



Georgia's Pre-K Program Lead Teacher Credential/Certification Requirements

A lead teacher must have a qualifying valid and current certificates or credentials. listed below. Pre-K providers should review the qualifications and conditions carefully to ensure that the lead teacher qualifies to teach in Georgia's Pre-K. All degrees and credentials are verified in the Georgia Professional Development System (GaPDS) by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC). A complete list of qualifying credentials and credentials can be found below:

Two Year Degree (Grandfathered associate degree or Montessori Diploma)
The associate degree/Montessori Diploma applies only to Pre-K lead teachers who were approved in the 2009 – 2010 school year with an approved ECE associate degree or Montessori Diploma. These teachers will be considered approved if they continue employment as a lead teacher with the same program. If the teacher leaves the current program in which he/she is approved, he/she will be required to meet the minimum bachelor's degree requirement in the new classroom. If the program currently approved to have an associate degree/Montessori Diploma teacher replaces that teacher, the minimum education requirement of a bachelor's degree or higher credential will apply.
The following are only grandfathered credentials:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate of Science/Arts (ECE or related) • Associate of Applied Science/Technology (ECE or related) • Montessori Diploma (ECE, minimum of two years coursework)

Early Childhood Education (ECE) or Approved ECE-Related Bachelor's Degree – Four Year Degree or Higher Credential (Masters, Specialist, etc.) Approved related degrees are listed below.
Early Childhood Education (P-5)
Birth Through Kindergarten
Early Childhood Special Education General Curriculum (P-5)
Special Education Preschool (ages 3-5)
Child and Family Development
Child Development
Elementary Education
Elementary Reading and Literacy
Family & Consumer Science/Home Economics
Infant and Child Development
Special Education General Curriculum
Special Education Adapted Curriculum

Non-ECE Bachelor's or Higher with approved ECE credential
A teacher with a bachelor's degree (or higher) <u>not</u> related to Early Childhood Education must also hold one of the following approved ECE credentials:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate degree with ECE major

- Technical College Diploma (TCD) with ECE major
- Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC) with ECE major (*The Early Childhood Care and Education Program Administration TCC program is designed to prepare students for a job as manager of a Childcare Learning Center and will not meet the TCC requirement.*)
- Montessori Diploma (*Montessori courses must be taken from an accredited affiliate of the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education [MACTE]*)
- Valid Preschool Child Development Associate (CDA) credential issued by the Council for Professional Recognition. Note: The following CDA credentials will not meet the CDA requirement for a lead teacher: Infant/Toddler CDA, Family Child Care CDA, Home Visitors CDA, and Military School-Age CDA. Teachers with an expired CDA or in the process of renewing an expired CDA will not meet the CDA requirement.

T4 (Georgia teaching certificate issued by the GaPSC)

Bachelor’s Degree & Teaching Certificate Level 4, Certificate Type: Standard Professional (SR, MSR), Performance Based Professional (PR), Non-Renewable Professional (N, N1, N3), Life Certificate (D), Provisional Certificate (BT), Induction Certificates (I1, I3, I5), Military Provisional Certificates (MB1, MB2, MB3), Supplemental Induction (SIT, MSI), Waiver (W), International Exchange (X)

PSC Certification Field Codes

FLD808	Elementary Education (P-5)
FLD870	Birth Through Kindergarten
FLD708	Special Education General Curriculum Elementary Education (P-5)
FLD799	Special Education Preschool (ages 3-5)
FLD826	Special Education Preschool (ages 3-5) Endorsement
FLD805	Special Education Adapted Curriculum. The teacher must also hold ALL the Special Education Academic Content Concentrations (Language Arts, Mathematics, Reading, Science and Social Studies)
FLD798	Special Education General Curriculum. The teacher must also hold ALL the Special Education Academic Content Concentrations (Language Arts, Mathematics, Reading, Science and Social Studies)
FLD732	Reading Specialist
FLD885	ESOL English to Speakers of Other Languages <i>(The 855 field is valid through the 2025-2026 school year. Beginning the 2026-2027 school year, the field will no longer be a valid certification for Georgia’s Pre-K lead teachers.)</i>
FLD420	Montessori PK2-K (ages 2 ½ - 6)

- Only the certifications in the field codes listed above qualify for certified teacher funding rates.
- The “**Validity Date**” is the beginning date of certification for Georgia’s Pre-K teachers. DECAL does not issue waivers for certification; therefore, teachers who have pending certification are paid at the verified credential level.

