



# A Higher Standard

SPRING 2007



 **AMERICAN BOARD**  
*for Certification of Teacher Excellence*

# About ABCTE



**ABCTE is a nonprofit organization dedicated to recruiting, certifying, and supporting excellent teachers essential to achieving student success.**

With grant funding from the U.S. Department of Education, ABCTE developed the Passport to Teaching program—an innovative and high-quality certification program designed specifically for professionals who want to change careers and teach.

Candidates for ABCTE's program must have a bachelor's degree, pass the ABCTE professional teaching knowledge exam, pass an ABCTE certification exam in their subject area, and pass a background check.

To ensure success in the classroom, ABCTE provides candidates with access to the Prepare to Teach Workshops with over 40 hours of content, an experienced teacher-advisor, and optional access to comprehensive subject matter refresher courses. All ABCTE candidates are encouraged to participate in—and in some states, required to complete—the ABCTE intensive mentoring and induction program.

## ABCTE by the numbers

37: The number of staff at ABCTE

37: The average age of ABCTE candidates

445: The number of ABCTE certified teachers

3,500: The number of candidates pursuing the Passport to Teaching program

34,000: The number of people who have inquired about ABCTE

650: The program fee in US dollars, for Passport to Teaching enrollment

8: The number of technical steps it takes to develop one ABCTE exam

800: The number of potential test questions written for one of ABCTE's 150 item exams

2,000: The number of teachers who have been involved in the development of ABCTE's exams

6: The number of states that officially accept ABCTE certification

0: The number of ABCTE exams administered "online". All ABCTE exams are administered

at secure Pearson-VUE testing centers, not on the Internet, a common misperception

30: The percentage of our teachers that are in rural areas

8: The number of different podcasts that are available at The New Teacher Hotline

[www.newteacherhotline.com](http://www.newteacherhotline.com)

# 2006–2007 Headlines

## Mississippi Adopts ABCTE Certification

On July 12, 2006, the Mississippi State Board of Education unanimously voted to adopt ABCTE's Passport to Teaching program as an official route to state certification. The adoption of ABCTE's program received positive, widespread coverage in statewide media, and more than 1,000 Mississippians contacted ABCTE within just two months of the program's launch in the state. The ABCTE program received praise from Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour and from State Superintendent of Public Instruction Hank Bounds.



## Statewide Recruitment Events Attract 2,000 Attendees

ABCTE worked with more than 30 school districts and nonprofit organizations this year to hold statewide events, You Can Teach: Improve Our Future seminars, in Florida and Idaho to recruit career-changers into the teaching profession. More than 2,000 people attended the events in Idaho and Florida. In Idaho, Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter officially proclaimed the day of the event as "Celebrating ABCTE Teachers Day."

## ABCTE Launches Teach & Inspire Initiative

In 2006 and the first half of 2007, ABCTE inaugurated a program designed to recruit a diverse pool of teachers for high-need subject and geographic areas. Working in partnership with Urban League affiliates in Mississippi and Florida, ABCTE launched the Teach & Inspire Mississippi and Florida coalitions to recruit teachers of color.

In Mississippi, coalition members include First Lady Marsha Barbour, former Governor William Winter and former Supreme Court Justice Reuben Anderson. Florida supporting partners include the Florida School Boards Association, the Florida Association of School Administrators and the Florida Consortium of Charter Schools.



# 2006–2007 Headlines *(continued)*

## U.S. Mayors Unanimously Endorse ABCTE

Recognizing that teacher shortages continue to grow, the nation's mayors voiced their unanimous support for ABCTE's program at the 74th Annual Meeting of the U.S. Conference of Mayors in Las Vegas in July. More than 200 mayors representing some of America's largest cities voted to approve the Recruiting, Training, Supporting and Retaining Teachers, Principals and Superintendents Resolution.

## ABCTE Listed in National Governors Association's Report as One Solution to Teaching Shortage

ABCTE's initiative, Project 5,000, was recognized as a "best practice" project in the National Governors Association 2007 *Innovation America* report. The report noted ABCTE's program and Project 5,000 initiative, which is aimed at recruiting 5,000 science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) teachers.

ABCTE places great emphasis on recruiting a diverse pool of teachers, resulting in higher rates of males and minorities than teachers certified through traditional paths. There are currently more than 3,500 aspiring teachers going through ABCTE's teacher certification programs in various subjects, one-third of whom are pursuing math and science certification.



## ABCTE Launches Resources to Better Prepare Teachers

Over the past year, ABCTE launched comprehensive and affordable refresher courses for its subject area examinations, providing candidates with flexible and innovative methods to prepare for their classroom experiences. Based in large part on feedback from principals hiring ABCTE teachers, ABCTE announced significant changes to the Passport to Teaching program. As a part of their program fee, all candidates for certification are now provided with the Prepare to Teach Workshops with over 40 hours of online classroom management, pedagogy, communicating with parents, and other essential topics for successful first-year teaching.

