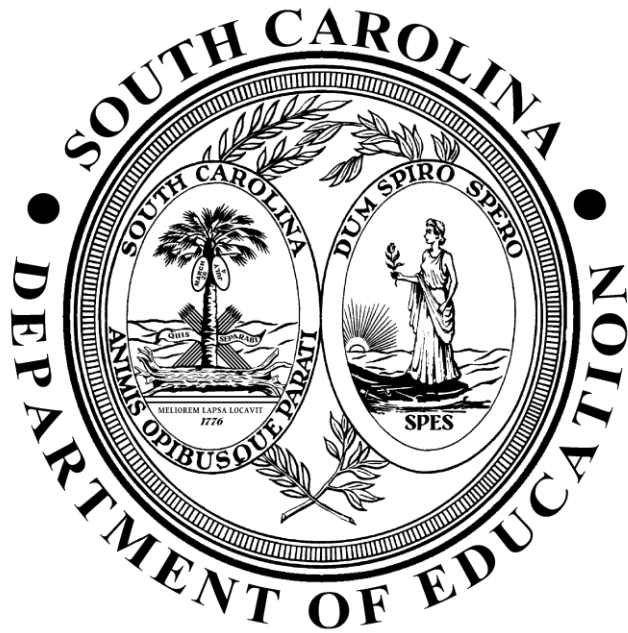


STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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Annual Report on Teach for America South Carolina for the 2020-21 School Year

Provided to the South Carolina State Board of Education and General Assembly
Pursuant to the Teach for America Guidelines

March 8, 2022

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Introduction

On October 13, 2010, the State Board of Education (SBE) adopted a resolution to support bringing Teach for America (TFA) to South Carolina beginning with the 2011-12 school year. This resolution was adopted to address a goal of recruiting, retaining, and distributing highly effective teachers throughout South Carolina, especially in rural school districts. The SBE subsequently approved implementation guidelines for TFA South Carolina in December 2010 and amended the guidelines in April 2014.

The mission of this nationwide, non-profit organization is to promote an equitable education for all children by recruiting and supporting promising future leaders to make a two-year commitment to teach in rural or urban school districts throughout the country. Beyond the two-year commitment, corps members are encouraged to continue their support and advocacy for educational opportunities for all children. Upon selection through a national application process, TFA corps members are assigned to a regional affiliate such as TFA South Carolina and seek employment in partner schools and districts. Pursuant to the SBE-approved implementation guidelines, South Carolina corps members must teach in a TFA partner school or district during their two-year commitment. Beyond this commitment, a TFA South Carolina participant has the option to remain teaching in a public school district in the state on a conditional (i.e., Alternative Route) certificate and meet additional requirements to advance to a standard Professional credential. These additional requirements must be met within two years. Funding for TFA South Carolina is provided through private donors, school districts partners, and an annual appropriation from the General Assembly.

Pursuant to SBE guidelines, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) provides this annual report on TFA South Carolina for the 2020-21 school year, the last year for which complete data are available. Success measures indicated in the guidelines include participant certificate numbers by program year, certification field, employing district, retention data during the two-year commitment, classroom performance evaluation, student learning data, and employer satisfaction data.

TFA South Carolina Partner Districts and Schools

The SBE must approve partner districts or schools for the TFA South Carolina program. The original partner school districts were approved in April 2011. Table 1 outlines the TFA partner school districts by approval date. Districts marked with an asterisk maintained an active partnership with TFA South Carolina during the 2020-21 school year.

