



TEACHER SUPPORT SPECIALIST



PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

**Northeast Georgia Georgia RESA
375 Winter Street
Winterville, GA 30683
706/742-8292; 706/542-7675;
Fax 706/742-8929**

<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Need, Purposes, and Program Components	3
2. Program Objectives	4
3. Admission Criteria for Endorsement Candidates	5
4. Beliefs, Commitments, and Purposes of Endorsement Programs	5-6
5. Standards for Learning and Assessment	7-8
6. Monitoring and Assessing Candidate Progress	9
7. Assessment Checklist	10-13
8. Field Experiences	14
9. Instructional Staff	14
10. Quality of Instruction	15
11. Endorsement Programs	16

*Northeast Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency
is committed to provide effective, cost-efficient services to member educational systems and
their communities for improving student progress and achievement. The agency will collaborate
with clients to identify needs, contribute leadership and expertise in responding to needs, and
evaluate services as related to student learning.*

Need

A review of the literature clearly identifies the need for some kind of support system for those new to any profession or those who are changing roles within a profession. One of the greatest problems we face in Georgia and in the nation is our inability to retain qualified teachers. Approximately 30% of teachers leave the profession in their first or second year of teaching. Almost 50% have left the profession after four years of teaching (Schlechty and Vance, 1983). Teaching is one of the few—if not the only professions in which beginners are expected to assume full responsibilities the first day on the job. The Teacher Support Specialist program is part of our answer to this problem. We recognize that new teachers do not enter the classroom for the first time as fully-formed professionals, and we know that new teachers often suffer from “reality shock” when faced with a full classroom of students. “Sink or swim” is not a sufficient strategy for developing a cadre of able young teachers in today’s environment. And, unless they are required to do so, 92% of new teachers do not seek help, except through an informal and incidental sharing of experiences.

Purposes

The purposes of the Georgia Teachers Support Specialist program are to prepare experienced teachers to provide support and guidance to student teachers, beginning teachers, and to their colleagues in peer coaching relationships. The Teacher Support Specialist program is designed to provide training not only to prepare highly qualified experienced teachers as mentors but also to provide information about cooperative, collaborative structures that can be established to support beginning teachers. TSSs will be prepared to do more than just offer advice.

Program Components

The program consists of two fifty-hour courses. The **TSS Course**, 5 SDUs, focuses on the enhancement of skills used in observing instruction and providing supportive feedback to the novice. The role and responsibilities of the TSS in identifying and responding to the needs of beginning teachers, supervising the field experiences of pre-service teachers, and in promoting professional growth of colleagues will be emphasized.

The **TSS Internship**, also a 5 SDU course and taken subsequent to completion of the TSS course, consists of activities related to the application of the knowledge and skills acquired during the first course. Activities will include mentoring and coaching another teacher and/or supervising a student teacher, attending seminars, and maintaining a reflective journal or other appropriate documentation. The Internship is supervised by a building administrator or veteran TSS teacher already on staff at the intern’s school.

TSS Program Objectives

1. Participants will be able to demonstrate and discuss the critical attributes of effective teaching practices.
2. Participants will demonstrate skills in collecting and analyzing classroom observational data and in providing feedback.
3. Participants will demonstrate effective interpersonal skills in conferencing situations.
4. Participants will be able to discuss and demonstrate principles of adult learning theory, motivation, and reflective teaching.
5. Participants will develop a calendar of activities to facilitate the professional development of a protégé.

1. Admission Criteria for Endorsement Candidates

- Each candidate will have a valid clear renewable Georgia teaching certificate.
- Each candidate will have the recommendation of the principal or other appropriate supervisors in the employing school system.
- Each candidate will provide documentation of personal and professional behaviors that would indicate the likelihood of being successful in the work of a mentor teacher.

2. Beliefs, Commitments, and Purposes Common to All Endorsement Programs

The primary role of staff development programs in the RESA is to support improvement in instruction and in learning results for students. Teachers should be able to renew their professional certification through RESA professional development unit credit courses approved by their school systems, the Georgia Department of Education, and, where applicable, the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

Guiding curriculum and instruction in all staff development courses are the beliefs that systems' thinking is an effective model for programming, that the effectiveness of educational programs should be evaluated by student results, and that staff development should model constructivist curriculum practice.