T5 (Georgia teaching certificate issued by GaPSC)

Master’s Degree & Teaching Certificate Level 5, Certificate Type: Standard Professional (SR, MSR), Performance Based Professional (PR), Non-Renewable Professional (N, N1, N3), Life Certificate (D), Provisional Certificate (BT), Induction Certificates (I1, I3, I5), Military Provisional Certificates (MB1, MB2, MB3), Supplemental Induction (SIT, MSI), Waiver (W), International Exchange (X)

PSC Certification Field Codes

FLD808	Elementary Education (P-5)
FLD870	Birth Through Kindergarten
FLD708	Special Education General Curriculum Elementary Education (P-5)
FLD799	Special Education Preschool (ages 3-5)
FLD826	Special Education Preschool (ages 3-5) Endorsement
FLD805	Special Education Adapted Curriculum. The teacher must also hold ALL the Special Education Academic Content Concentrations (Language Arts, Mathematics, Reading, Science and Social Studies)
FLD798	Special Education General Curriculum. The teacher must also hold ALL the Special Education Academic Content Concentrations (Language Arts, Mathematics, Reading, Science and Social Studies)
FLD732	Reading Specialist
FLD885	ESOL English to Speakers of Other Languages <i>(The 855 field is valid through the 2025-2026 school year. Beginning the 2026-2027 school year, the field will no longer be a valid certification for Georgia's Pre-K lead teachers.)</i>
FLD420	Montessori PK2-K (ages 2 ½ - 6)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only the certifications in the field codes listed above qualify for certified teacher funding rates. • The “Validity Date” is the beginning date of certification for Georgia’s Pre-K teachers. DECAL does not issue waivers for certification; therefore, teachers who have pending certification are paid at the verified credential level. 	

T6 (Georgia teaching certificate issued by GaPSC)	
Specialist Degree & Teaching Certificate Level 6 , Certificate Type: Standard Professional (SR, MSR), Performance Based Professional (PR), Non-Renewable Professional (N, N1, N3), Life Certificate (D), Provisional Certificate (BT), Induction Certificates (I1, I3, I5), Military Provisional Certificates (MB1, MB2, MB3), Supplemental Induction (SIT, MSI), Waiver (W), International Exchange (X)	
PSC Certification Field Codes	
FLD808	Elementary Education (P-5)
FLD870	Birth Through Kindergarten
FLD708	Special Education General Curriculum Elementary Education (P-5)
FLD799	Special Education Preschool (ages 3-5)
FLD826	Special Education Preschool (ages 3-5) Endorsement
FLD805	Special Education Adapted Curriculum. The teacher must also hold ALL the Special Education Academic Content Concentrations (Language Arts, Mathematics, Reading, Science and Social Studies)
FLD798	Special Education General Curriculum. The teacher must also hold ALL the Special Education Academic Content Concentrations (Language Arts, Mathematics, Reading, Science and Social Studies)
FLD732	Reading Specialist
FLD885	ESOL English to Speakers of Other Languages <i>(The 855 field is valid through the 2025-2026 school year. Beginning the 2026-2027 school year, the field will no longer be a valid certification for Georgia's Pre-K lead teachers.)</i>
FLD420	Montessori PK2-K (ages 2 ½ - 6)
Important Information:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only the certifications in the field codes listed above qualify for certified teacher funding rates. 	

- The **“Validity Date”** is the beginning date of certification for Georgia’s Pre-K teachers. DECAL does not issue waivers for certification; therefore, teachers who have pending certification are paid at the verified credential level.

T7 (Georgia teaching certificate issued by GaPSC)

Doctoral Degree & Teaching Certificate Level 7, Certificate Type: Standard Professional (SR, MSR), Performance Based Professional (PR), Non-Renewable Professional (N, N1, N3), Life Certificate (D), Provisional Certificate (BT), Induction Certificates (I1, I3, I5), Military Provisional Certificates (MB1, MB2, MB3), Supplemental Induction (SIT, MSI), Waiver (W), International Exchange (X)

PSC Certification Field Codes

FLD808	Elementary Education (P-5)
FLD870	Birth Through Kindergarten
FLD708	Special Education General Curriculum Elementary Education (P-5)
FLD799	Special Education Preschool (ages 3-5)
FLD826	Special Education Preschool (ages 3-5) Endorsement
FLD805	Special Education Adapted Curriculum. The teacher must also hold ALL the Special Education Academic Content Concentrations (Language Arts, Mathematics, Reading, Science and Social Studies)
FLD798	Special Education General Curriculum. The teacher must also hold ALL the Special Education Academic Content Concentrations (Language Arts, Mathematics, Reading, Science and Social Studies)
FLD732	Reading Specialist
FLD885	ESOL English to Speakers of Other Languages <i>(The 855 field is valid through the 2025-2026 school year. Beginning the 2026-2027 school year, the field will no longer be a valid certification for Georgia's Pre-K lead teachers.)</i>
FLD420	Montessori PK2-K (ages 2 ½ - 6)

- Only the certifications in the field codes listed above qualify for certified teacher funding rates.
- The **“Validity Date”** is the beginning date of certification for Georgia’s Pre-K teachers. DECAL does not issue waivers for certification; therefore, teachers who have pending certification are paid at the verified credential level.