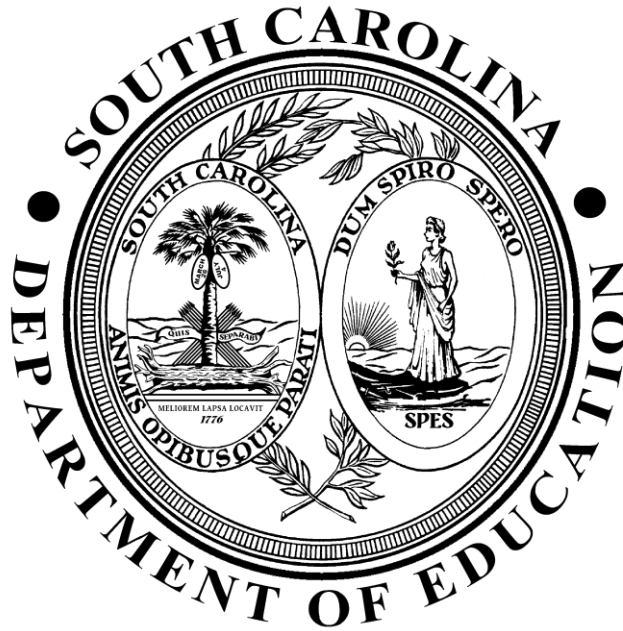


STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION



**Annual Report on the American Board for the Certification of
Teacher Excellence for the 2019–20 School Year**

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

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

March 9, 2021

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Reporting Requirement

Pursuant to 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 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 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 certification areas in the program include the following high school subjects (grades 9–12) biology, chemistry, English, mathematics, physics, and science and the following middle level subjects (grades 5–8) language arts, mathematics, and science. Previously known as ABCTE and located in Washington, D.C., the organization is now known as American Board and is located in Atlanta, Georgia.

South Carolina is one of fourteen states that accepts American Board for initial certification purposes. Other states that utilize this program include: Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Mississippi, Missouri, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah, and Wisconsin.

The American Board website describes the program as self-paced and indicates that most candidates complete the program of study for the exams within an average of seven to ten months. The full cost of the program may be up to \$2,850. The program provider appears to offer special pricing frequently, and the advertised cost fluctuates. As of February 1, 2021, American Board offered a one-time payment promotional price of \$1,900; candidates may utilize a payment plan for program costs.

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 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

S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-330 states that 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 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 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 2019–20

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 2019–20 academic year, the most recent year for which complete data are available, one hundred and three educators participating in American Board were issued an Alternative Route certificate statewide. Table 1 indicates the number of certificates issued by content area over the last three academic years. There were steady increases in the number of educators certifying in secondary mathematics and middle level language arts.

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

Certification Field	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20
Biology	7	3	4
Chemistry	1	1	1
English	16	25	18
Mathematics	17	18	24
Physics	0	0	0
Science	13	13	15
Middle Level Mathematics	6	6	4
Middle Level Language Arts	12	15	24
Middle Level Science	5	14	13
TOTAL	77	95	103

Table 1 Note: Certificates reflected in this table include those issued for American Board teachers in their first, second or third year of teaching.

Table 2 indicates the districts in which the American Board teachers were employed and reflects an eight percent overall increase in the number of American Board teachers hired by districts in 2019–20 over the previous year. For the 2019–20 academic year, the districts employing the greatest number of teachers through this pathway were Horry County Schools and Greenville County Schools.

Table 2. American Board Teachers Employed by District and Year

School District	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20
Abbeville	0	0	1
Aiken	4	5	0
Anderson 1	1	1	2
Anderson 2	0	1	1
Anderson 4	1	1	1
Anderson 5	2	4	3
Barnwell 45	1	1	1
Beaufort	1	3	5
Berkeley	7	6	7
Charleston	11	8	6
Cherokee	2	1	2
Chester	0	0	3
Chesterfield	0	0	1
Clarendon	0	1	1
Colleton	1	1	2
Darlington	0	0	2
Dorchester 2	2	4	4
Edgefield	0	1	2
Florence 1	2	2	0
Florence 3	0	0	1
Florence 5	0	1	1
Georgetown	0	1	2
Greenville	4	5	7
Greenwood 50	1	2	2
Horry	6	9	9
Kershaw	0	0	1
Lancaster	0	0	2
Laurens 56	1	2	2
Lexington 1	1	2	2
Lexington 3	0	1	0
Marion	1	0	0
Newberry	0	1	1
Oconee	2	1	1
Orangeburg	1	0	1
Pickens	2	1	4

School District	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20
Richland 1	1	2	2
Richland 2	0	2	2
Spartanburg 5	0	0	1
Spartanburg 6	0	0	2
Spartanburg 7	3	4	3
Sumter	3	3	0
Union	1	1	1
York 3 (Rock Hill)	3	3	2
York 4 (Fort Mill)	0	1	1
Williston 29	0	2	0
Public Charter School District	12	6	4
Charter Institute of Erskine	0	4	4
TOTAL	77	95	103

Table 2 Note. This table includes American Board teachers in their first, second, or third year of teaching.

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 in a subsequent year. Following participation in the induction process, American Board teachers must successfully complete the 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 for all teachers employed on a first, second or third-year American Board certificate during the 2019–20 school year.

Table 3. 2019-20 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	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)
Induction 1	Formative	34	34 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Induction 2	Formative	8	8 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Induction 3	Formative	1	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Annual 1	Summative	28	26 (93%)	0 (0%)	2 (7%)
Annual 2	Summative or GBE	19	18 (95%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)

Table 3 Note. Data were retrieved from the SCDE evaluation data system and include ninety-one educators whose evaluation results were reported to the SCDE by employing school districts. Districts did not report evaluation results for six teachers, including four first-year teachers hired mid-year and one who resigned mid-year. Data are not included in the table for six 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.

Advancement to a Standard Professional Teaching Certificate

There were a total of thirty-five American Board participants in their third year during 2019–20 and twenty-two of these participants met all requirements and advanced from an Alternative Route certificate to a standard Professional certificate following the conclusion of the school year. In order to advance, these educators had to maintain employment, meet all ADEPT evaluation requirements, and submit a qualifying score on the required pedagogy examination. Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, some third year participants were unable to complete all requirements for the Professional by the end of the 2019–20 school year due to incomplete ADEPT results or closures of certification testing centers. Under flexibility granted to the Superintendent of Education, the SCDE extended issued an additional Alternative Route certificate for the 2020–21 school year to nine American Board teachers at the request of the employing school district. During this extension year, each educator must complete all remaining requirements for advancement to the Professional certificate.