprofessional assessment:
  - a. Knowledge of, and the ability to assist in instructing, reading, writing, and mathematics; or
  - b. Knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing, reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness, as appropriate.

### **Georgia Paraprofessionals**

All Georgia paraprofessionals must hold a valid state paraprofessional certificate issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

*Note: An educator holding a valid Teaching Certificate in Induction- Pathway 1, 2 or 3, Professional, Lead Professional, and Advanced Professional Certificates is considered “highly qualified” to serve in a Paraprofessional position and does not need to also hold a Paraprofessional Certificate.*

### **Two Years of Study**

Two years of study at an institution of higher education requires completion of a minimum of 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours at a GaPSC approved, accepted institution of higher education.



### **Paraprofessionals – Definition**

A paraprofessional is an individual with instructional duties. 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 are not considered to be paraprofessionals for Title I purposes. The requirements do not apply to individuals who work with special education students performing non-instructional duties, such as assisting with mobility and bodily functions. The requirements do not apply to individuals with: (a) primary duties to act as a translator or (b) duties consisting solely of conducting Parental Involvement Activities. (See Title I, Part A, Section 1119 c-g.)

### **Requirements for Paraprofessionals in Non-Title I Schools**

*While Federal requirements apply only to paraprofessionals employed in Title I-supported programs, all Georgia paraprofessionals must hold a valid state certificate issued by the GaPSC. To be eligible for the clear renewable paraprofessional certificate, the applicant must:*

- Be employed as a paraprofessional in a Georgia LEA. The request for issuance of the certificate must be submitted electronically to the GAPSC from the employing LEA using the Paraprofessional Automated Certification (PAC) system.
- Have an associate's degree or higher from an accredited, GaPSC accepted institution of higher education in any subject OR have completed two years college coursework (60 semester hours) OR have passed a PSC-approved paraprofessional assessment. If eligibility is established through the assessment, the applicant must also hold a high school diploma or GED equivalent.

### **4.13 Requirements for “Highly Qualified” Paraprofessionals in Charter Schools, Charter LEAs, and Strategic Waivers School Systems that Do Not Require Certification - ESEA Sec. 1119 (c-g)**

ESEA requires that all paraprofessionals who work in a program supported by Title I, Part A funds (Schoolwide Program or Targeted Assistance Program) be “highly qualified.” “Highly qualified” paraprofessional requirements do not apply to those working in pre-kindergarten classrooms unless the position is funded by Title I, Part A.

### **Requirements for New Paraprofessionals**

New paraprofessionals hired after January 8, 2002, to work in Title I schools, (based on state certification rule 505-2-.11) must have:

- Completed at least 2 years of study at an institution of higher education; or
- Obtained an associate's (or higher) degree; or
- Demonstrate academic content knowledge in reading, writing, and mathematics through the Georgia state-approved paraprofessional assessment.

### **Two Years of Study**

Two years of study at an institution of higher education requires completion of a minimum of 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours at a GaPSC approved, accepted institution of higher education.

### **Paraprofessionals: Definition**

A paraprofessional is an individual with instructional duties. 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 are not considered to be paraprofessionals for