Table 1. TFA Partner Districts by SBE Approval Dates

Approval Date	District
April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chesterfield County School District• Clarendon County School Districts One, Two*, and Three• Darlington County School District*• Dillon County School District Four• Florence County School Districts One*, Two, Three*, Four*, and Five

Approval Date	District
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lee County School District • Marion County School Districts One, Two, and Seven • Marlboro County School District • Orangeburg Consolidated School District Five* (now Orangeburg) • Williamsburg County School District
May 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orangeburg Three* (now Orangeburg County School District) • Charleston County Schools*
June 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Berkeley County School District* • Colleton County Schools* • Dillon School District Three • Marion County Schools*
June 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lee County School District <p><i>Note.</i> Lee County was approved as an original partner district in 2011; however, the district did not begin an active partnership with TFA until the 2014-15 school year.</p>
April 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legacy Early College (SC Public Charter School District) *
May 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting Street Schools–Spartanburg*

Certification Process

Year One

As part of an approved alternative route preparation program, an eligible first-year TFA corps member is issued a one-year Alternative Route certificate in the designated classroom teaching field. In order to be issued the first one-year credential, the candidate must submit the following documentation to the SCDE Office of Educator Services:

- certification application and fee;
- official transcript verifying an earned bachelor’s degree or higher from a regionally accredited college or university;
- official qualifying score on the subject area assessment(s) required by the SBE for certification.
- verification of candidacy by TFA;
- confirmation of employment as a full-time teacher in the qualifying subject area;
- verification of successful completion of the approved TFA pre-service orientation and training program;
- cleared fingerprint-based criminal history background reports pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-115; and
- completion of the Darkness to Light Stewards of Children Child Abuse Prevention Training Program.

Year Two

With documentation of successful progress in the program and continued employment in a partner school or district, a corps member will be issued a second one-year Alternative Route certificate.

Year Three

Pursuant to SBE guidelines, a corps member has the option to remain teaching in South Carolina beyond the two-year commitment and complete additional requirements to advance to a standard Professional educator certificate. These requirements include:

- successful completion of the state’s summative evaluation of teaching performance;
- a passing score on the pedagogy assessment required for certification; and
- successful completion of nine hours of approved graduate level course work.

To be issued the third one-year certificate, the candidate’s hiring school district must submit a confirmation of employment to the SCDE.

Year Four

If unable to complete all requirements to advance to a Professional certificate by the end of the third year, a participant may request a final one-year Alternative Route certificate with documentation of successful progress and a confirmation of employment.

2020-21 TFA Certification Data

Program Year One

In July 2020, the SCDE approved the issuance of a Temporary Alternative Route certificate for the 2020-21 school year to eligible candidates. The Temporary certificate provided a one-year, non-renewable option for a participant who had successfully completed all requirements for their alternative route program except for the certification assessment(s) required by the State Board of Education. Twenty-four first year teachers held the Alternate Route certificate with Teach for America during the 2020-21 academic year. During the same year, 18 first year participants in Teach for America were issued Temporary certificates. For the current 2021-22 school year, 11 Temporary certificate holders from the previous academic year were issued an Alternate Route certificate. The Temporary certificate holders advanced to the Alternate Route certificate with a qualifying Praxis subject area examination and continued employment in a TFA partnership school district. The remaining seven Temporary certificate holders from last year have resigned or do not meet requirements for the Alternative Route certificate that this time.

Program Year Two

For the 2020-21 academic year, the SCDE issued a second year Alternative Route certificate to 41 of the 58 TFA corps members first assigned to South Carolina during the 2019-20 school year. Eleven corps members who participated in TFA during 2019-20 did not return for a second year. Six teachers who did not meet certification requirements in 2019-20 met certification requirements in 2020-21 and were issued a first year Alternative Route or Temporary certificate. Their information is included in the Program Year One paragraph above.

Program Year Three

For the 2020-21 school year, 34 corps members who began their participation with South Carolina TFA during the 2018-19 school year opted to remain teaching beyond their two-year commitment and pursue a standard Professional certificate. At the conclusion of the 2020-21 school year, 17 of the 34 educators advanced to a Professional certificate. Eleven of the 34 third year participants have been issued an extension year certificate for 2021-22 to complete

certification requirements. The remaining six are not employed with a public school district and are not certified for 2021-22.

