



2023-24 Annual Report on Certification through American Board

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

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Reporting Requirement

Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-350, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) submits a report to the General Assembly annually by March 31 of the total number of individuals employed in South Carolina with a certificate issued by the American Board. This report includes information 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 (ABCTE) is a nonprofit 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 secondary certification areas for the program include biology, chemistry, English, mathematics, physics, and science. American Board also offers the middle level subject areas of language arts, mathematics, and science. Previously known as ABCTE, the organization is currently known as American Board and is based in Atlanta, Georgia.

South Carolina is one of 16 states that accepts American Board for initial certification purposes. Other states that utilize this program include Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and West Virginia.

Program Cost

According to the provider’s website, the total cost to participants varies, and the provider appears to offer promotional pricing frequently. At the time of this report, American Board offered a one-time payment promotional price of \$1,900. Program cost for a candidate selecting to pay on an installment plan is a total of \$3,010 (a \$2,850 program fee plus \$160 administrative fee). American Board offers an installment plan discount of \$328, leaving a program total of \$2,682. Candidates pay this amount in nine monthly payments of \$298 upon submitting an installment plan contract.

Curriculum and Assessment

The American Board website describes the program as self-paced and indicates that most candidates complete the program of study for the required exams within an average of seven to ten months.

The American Board program is solely online and consists of study materials to prepare candidates to pass the organization’s content area examination and Professional Teaching Knowledge (PTK) examination. These tests are proprietary, and the organization does not provide states with any information on the content of these tests or the alignment of these tests to national content area and teaching standards. The exams have not been correlated to other certification examinations, including the Praxis series approved for certification purposes in South Carolina. The American Board website indicates that study materials prepare candidates for the exams; no information is provided on the how the program and exams prepare candidates for classroom practice.

The American Board in South Carolina

Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-330, a person who has received an American Board 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 college or university meeting State Board of Education accreditation requirements 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 as part of the state’s ADEPT program. To advance to a Professional certificate 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 2023-24

Individuals who pass the American Board examinations, obtain the American Board certificate, and complete the South Carolina application for certification process (application, official transcript(s), fee, and fingerprint-based criminal history reports) are issued an American Board Statement of Eligibility. This item allows participants to seek employment in a South Carolina public school or public charter school district. The SCDE issues an Alternate Route certificate to an eligible American Board candidate upon a confirmation of employment.

For the 2023-24 academic year, the most recent year for which complete data are available, 67 educators participating in American Board were issued an Alternate Route certificate statewide. Table 1 indicates the number of certificates issued by content area over the last three academic years. There has been a steady decrease in the overall number of educators certifying through American Board during the past three school years.

Table 1. Number of American Board Certificates Issued by Certification Field and Year

Certification Field	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Biology	2	0	2
Chemistry	0	0	1

Certification Field	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
English	16	11	12
Mathematics	18	12	8
Physics	0	0	0
Science	16	13	11
Middle Level Mathematics	8	7	6
Middle Level Language Arts	32	24	15
Middle Level Science	11	13	12
TOTAL	103	80	67

Note. Certificates reflected in this table include those issued for American Board teachers in their first, second, or third year of teaching. Source: South Carolina Department of Education educator certification and information system (2024, November).

Table 2 indicates where the American Board teachers were employed by districts over three school years. The districts employing the greatest number of teachers through this pathway are Berkeley County School District and the SC Public Charter School District.

Table 2. American Board Teachers Employed by District and Year

School District	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Abbeville	2	0	0
Aiken	2	1	2
Allendale	2	1	0
Anderson 1	1	1	1
Anderson 5	3	1	2
Beaufort	2	2	2
Berkeley	2	3	9
Charleston	11	8	2
Cherokee	1	1	0
Chester	3	0	0
Chesterfield	2	1	1
Clarendon 2	1	2	0
Colleton	1	0	0
Darlington	3	0	0
Dorchester 2	4	2	1
Dorchester 4	1	0	0
Edgefield	0	1	0
Florence 1	0	2	2
Florence 5	1	2	2
Georgetown	3	1	1
Greenville	8	6	4
Greenwood 50	1	1	3
Greenwood 52	1	1	1

School District	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Horry	10	9	5
Kershaw	1	0	1
Lancaster	2	0	0
Laurens 55	1	2	1
Laurens 56	1	2	0
Lexington 1	5	3	2
Lexington 2	2	3	1
Lexington 3	0	0	1
Lexington 4	0	0	1
Lexington/Richland 5	1	1	1
Oconee	1	1	0
Pickens	4	1	0
Richland 1	2	3	4
Richland 2	3	1	0
Spartanburg 2	1	0	1
Spartanburg 5	0	3	3
Spartanburg 6	2	0	0
Spartanburg 7	1	1	1
Sumter	0	0	1
York 2 (Clover)	0	0	1
York 3 (Rock Hill)	2	0	0
York 4 (Fort Mill)	0	1	0
SC Public Charter School District	7	9	7
Charter Institute of Erskine	1	3	2
SC School for the Deaf and Blind	0	1	1
SC Governors School for Arts & Humanities	1	1	0
TOTAL	103	80	67

Note. This table includes American Board teachers in their first, second, or third of teaching. Source: Source: South Carolina Department of Education educator certification and information system (2024, November).

Teaching Effectiveness

All American Board participants must take part in South Carolina's ADEPT system. During their first year in the classroom, American Board 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 in a subsequent year. Following participation in the induction process, American Board teachers must successfully complete the summative evaluation requirement to be eligible for advancement to a Professional teaching certificate at the end of their program.

Table 3 provides a summary of the ADEPT evaluation results for all teachers employed on a first, second, third, or final extension year American Board certificate during the 2023-24 school year.

Table 3. 2023-24 ADEPT Results for Teachers with American Board Certificates

Contract Level	ADEPT Process	Total Teachers	Evaluation Results Met	Evaluation Results Not Met	Evaluation Results Incomplete
Letter of Agreement	Formative	1	1	0	0
Induction 1	Formative	23	21	0	2
Induction 2	Formative	5	5	0	0
Annual 1	Summative	18	18	0	0
Annual 2	Summative or Goals-Based	13	13	0	0
Annual 3	Goals-Based	1	1	0	0

Notes. Table 3 includes 61 educators whose evaluation results were reported to the SCDE by employing school districts. Districts did not report evaluation results for three participants who resigned mid-year or became certified too late in the school year to receive an evaluation. Data is not included for three 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 educator certification and information system (2024, November).

Advancement to a Standard Professional Teaching Certificate

During the 2023-24 academic year, 25 participants were enrolled in the third year of the American Board certification process. Of these, 21 successfully completed the program and advanced from an Alternate Route certificate to a standard Professional certificate.