



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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**TO:** Members, South Carolina House of Representatives  
Members, South Carolina Senate

**FROM:** Jay W. Ragley  
Director, Office of Legislative and Public Affairs  
South Carolina Department of Education

**DATE:** June 25, 2013

**SUBJECT:** ABCTE Annual Report

On behalf of the South Carolina State Board of Education and in compliance with requirements of SC Code of Laws 59-25-350, attached to this memorandum is the annual report regarding passport certificates issued by the America Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE) to individuals employed in South Carolina school districts.

## **Report on American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE)**

### **Introduction**

The America Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE) is a non-partisan, non-profit 501(c)3 organization established by 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 ABCTE in the areas of biology, chemistry, English, mathematics, physics, or science. Currently, South Carolina is one of eleven states that accept ABCTE for initial certification purposes. These other states include Florida, Idaho, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Utah. At this time, ABCTE is no longer accepting new applications for teaching in Nevada, and program participants in Tennessee are limited to private schools or to a pilot program with one public school district. While most states accept participants in the same middle and secondary level certification areas as South Carolina, several states also accept applicants in history and three accept applicants seeking elementary or reading certification. Additionally, the ABCTE organization indicates on its website that individuals may be able to teach in independent and charter schools in some other states and countries.

S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-330 states that a person who has received the ABCTE certificate in one or more of the subject areas listed above, 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 State Board of Education 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 must be valid for one year and may be renewed annually for two additional years upon the successful completion of the hiring district's induction program of state teaching requirements (ADEPT). To obtain professional certification at the end of the three-year ABCTE eligibility period, the individual must also pass the Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) examination, South Carolina's adopted pedagogy exam.

S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-350 states that the SC Department of Education shall submit annually by March 31 to the State Board of Education and General Assembly the total number of individuals employed in South Carolina with a passport certificate issued by ABCTE by district, as well as non-privileged information collected on these individuals through the ADEPT reporting system.

### **ABCTE in South Carolina**

***Certification:*** Individuals who pass the ABCTE examinations and who complete the South Carolina certification application (application, fee, FBI/SLED clearance process) are issued a Statement of Eligibility. The Statement of Eligibility allows these individuals then to seek employment in a South Carolina school district.

Certificates for 2012–13 have been issued in the following approved ABCTE content areas.

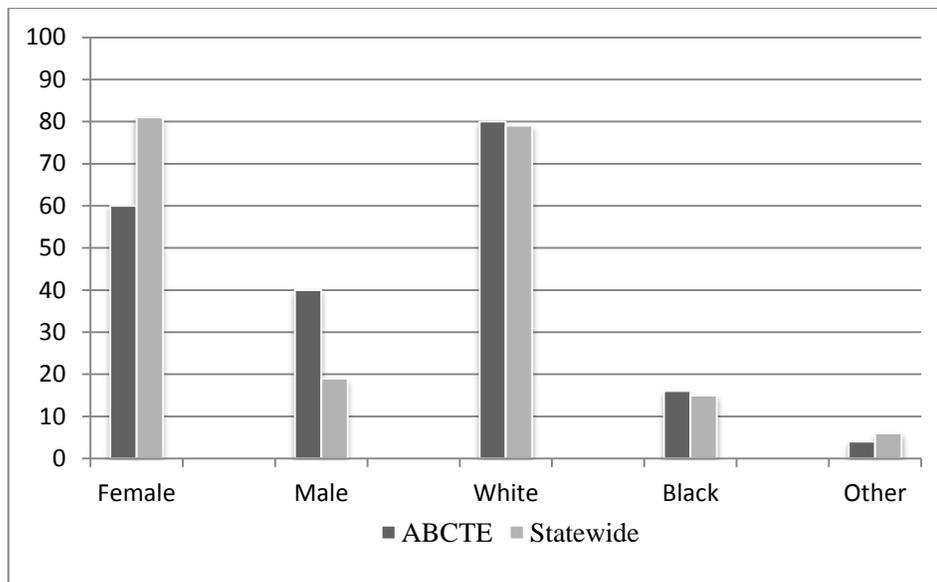
Certification Area	Number Certified*
Biology	5
Chemistry	2
English	20
Mathematics	13
Physics	1
Science	12

\*One participant has dual certification.

Since 2007, over 175 individuals have applied for a Statement of Eligibility to teach in South Carolina based on the presentation of passing ABCTE examination scores. Of these, 126 applicants have received alternative-route certification. Fifty-nine (59) school districts in South Carolina have hired these individuals.

The chart below summarizes demographic data for teachers entering South Carolina classrooms through this alternative pathway. Notably, 40 percent of teachers entering through ABCTE are male—a figure significantly higher than the percentage of males in the overall teaching population in the state. In terms of race, ABCTE teachers mirror the state teaching population.

### South Carolina ABCTE Teacher Demographics



Additionally, within the group of 126 educators who have been hired to teach in South Carolina through ABCTE, the average age is 37 years. Prior work experience in any field ranges from zero to twelve years, with three years being the average length of prior work experience.