Program Year Four

The SCDE issued a fourth year Alternative Route certificate to four individuals who entered the TFA program in South Carolina during the 2017-18 school year. At the close of the academic year, three educators advanced to a Professional certificate and one participant resigned.

Program Year Five

Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, some fourth-year participants were unable to complete all requirements for the Professional certificate by the end of the 2019-20 school year due to incomplete ADEPT results or testing center closures. The SCDE extended an additional Alternate Route certificate for the 2020-21 school year to two Teach for America participants at the request of employing school districts. At the conclusion of the previous academic year, both teachers on the final extension met all program requirements and advanced to a standard Professional certificate.

Professional Certificates

Following the 2020-21 academic year, a total of 22 TFA participants advanced to a standard Professional certificate. On February 8, 2022, the State Board of Education suspended the Professional certificate of one of these educators for unprofessional conduct due to breach of contract. Of the 22 TFA participants who advanced to the Professional certificate, 15 remain employed in South Carolina school districts for the 2021-22 school year.

Certificates Issued for 2020-21

The SCDE issued a total of 123 Alternative Route and Temporary certificates to eligible Teach for America participants during the 2020-21 school year. Additional information is provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2. TFA Certificates Issued for 2020-21 by Program Year

Program Year	Entry Year	Beginning Cohort Size	Certificates Issued in 20-21
1	2020-21	42	42
2	2019-20	58	41
3	2018-19	61	34
4	2017-18	n/a	4
Final Extension	2016-17	n/a	2
Total			123

Note. As indicated, candidates participating in program years three and four have exercised the option established in SBE guidelines to remain teaching in a South Carolina classroom to pursue a Professional certificate by meeting additional requirements. If a candidate does not meet all requirements to advance to a standard Professional certificate at the end of year three, the candidate has an option of a one-year extension with documentation of successful progress and continued employment. A final extension year was granted in 2020-21 due the COVID-19 health emergency. Source: South Carolina Department of Education educator certification information system (2021, December).

Certificates Issued by Subject Area/Certification Field

Table 3 indicates the number of Teach for America Alternate Route certificates issued by content area during the past academic year. The greatest number of certificates were issued in the subject areas of elementary and special education: multi-categorical.

Table 3. TFA Alternative Route Certificates Issued for 2020-21 by Certification Field

Certification Field	Certificates Issued
Biology	1
Early Childhood	5
Elementary	36
English	13
Mathematics	6
Middle Level Language Arts	10
Middle Level Mathematics	9
Middle Level Science	5
Middle Level Social Studies	7
Science	9
Social Studies	5
Spanish	1
Special Education: Learning Disabilities	1
Special Education: Multi-categorical	15
Total	123

Note. Certificates reflected in this table include those issued for TFA teachers in their first, second, third, or final extension year of teaching. Source: South Carolina Department of Education educator certification and information system (2021, December).

Employing Districts

During their two-year program commitment, TFA corps members must be employed in a partner school or school district approved by the SBE. TFA teachers who wish to pursue a Professional certificate by exercising the third- and fourth-year option allowed in program guidelines may be employed in any South Carolina public school district. Table 4 indicates where the Teach for America educators were employed by district. Last year, Charleston County School District and Orangeburg County School District employed the greatest number of TFA teachers.

Table 4. TFA Alternative Route Certificates Issued by Employing District

Public School or District	Number of TFA Participants Employed
Aiken	1
Berkeley*	11
Charleston*	20
Clarendon Two*	4
Colleton*	18
Darlington*	1
Dorchester Two	1
Florence One*	11
Florence Three*	7
Horry	2
Kershaw	1
Lexington Richland Five	1
Orangeburg*	20
Legacy Early College* (located in SC Public Charter School District)	17
Marion*	2
Meeting Street Elementary at Spartanburg* (located in Spartanburg Seven)	1
Richland One	1
Richland Two	2
Williamsburg	1
York Three (Rock Hill)	1
Total	123

Note. The asterisk denotes districts or schools who hold active partnerships with TFA. This table includes TFA teachers in their first, second, third, fourth, or final extension year of teaching. Source: Source: South Carolina Department of Education educator certification and information system (2021, December).

