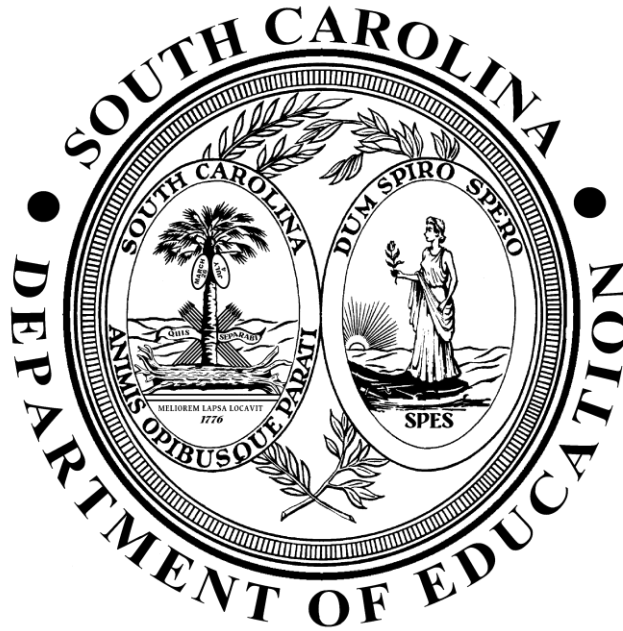


STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MOLLY M. SPEARMAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION



**Annual Report on the American Board for the Certification of
Teacher Excellence**

Provided to the South Carolina State Board of Education
and General Assembly

Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-350

March 12, 2019

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Reporting Requirement

Per S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-350, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) submits annually by March 31 to the State Board of Education (SBE) and General Assembly the total number of individuals employed in South Carolina with a passport certificate issued by the American Board by district, as well as non-privileged information collected on these individuals through the Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teaching (ADEPT) reporting system.

Introduction

The American Board for the Certification of Teaching Excellence (American Board) is a self-sustaining, non-partisan, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization established in 2001 through a grant from the United States Department of Education. In June 2007, the South Carolina General Assembly passed the American Board for the Certification of Teacher Excellence Act, which allows school districts to hire individuals who have received a passport certificate issued by the organization. The statute, S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-310, authorizes the following content areas: “biology, chemistry, English, mathematics, physics, or science. Additional areas of certification may be approved by the State Board of Education upon review of the longitudinal information required in Section 59-25-350.” Current areas are secondary biology, chemistry, English, mathematics, physics, science, middle level language arts, middle level mathematics, and middle level science. Previously known as ABCTE, the organization is now known as the American Board and has relocated its headquarters from Washington, D.C., to Atlanta, Georgia.

Currently, South Carolina is one of thirteen states that accepts the American Board for initial certification purposes. The other states include Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah, and Wisconsin.

The American Board website describes the program as self-paced and self-directed and indicates that most candidates complete the program of study for the exams within an average of seven to ten months. Candidates must pass the organization’s content area examination and Professional Teaching Knowledge (PTK) exam. These examinations are proprietary, and the organization does not provide states with information on the content of these tests. The exams have not been correlated to other certification examinations including the Praxis series approved for certification purposes in South Carolina.

According to American Board website, the full cost of the program may be up to \$2,850; however, the American Board offers special pricing on a routine basis, and the advertised cost fluctuates. Currently, there is a “one-time payment” promotional price of \$1,900. The American Board offers candidates an installment plan, financial assistance, and a discounted rate for military veterans.

The American Board in South Carolina

S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-330 states that a person who has received an American Board passport certificate in one or more of the subject areas approved for South Carolina and who has a minimum of a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university or an institution with a teacher education program that has been approved by the SBE for certification purposes must be issued an appropriate Alternate Route certificate upon verification of employment in a South Carolina school district. The Alternate Route certificate is valid for one year and may be renewed annually for two additional years upon the successful completion of the hiring district's induction program as part of the state's ADEPT program. To obtain professional certification at the end of the three-year American Board eligibility period, the individual must demonstrate teaching effectiveness through the ADEPT summative evaluation process and must present a passing score on the Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) examination, a pedagogy assessment approved by the SBE for certification purposes.

American Board Certificates Issued in 2017–18

Individuals who pass the American Board examinations and who complete the South Carolina certification application process (application, fee, and Federal Bureau of Investigation/State Law Enforcement Division clearance process) are issued an American Board Statement of Eligibility, which allows these individuals then to seek employment in a South Carolina public school or school district. The SCDE issues an Alternate Route to an eligible American Board candidate upon confirmation of employment.

For the 2017–18 academic year, the most recent year for which complete data are available, seventy-seven educators participating in American Board were issued an Alternate Route certificate in the approved content areas and were employed statewide in the districts as indicated. Table 1 indicates the number of certificates issued by content areas over the last three academic years, and Table 2 indicates the districts in which these American Board teachers were employed. Additionally, Table 1 shows an increase overall in the number of American Board teachers employed and certified over the last three years, with notable increases in all middle level content areas as well as high school science. Table 2 shows a widespread distribution of American Board teachers throughout the state in districts large and small, rural and urban. For the 2017–18 academic year, the districts employing the greatest number of teachers through this pathway were the Charleston County School District and the Public Charter School District.