In the following table, pathway participants are grouped by the academic year in which they first received a South Carolina ABCTE certificate. For example, Group 1 received their first

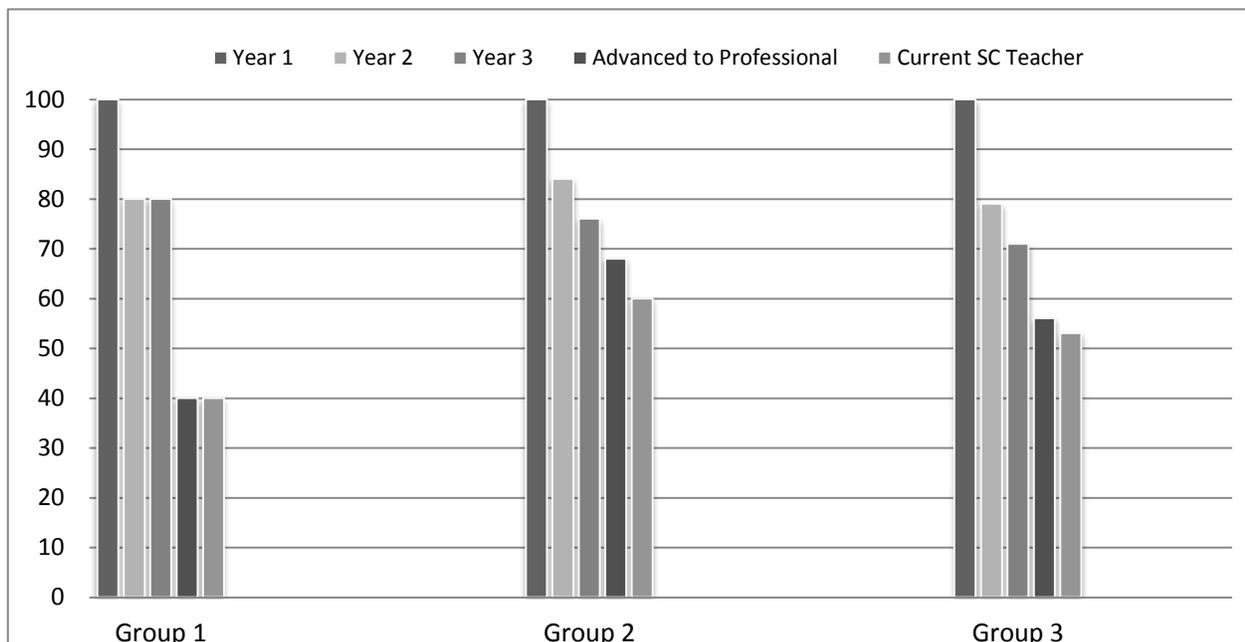
certificate in 2007–08 while Group 6 received their first certificate in 2012–13. The table displays the number entering South Carolina classrooms in their first year. Information provided for a group’s second and third years includes the percentage of participants retained in the program.

### ABCTE Participants by Year

	<b>Group 1</b> Entry Year 2007–08	<b>Group 2</b> Entry Year 2008–09	<b>Group 3</b> Entry Year 2009–10	<b>Group 4</b> Entry Year 2010–11	<b>Group 5</b> Entry Year 2011–12	<b>Group 6</b> Entry Year 2012–13	<b>Total</b>
<b>2007–08</b>	5						5
<b>2008–09</b>	4 (80%)	25					29
<b>2009–10</b>	4 (80%)	21(84%)	34				59
<b>2010–11</b>		19 (76%)	27 (79)	24			70
<b>2011–12</b>			24 (71)	20 (83)	26		70
<b>2012–13</b>				19 (79)	20 (81)	13	52

### ABCTE Participant Certification and Retention Data

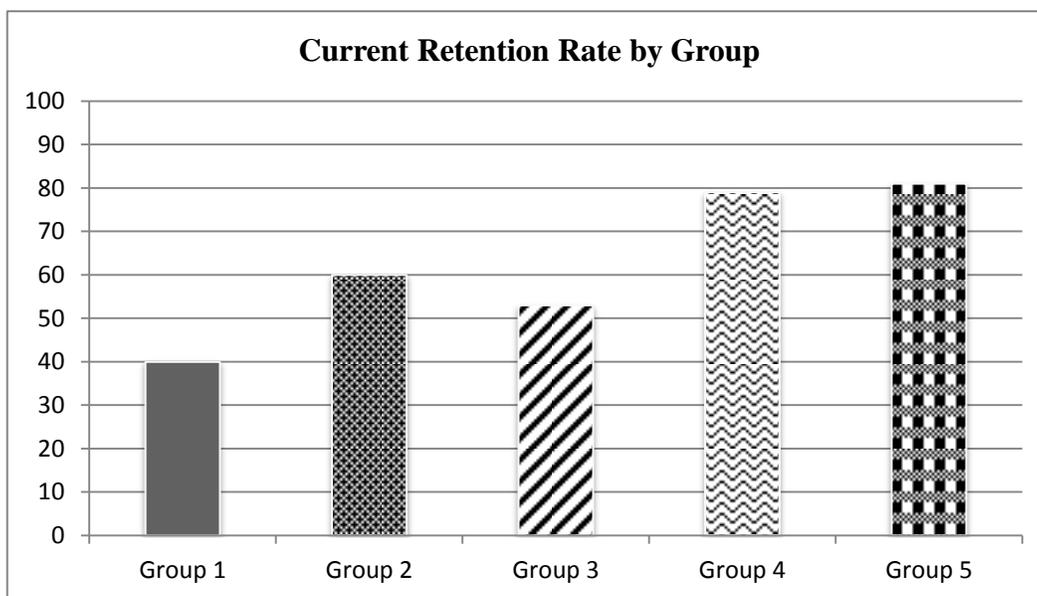
With the end of the 2011–12 school year, three groups of ABCTE teachers have completed the three-year time period during which they must satisfy all requirements necessary to advance from the ABCTE critical need certificate to a professional teaching credential. The chart below indicates the percentage of teachers retained during each of the three-year progression periods as well as the percentage in each cohort year that advanced to a professional certificate as well as those still teaching in a South Carolina public school.