Teaching Performance Evaluation and Student Learning Data

During their two-year commitment, TFA corps members must be employed on an Induction contract and participate in a formative evaluation process as part of the state’s expanded system for Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teaching (ADEPT). In the event a corps member will not be employed by the twenty-eighth student attendance day, the educator is eligible for employment on a letter of agreement and still must be provided formative support. Employing districts must meet all SBE requirements for induction and mentoring, consistent with requirements for other beginning teachers. During their two-year commitment, corps members are also supported by TFA mentors and may receive additional training and assistance through the program provider. During year one, TFA corps members participate in their employing district’s induction program and must be assigned an appropriately trained mentor. During their second year of employment, TFA teachers must continue to be employed under an Induction contract and must participate in a formative evaluation process based upon their identified performance strengths and areas for growth. This formative evaluation process may include all or selected components of a state-approved summative evaluation model. However,

the results of any summative components may be used only for formative feedback purposes and may not be applied toward certificate advancement.

Corps members who opt to pursue a standard educator certificate after their two-year commitment must be employed on an annual contract in year three and participate in a summative (i.e., formal) evaluation process. If the evaluation results are not met or the process is incomplete, the educator will have the option to attempt the evaluation process again during an extension year provided that the teacher has continued employment and district support. As with all other beginning teachers, TFA participants must successfully complete summative evaluation requirements at the annual contract level to be eligible for advancement to a Professional certificate.

Table 5. TFA ADEPT Performance Evaluation Data for 2020-21

Contract Level	Evaluation Process	Total Teachers	Results Met	Results Not Met	Results Incomplete	Results No Data
Induction 1	Formative	43	36	4	2	1
Induction 2	Formative	32	30	0	0	2
Annual 1	Summative	34	34	0	0	0
Annual 2	Summative	6	6	0	0	0
Annual 2	Goals-based	1	1	0	0	0
Annual 3	Goals-based	1	1	0	0	0

Note. Data were retrieved from the SCDE evaluation data system and include 119 educators whose evaluation results were reported to the SCDE by employing school districts. Data are not included in the table for two teachers whose districts reported results associated with a contract level for which the teachers were not eligible. South Carolina teachers may not be employed on a continuing contract until they are eligible for a standard Professional certificate. Source: South Carolina Department of Education teacher performance evaluation data system (2022, January).

Impact on Student Learning

As part of the expanded ADEPT system, South Carolina teachers engage in a process of establishing a student learning objective (SLO) for a group of learners and then design instructional sequences and assessments, administer one or more formative assessments, deliver instruction, and facilitate learning, and then administer summative assessments. Through the SLO process, teachers can evaluate the impact of their instruction on student learning relative to the objective, reflect on their instructional practice, build upon strengths, and identify areas for continued growth. Each SLO is completed over an extended period of the academic year, and teachers work with school-based leaders to develop and evaluate their SLOs. The SLO data reported by school districts for TFA participants during 2020-21 is summarized below.

Table 6. TFA SLO Rating Data for 2020-21

Contract Level	Exemplary Rating	Proficient Rating	Needs Improvement Rating	Unsatisfactory Rating	Unknown Rating	Total
Annual 1	8	21	4	0	0	33
Annual 2	1	4	2			7
Annual 3	0	1	0	0	0	1
Induction 1	5	31	3	2	2	43
Induction 2	5	21	2	1	2	31
Total	20	78	11	3	4	115

Districts submitted SLO data for 117 TFA participants. Data are not included in the table for two teachers whose districts reported results associated with a contract level for which the teachers were not eligible. Source: South Carolina Department of Education teacher performance evaluation data system (2022, January).

Employer Satisfaction Data

TFA administers an employer satisfaction survey biennially. The next administration is slated for spring 2022.