Constructivist approaches to learning incorporate the idea that learning is essentially the process of making meaning from experience. Making meaning implies the presence of context for information, of opportunity for application of skills learned, of the learner's active analysis and evaluation of concepts and skills, of the learner's reflection on the application of concepts or skills. Opportunities for field experiences are therefore essential to the learning process for adults as well as younger learners. Without field experiences and other applications of knowledge and skill, meaningful learning cannot take place.

Participants in the programs will assess the quality of instruction during and at the end of each course, and that data will be compiled for the advisory council by the RESA Professional Development Coordinator.

The RESA Professional Development Coordinator has the responsibility for assuring quality instruction in all RESA courses and insures that instructional concepts and practices are consistent with research and with sound adult learning principals.

The Georgia Department of Education and the school systems in this region have long recognized Northeast Georgia RESA for providing quality professional development courses to meet professional development needs of their staff members. Northeast Georgia RESA will work to extend to this activity our care for quality service to our clients and students in this region.

All endorsement programs delivered at this RESA have the purpose of providing educators high-quality preparation to address defined needs of students and staff members in schools. The purpose of the Teacher Support Specialist Endorsement program is to provide qualified mentors to deliver services to meet the needs of beginning teachers, student teachers, and teachers seeking collegial growth opportunities. Schools or school systems will view program completion as documenting that the individual has acquired and applied the appropriate knowledge and skills to be a mentor teacher.

Beliefs and Commitments

Northeast Georgia RESA supports the diverse needs of member systems by providing flexible, meaningful, cost-effective endorsement programs to improve student learning.

1. We believe that an effective endorsement program provides:
 - Highly specialized instruction to professional educators
 - Opportunities to use advanced learning in real school situations
 - Systematic processes for candidate selection
 - Planned field experiences with supervision
 - Research-based, comprehensive content
 - Opportunities for interaction with other learners
 - Exemplary instructors
 - Delivery model based on diverse needs of systems
 - Systematic assessment system
2. We believe every endorsement candidate should be prepared to recognize and modify for the diversity that each learner brings to the education process as evidenced by learners':
 - Values and cultures
 - Individual learning styles
 - Personal experiences and realities
 - Talents and interests
3. We believe that endorsement programs should infuse appropriate technology through:
 - Providing access to current research and world-wide resources
 - Modeling by the instructor/s
 - Training the candidates in appropriate technology applications
4. We believe instruction in an effective endorsement program incorporates and models:
 - Respect for learner diversity
 - Authentic assessment of the candidates' knowledge and skills
 - Learning styles
 - Multiple intelligences
 - Self assessment of concepts and skills
 - Real-world connections
5. We believe that instructors should be:
 - Recruited from professionals having in-field or related experiences and expertise
 - Selected according to specified criteria
 - Retained based on evidence of positive impact on candidates' learning
6. We believe that candidates should be:
 - Recruited from experienced professionals in specified areas
 - Selected according to successful performance and program criteria
 - Retained based on successful demonstration of assessment standards
7. We believe that the processes which guide policy and resources acquisition decisions should be:
 - Driven by the need to improve student learning
 - Research-based and credible
 - Collaborative and communicated
 - Responsive to system needs
 - Aligned to program standards

1. Standards for Learning and Assessment

Candidates seeking certification endorsement for Teacher Support Specialist should expect to demonstrate mastery of competencies as identified in Georgia Professional Standards Commission standards outlined here:

Standard I. The program shall require demonstrated competence in the application of current research and successful practices concerning teaching, learning, and supervision.