Once school districts have reported the ADEPT evaluation results for the current academic year (no later than June 20, 2013), an additional nineteen of the original twenty-four ABCTE teachers in Group 4 (those completing their third year) may be eligible to advance to a professional certificate.

## Overall Retention Rates

The chart below summarizes the retention rate of educators within each ABCTE group as of the 2012–13 school year.

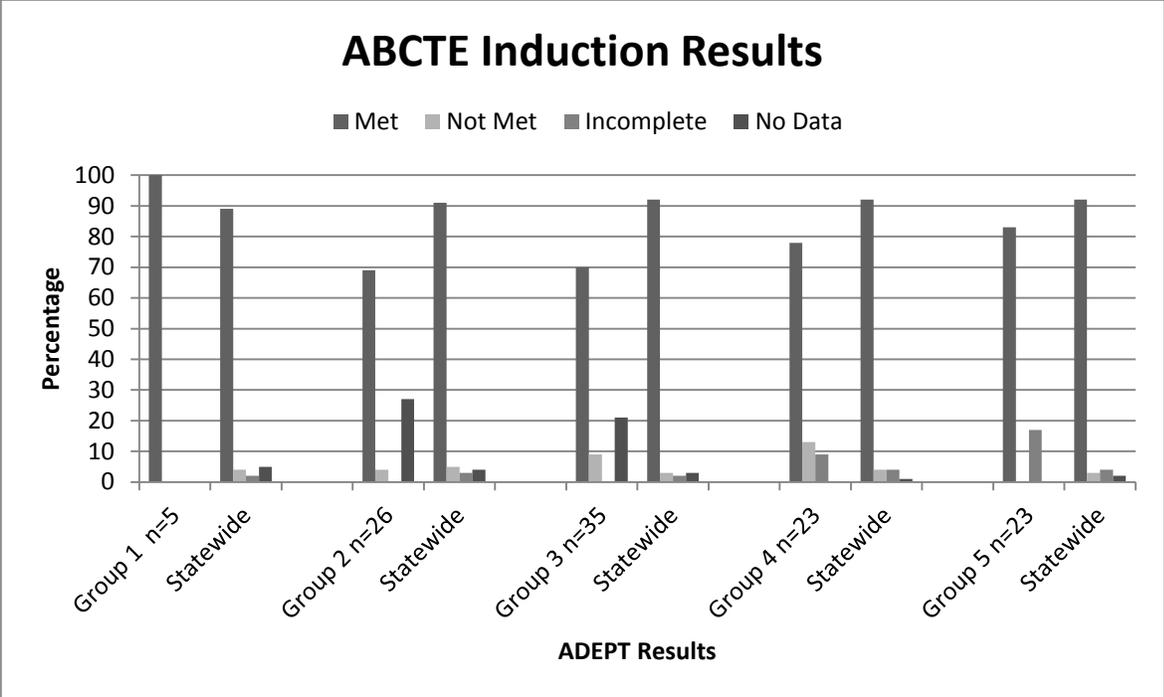


## Teaching Effectiveness

**ADEPT:** All ABCTE participants must take part in ADEPT, South Carolina’s system for Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teaching. During their first year in the classroom, ABCTE 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 year 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 placed on a letter of agreement but are still required to eventually meet the induction and formal contract requirements specified for ABCTE participants. Following participation in the induction process, ABCTE teachers must successfully complete formal/summative evaluation requirements in order to be eligible for advancement to a professional teaching certificate.

Since 2007, an average of 80 percent of first-year ABCTE participants have received an evaluation rating of “met” during the induction process. Of the educators who have progressed to the formal evaluation process at the annual contract level, an average of 68 percent have received a rating of “met.” A total of thirty-five ABCTE participants to date have met all ADEPT and certification requirements to advance to a professional teaching credential. The following two charts provide information on the Induction and Formal Evaluation success of ABCTE participants by group.

## ABCTE Participant Induction Results



**ABCTE Participant Formal Evaluation Results**