Table 1. *Number of American Board Certificates Issued by Certification Area*

Certification Area	Number of American Board Certificates Issued		
	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Biology	8	8	7
Chemistry	2	0	1
English	21	15	16
Mathematics	17	17	17
Physics	0	0	0
Science	9	15	13
Middle Level Mathematics	1	4	6
Middle Level Language Arts	4	9	12
Middle Level Science	1	3	5
TOTAL	63	71	77

Note. Certificates reflected in this table include those issued for American Board teachers in their first, second, or third year of teaching. An educator’s first American Board certificate is issued upon confirmation of employment, and the credential may be renewed for two additional years with continued employment. Upon successful completion of summative evaluation requirements and the required pedagogy exam, a teacher may advance to a standard Professional teaching certificate.

Table 2. *Number of Teachers with American Board Certificates by School District*

School District	Number of American Board Candidates Employed		
	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Abbeville	1	1	0
Aiken	1	4	4
Anderson 1	1	1	1
Anderson 4	0	0	1
Anderson 5	1	1	2
Barnwell 45	1	0	1
Beaufort	1	2	1
Berkeley	7	7	7
Charleston	11	9	11
Cherokee	1	1	2
Chesterfield	1	0	0
Colleton 1	0	1	1
Darlington	2	1	0
Dorchester 2	0	1	2

School District	Number of American Board Candidates Employed		
	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Dorchester 4	1	0	0
Edgefield	2	1	0
Florence 1	3	2	2
Florence 4	0	1	0
Georgetown	1	2	0
Greenville	2	3	4
Greenwood	0	1	1
Hampton	0	1	0
Horry	4	3	6
Lancaster	1	1	0
Laurens 56	1	1	1
Lexington 1	0	1	1
Lexington 2	2	1	0
Marion 10	1	0	1
Marlboro 01	1	0	0
Oconee	3	4	2
Orangeburg 4	0	0	1
Pickens	1	1	2
Richland 1	0	1	1
Richland 2	2	0	0
Spartanburg 2	2	2	0
Spartanburg 6	1	2	0
Spartanburg 7	0	1	3
Sumter	1	4	3
Union 1	2	0	1
York 3	0	2	3
York 4	0	1	0
Public Charter School District	3	6	12
SC School for Deaf & Blind	1	0	0
TOTAL	63	71	77

Note. This table includes American Board teachers in their first, second, or third year of teaching. An educator’s first American Board certificate is issued upon confirmation of employment, and the credential may be renewed for two additional years with continued employment. Upon successful completion of summative evaluation requirements and the required pedagogy exam, a teacher may advance to a standard Professional teaching certificate.

Teaching Effectiveness

All American Board participants must take part in South Carolina’s ADEPT system. During their first year in the classroom, American Board participants—like all other first year educators—participate in a formative evaluation process, which includes the district’s induction program and the assignment of a mentor. The purpose of this formative process is to provide the appropriate assistance and support to facilitate the beginning teacher’s effectiveness and classroom practice. While the intent is for teachers to complete the induction process during their first year of program participation, some are hired too late in the year to be placed on an induction contract. These individuals are employed on a Letter of Agreement but are still required to meet the induction and summative evaluation requirements specified for American Board participants in a subsequent year. Following participation in the induction process, American Board teachers must successfully complete summative evaluation requirements to be eligible for advancement to a Professional teaching certificate at the end of three years. Table 3 provides a summary of the ADEPT evaluation results of all teachers employed on a first-, second-, or third-year American Board certificate during the 2017–18 school year. For comparison purposes, the statewide percentage of Induction teachers with an ADEPT result of Met for 2017–18 was 95 percent, and the statewide percentage of teachers with a result of Met at the Annual Summative level was 91 percent.

Table 3. *ADEPT Results for Teachers with American Board Certificates in the 2017–18 Academic Year*

Contract Level	ADEPT Process	Total Teachers	Evaluation Results		
			Met	Not Met	Incomplete
Letter of Agreement	Formative	2	1 (50%)	0 (0%)	1 (50%)
Induction 1	Formative	31	29 (94%)	0 (0%)	2 (6%)
Induction 2	Formative	6	6 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Annual 1	Summative	26	23 (88%)	1 (4%)	2 (8%)
Annual 2	Summative or GBE	9	9 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Note. Data were retrieved from the SCDE ADEPT Data System for the 2017–18 academic year and include seventy-four educators whose evaluation results were reported to the SCDE by employing school districts. Data for three educators were not reported.

Advancement to a Standard Professional Teaching Certificate

A total of eighteen American Board participants advanced from an Alternate Route credential to a Professional teaching certificate following the 2017–18 academic year. In order to advance, these educators had to maintain employment, meet all ADEPT evaluation requirements, and submit a successful score on the required pedagogy examination.