1. Candidates will discuss and demonstrate principles of adult learning theory, motivation, and reflective teaching and demonstrate the importance of the role that learning styles, abilities, intelligences, modalities, and brain-compatible learning play in teaching and student learning.
 - Demonstrate understanding of adult developmental stages and life transitions
 - Demonstrate understanding of how adults learn and are motivated
 - Demonstrate understanding of the stages of the career cycle
 - Apply brain-compatible learning theory in differentiated teaching and learning
2. Candidates will synthesize educational theory and practice as they reflect on their own teaching and as they learn to facilitate reflective teaching in others.
 - Examine models of teaching and reflect on their effectiveness
 - Select activities to guide reflective practices with protégé/s.
3. Candidates will exhibit effective conferencing and observation skills through knowledge and application of clinical supervision.
 - Acquire skills needed for the effective collaboration and supervision of teachers
 - Identify at least one supervisory model which can be practiced as a teacher support specialist
 - Use their chosen model to help protégé/s become conscientious and competent

Standard II. The program shall require demonstrated competence in the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the supervision and support of student teachers, interns, other professional laboratory participants, beginning teachers, and other teachers needing support.

4. Candidates will demonstrate an informed appreciation for the diverse professional, personal, social, cultural, and language skills that exist among educators.
 - Identify factors that contribute to a positive school climate
 - Assess personal awareness level of diversity and assist protégé/s in accommodating diversity
 - Acknowledge cultural diversity in interactions with peers and protégé/s
5. Candidates will exhibit effective interpersonal and communication skills.
 - Incorporate active listening skills in interactions with protégé/s
 - Demonstrate effective questioning skills to encourage reflective practice
 - Use strategies to establish trust and rapport with protégé/s
 - Communicate the structure and purpose of the TSS program to administrators, protégé/s, and peers
6. Candidates will demonstrate, discuss, and model the importance of professional ethics, behaviors, and teaching practices.
 - Identify role and responsibility of the Professional Standards Commission
 - Analyze legal, professional, and ethical issues
 - Generate effective practices and proactive responses to problems and needs
 - Plan for professional acculturation of protégé/s

Standard III. The program shall require demonstrated competence in reflective teaching; mentoring; peer coaching; induction process; observations and feedback techniques; evaluation techniques and instruments; and conferencing skills.

7. Candidates will exhibit effective conferencing and observation skills through knowledge and application of clinical supervision.
 - Acquire skills for effective collegial supervision of teachers
 - Choose among several supervisory models for interaction with protégé/s
 - Use appropriate supervisory model to help protégé/s become conscientious and competent
8. Candidates will synthesize educational theory and practice by reflecting on their own practice and guiding reflection in others.
 - Examine models of teaching and reflect on their effectiveness
 - Select activities to guide reflective practice with protégé/s

Standard IV. The program shall require demonstrated competence in the use of available technology including the application of computer hardware and software for instruction and supervision and techniques for evaluating the use of software for TSS programs.

9. Candidates will demonstrate the effective use of available, appropriate electronic and other media technology.
 - Apply technology for instruction and supervision
 - Model use of audio-visual equipment
 - Document Teacher Support Specialist activities through electronic media such as e-mail, or video/audio taping
 - Interact with Teacher Support Specialist instructors, candidates, and protégé/s through e-mail

Standard V. The program shall require a structured and supervised internship for the demonstration of supervision and support competencies.

10. Candidates will conduct at least two observation cycles with protégé/s.
 - Plan conference framework identifying components and information strategies
 - Use note-taking strategies and observation instruments
 - Incorporate reflective questioning techniques and communication strategies
11. Candidates will audiotape or videotape pre- and post-observation conference in one clinical cycle and receive feedback from a supervisor.
12. Candidates will conduct effective conferences with protégé/s.
13. Candidates will facilitate growth and minimize conflict with communication skills.
14. Candidates will demonstrate appropriate, effective verbal skills in all interactions with protégé/s.
15. Candidates will develop an action plan for the internship.
16. Candidates will maintain a log of appropriate activities and interactions with protégé/s indicating at least 50 contact hours.
17. Candidates will keep a narrative journal and record professional reflections regarding anecdotal data and analysis of their work with their protégé.
18. Candidates will attend at least three follow-up seminars of at least three hours each during their internship.

Standard VI. Special Georgia Requirements. The program shall include all requirements specified in Rule 505-2.

Candidates will meet all special Georgia requirements specified in Rule 505-2. All special Georgia requirements for the base teaching field must be completed before endorsement.

