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STATEMENT OF ADVOCACY: CALL FOR THE GEORGIA PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMISSION TO REQUIRE ESOL PREPARATION COURSES FOR ALL GEORGIA CERTIFIED TEACHERS

WE ASK:

[GATESOL](#), [LCF Georgia](#), [GALAS](#), and [GALEO](#) join together to urge the Georgia Professional Standards Commission to acknowledge that all K-12 teacher preparation programs should require ESOL courses, including cultural and linguistic knowledge and methods that reflect current research and best practices in teaching multilingual learners.

WE BELIEVE:

- The likelihood that graduates accepting teaching jobs in Georgia will teach multilingual learners is high. [Georgia enrollment in ESOL grew by 61 percent from FY 2011 to FY 2019](#).
- [Federal guidance](#) from the U.S. Department of Education encourages states to provide highly-qualified core content teachers who have received training to support multilingual learners.
- The [Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation](#) is committed to ensuring Educator Preparation Programs serve diverse learners, including those identified as multilingual.
- The [2020 WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework](#) emphasizes the core principle of integrating language instruction with content instruction. As a WIDA state, [Georgia is moving decisively](#) toward the integration of content and language.
- [InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards and Learning Progressions for Teachers 1.0](#) demand that teachers address “cultural and linguistic diversity and the specific needs of students for whom English is a new language.” Hence, TESOL courses in teacher education programs need to include a focus on linguistic diversity, content and language integration, and culturally sustaining approaches to multilingual education.

WE ACKNOWLEDGE:

- Georgia’s educational history tells a story of students from a variety of backgrounds facing discrimination. In October of 2020 three federal cases were under investigation for discrimination of multilingual learners in Georgia. [Stephen Owens affirms](#), “Any argument that ELs are not receiving the resources they need to have equal



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opportunities would be backed up by history, current litigation and student test scores.”

- A [U.S. Department of Justice finding](#) that Massachusetts was violating the civil rights of students by failing to ensure that their teachers are adequately trained to teach multilingual learners forced the state to [put guidelines in place](#) to address this problem. Core academic teachers of multilingual learners, principals, assistant principals, supervisors, and directors who evaluate those teachers must now all obtain training and licensure requirements for the Sheltered English Immersion Endorsement.
- Many states join with [Massachusetts](#) in setting minimum requirements for ESOL preparation courses for teacher certification in order to both protect the educational rights of multilingual learners and to affirm a commitment to address the persistent gap in academic proficiency experienced by multilingual learners. States that require this (at least for any classroom with multilingual learners) include: [Alabama](#), [Alaska](#), [California](#), [Connecticut](#), [Delaware](#), [Florida](#), [New Jersey](#), [New York](#), [Oregon](#), [Pennsylvania](#), and [Virginia](#).

We acknowledge Georgia Professional Standards Commission’s dedication to high standards and to ensuring that Georgia certified teachers are well prepared for the challenges they face in the classroom. We appreciate your consideration of requiring ESOL preparation courses for K-12 teacher certification.