

Cirrus Academy Charter School Professional Qualifications/ESSA In-Field
FY2019 – 2020

Highly Qualified is no longer required by or reported to United States Department of Education (USDE). Cirrus Academy Charter School follows ESSA qualifications:

- 1) ESSA says that State Education Agencies (SEAs) and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) must ensure teachers meet applicable state certification requirements [Sections 1111(g)(2)(J), 1112(c)(6)]. In Georgia, under OCGA § 20-2-2065, state certification can be waived for most teachers, meaning that each LEA that waives certification must establish professional qualifications (PQ) for their teachers.
- 2) ESSA says the SEA must report information on the qualifications of the teachers including out-of-field. How can my LEA ensure that teachers meet PQ and ESSA In-Field? Establish professional qualifications that take subject matter competency into consideration either by requiring certification or the GaDOE accepted equivalent.

Teachers of Special Education Students

- Special Education: Teachers required to hold special education certification must hold a clearance certificate and certification in adapted or general special education curriculum that aligns to the course(s) being taught and the IEPs of the students being served. They may NOT waive certification in adapted or general special education curriculum.
- Content: All special education teachers issuing grades are required to hold content area certification in the subject field and grade level bands for which the teacher is assigned (K-5), (4-8), (6-12) in accordance with the cognitive level specified in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- Charter Waivers: In Georgia, only teachers in LEAs that waive certification may verify content through degree, coursework, or content test; this must be in compliance with the LEA certification waiver procedures outlined in the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP).
- Emergency/ Provisional: In accordance with Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), special education teachers in Georgia may not hold emergency or provisional special education credentials. This means that a special education teacher holding a GaPSC Non-Renewable Professional (N), Waiver (W), or Supplemental Induction (SI) certificate may not meet Georgia's Professional Qualification Requirements.

Professional Qualifications for Paraprofessionals ESSA Sec.1111(g)(2)(M);

GaPSC Certification Rule 505-2-.18 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 and at Cirrus Academy Charter School a paraprofessional employed by Cirrus, must hold a clearance certificate and 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 GaPSC accepted accredited institution; or
- Content Area Test: 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.

Parent's Right to Know Notification

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

- Cirrus Academy Charter School notification requirements apply to all programs within the LEA.
- Cirrus notify parents annually at the start of school (within 30 calendar days of the start of school).
- Cirrus use the language of the law.
- Cirrus maintain records of the notifications.
- Cirrus uses what Georgia considers best practices when notifying parents: (1) notifying parents in multiple formats in order to ensure accessibility and, (2) to the extent practicable, notifying in a language the parent may understand.

20 Day Notification of Professional Qualifications ESSA Sec. 1112(e)(1)(B)(ii)

Cirrus notification requirements apply to all teachers in programs within each LEA.

- Cirrus notify parents if a teacher has not met subject or grade level requirements for professional qualifications in compliance with state law for more than four consecutive weeks. In Georgia, this means either GaPSC certification requirements, or, if certification is waived under the Official Code of Georgia 20-2-80, 20-2-2065 or State Board Rules 160-5-1-.33, 160-4-9-.07, the minimum qualifications established by Cirrus Academy is a Clearance Certificate with either content or coursework
- At Cirrus and in Georgia, this notification must be made within 10 business days following the four consecutive weeks.
- For additional notification requirements and best practices, see the ESSA PQ & In-Field Implementation Guide or contact GaDOE Staff.

Cirrus Academy Charter School uses charter/strategic waiver plans to establish minimum professional qualification requirements. The minimum professional requirements are a Bachelor Degree with course work, academic degree, or content with 21 semester hours in the content area they are teaching or 35 quarter hours in the content area they are teaching. Some teachers may hold a degree but lack the GACE to suffice a GAPSC certificate. All teachers at Cirrus holds a GAPSC clearance except for Special Education Teachers who meet full GAPSC certification. Notifications are sent for any teachers who do not meet applicable State and/or LEA professional qualification