4. Monitoring and Assessing Progress of Endorsement Candidates

Northeast Georgia RESA will

Systematically advise endorsement candidates about program expectations and evaluation guidelines

- Identify how data on each participant's competencies and content knowledge will be collected and analyzed for formative and summative purposes
- Provide for regular, frequent assessments of candidates in activities to demonstrate competencies in program for TSS endorsement
- Provide Endorsement Program Advisory Council to review information regarding individual candidates failing to make satisfactory progress toward completion, including on-the-job performance
- Establish appropriate assessments of participants' knowledge and competency throughout the program
- Make improvements in program design and delivery based on assessment results
- Provide assessment strategies to instructors, including portfolios, interviews, tests, projects, performances, and observations
- Relate participant assessment information and analyses to program purposes, beliefs and commitments

5. Instructor's Assessment Checklist

Candidates for Teacher Support Specialist Endorsement meet the following standards of performance as set by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. Instructor/s will assess progress and provide feedback to candidates at regular intervals.

Standard / Objective / Indicators	Assessment Method	Assessment Dates	Mastery (Instructor's/ Supv. initials)
Standard I. The program shall require demonstrated competence in the application of current research and successful practices concerning teaching, learning, and supervision.			
1. Candidate will discuss and demonstrate principles of adult learning theory, motivation, and reflective teaching and demonstrate the importance of the role that learning styles, abilities, intelligences, modalities, and brain-compatible learning play in teaching and student learning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate understanding of adult developmental stages and life transitions • Demonstrate understanding of how adults learn and are motivated • Demonstrate understanding of the stages of the career cycle • Apply brain-compatible learning theory in differentiated teaching and learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test • Project • Report • Presentation • Observation • Other 		
2. Candidate will synthesize educational theory and practice as they reflect on their own teaching and as they learn to facilitate reflective teaching in others. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine models of teaching and reflect on their effectiveness • Select activities to guide reflective practices with protégé/s. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test • Project • Report • Presentation • Observation • Other 		
3. Candidate will exhibit effective conferencing and observation skills through knowledge and application of clinical supervision. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquire skills needed for the effective collaboration and supervision of teachers • Identify at least one supervisory model which can be practiced as a teacher support specialist • Use their chosen model to help protégé/s become conscientious and competent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test • Project • Report • Presentation • Observation • Other 		

Standard / Objective / Indicators	Assessment Method	Assessment Dates	Mastery (Instructor's/ Supv. initials)
Standard II. The program shall require demonstrated competence in the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the supervision and support of student teachers, interns, other professional laboratory participants, beginning teachers, and other teachers needing support.			
4. Candidate will demonstrate an informed appreciation for the diverse professional, personal, social, cultural, and language skills that exist among educators. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify factors that contribute to a positive school climate • Assess personal awareness level of diversity • Acknowledge cultural diversity in interactions with peers and protégé/s • Assist protégé/s in accommodating diversity in their classrooms and with peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test • Project • Report • Presentation • Observation • Other 		
5. Candidate will exhibit effective interpersonal and communication skills. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate active listening skills in interactions with protégé/s • Demonstrate effective questioning skills to encourage reflective practice • Use strategies to establish trust and rapport with protégé/s • Communicate the structure and purpose of the TSS program to administrators, protégé/s, and peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test • Project • Report • Presentation • Observation • Other 		
6. Candidate will demonstrate, discuss, and model the importance of professional ethics, behaviors, and teaching practices. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List requirements of the internship • Identify role and responsibility of the Professional Standards Commission • Analyze legal, professional, and ethical issues • Generate effective practices and proactive responses to problems and needs • Plan for professional acculturation of protégé/s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test • Project • Report • Presentation • Observation • Other 		

Standard / Objective / Indicators	Assessment Method	Assessment Dates	Mastery (Instructor's/ Supv. initials)
Standard III. The program shall require demonstrated competence in reflective teaching; mentoring; peer coaching; induction process; observations and feedback techniques; evaluation techniques and instruments; and conferencing skills.			
7. Candidate will exhibit effective conferencing and observation skills through knowledge and application of clinical supervision. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquire skills for effective collegial supervision of teachers • Choose among several supervisory models for interaction with protégé/s • Use appropriate supervisory model to help protégé/s become conscientious and competent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test • Project • Report • Presentation • Observation • Other 		
8. Candidate will synthesize educational theory and practice by reflecting on their own practice and guiding reflection in others. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine models of teaching and reflect on their effectiveness • Select activities to guide reflective practice with protégé/s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test • Project • Report • Presentation • Observation • Other 		
Standard IV. The program shall require demonstrated competence in the use of available technology including the application of computer hardware and software for instruction and supervision and techniques for evaluating the use of software for TSS programs.			
9. Candidate will demonstrate the effective use of available, appropriate electronic and other media technology. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply technology for instruction and supervision • Model use of audio-visual equipment • Document Teacher Support Specialist activities through electronic media such as e-mail, or video/audio taping • Interact with Teacher Support Specialist instructors, candidates, protégé/s through e-mail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test • Project • Report • Presentation • Observation • Other 		

The assessments on this page will occur during the TSS Internship.

Standard / Objective / Indicators	Assessment Method	Assessment Dates	Mastery (Evaluator's/ Supv. initials)
Standard V. The program shall require a structured and supervised internship for the demonstration of supervision and support competencies.			
10. Candidate will conduct at least three observation cycles with protégé/s. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan conference framework, identifying components and information strategies Use note-taking strategies and observation instruments Incorporate reflective questioning techniques Include appropriate communication strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview Observation 		
11. Candidate will receive feedback from a supervisor following at least one pre- or post-observation conference in one clinical cycle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview Observation 		
12. Candidate will conduct effective conferences with protégé/s.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview Observation 		
13. Candidate will facilitate growth and minimize conflict with communication skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview Observation 		
14. Candidate will demonstrate appropriate, effective verbal skills in all interactions with protégé/s.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview Observation 		
15. Candidate will develop and implement an action plan for the internship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview Observation 		
16. Candidate will maintain a log of appropriate activities and interactions with protégé/s indicating at least 50 contact hours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview Observation 		
17. Candidate will keep a narrative journal and record professional reflections regarding anecdotal data and analysis of their work with their protégé/s.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview Observation 		
18. Candidate will attend four follow-up sessions of at least three hours each during their internship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview Observation 		

6. Field Experiences

Northeast Georgia RESA will

- Provide coordination of field experiences under supervision of course instructors and local system personnel in participating school systems
- Assess candidate's ability to apply information and practice in local educational settings
- Identify and sequence field experiences
- Monitor and evaluate program field experiences with feedback to the candidate incorporated into candidate's assessment portfolio

7. Instructional Staff

Northeast Georgia RESA will

- Insure instructors possess expertise in mentoring evidenced through resume, transcript, or training records.
- Insure instructors possess a teaching certificate and/or graduate degree
- Insure instructors have had successful experience with teaching adult learners
- Collect instructor evaluation data from participants, clients, and instructors
- Provide instructors who support the endorsement program's beliefs and commitments
- Distribute job announcements to local school systems and area educational institutions
- Set a goal and plan to meet the criterion of a culturally diverse faculty
- Select instructors from among qualified candidates without regard to race, color, sex, creed, religious preference, national origin, or disability
- Select instructors from among qualified candidates to reflect multiple cultural representation

8. Quality of Instruction

Northeast Georgia RESA will

- Communicate with course instructors to provide information about program beliefs and commitments regarding instruction
- Identify program concerns with cultural diversity
- Develop with clients and instructors appropriate syllabi for the courses
- Infuse technology into course activities
- Develop instructional strategies appropriate for adult learners and multiple learning styles
- Implement an evaluation program for courses, course materials, and instructors with input from clients, instructors, program administrators, and participants
- Incorporate program evaluation data into program continuous improvement process
- Provide candidates with assessment and feedback on progress toward competency on all standards
- Provide supervised field experiences to assess candidate progress

Endorsement Programs

Northeast Georgia RESA

Northeast Georgia RESA provides Certification Endorsement programs for teachers employed by member school systems. Programs are certified by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission and meet standards of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Currently, certification endorsement programs are provided in the following areas:

Gifted In-Field

English for Speakers of Other Languages

Teacher Support Specialist

Reading Specialist Certification

Persons wishing to enroll should contact their school system Staff Development Coordinator. Recommendations from principal or supervisor are required for all programs, and other qualifications are outlined in each program handbook.