## ABCTE Launches New Teacher Hotline Podcasts

The world is changing and professional development for new teachers must change with it. ABCTE launched the New Teacher Hotline podcast series to help all new teachers. The podcasts are free to new teachers and can be accessed through [www.newteacherhotline.com](http://www.newteacherhotline.com) or by subscribing to the podcast through Apple's iTunes website. Each topic runs about 20 minutes and provides critical tips for first-year teaching success, as well as answering questions from new teachers in the field. Spread the word and help all new teachers get a great start.





# Research Summaries



## Principals Say ABCTE Teachers Are Effective

In 2006, ABCTE commissioned Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. to perform an independent survey of principals who have hired ABCTE teachers.

In this study, 89.9 percent of principals said that ABCTE teacher performance was the same, or better than, all other educators. In fact, 58 percent rated the performance of their ABCTE teachers as “above average” or “substantially above average.”

Also, 96.9 percent of principals said that ABCTE teachers were “as effective” (or “more effective”) in the classroom than other educators. Principals gave ABCTE teachers higher effectiveness scores than “all other teachers” in the following areas:

- Understanding students’ needs
- Planning lessons
- Leading instructional activities
- Adapting instruction
- Managing the classroom
- Encouraging desired student behavior
- Engaging students in learning
- Communicating content knowledge
- Collaborating with other teachers
- Responding to feedback from other teachers and administrators
- Relating to parents

And 84 percent of principals expressed confidence in the ABCTE certification program, based on the performance of their ABCTE teacher(s).

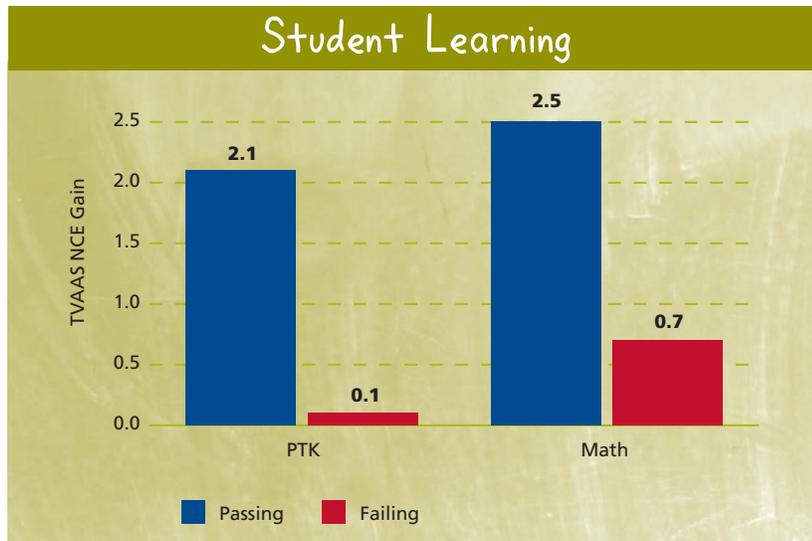
## ABCTE Math Program Predicts Teacher Effectiveness, Student Achievement

In 2006, ABCTE conducted a study to compare student achievement levels of teachers who pass and fail the ABCTE mathematics certification program. Performed in Tennessee—where student achievement data are linked to teachers and are available through the state’s TVAAS value-added assessment system—the report served to validate the effectiveness of ABCTE’s mathematics program on student achievement.

The study found a direct correlation between teacher performance on the ABCTE math and professional teaching knowledge examinations and student achievement. Teachers who score at a higher level on both ABCTE exams generate significantly higher student achievement than teachers who scored considerably lower on the examinations. In common terminology, the long-term achievement of students in the classrooms of higher-performing teachers can be assigned a grade of A, while students in classrooms with lower-performing teachers receive a B or a C.



In the chart below, the NCE gain (longitudinal student learning gains, with zero being considered average) for students of teachers who scored higher on ABCTE examinations is significantly higher than the NCE gain for students of teachers who scored lower on ABCTE examinations.



## Floridians Speak Out on Teaching, Endorse ABCTE Program

In February 2007, ABCTE contracted with the nationally respected polling firm, The Tarrance Group, to conduct a survey of Florida residents regarding the need for teachers in the state and their views on teaching and teachers.

The poll provided interesting insight into the mind-set of Florida residents and their knowledge of and attitudes toward ABCTE. A full 27 percent of college-educated, non-teaching working-age adults have heard of ABCTE from a source other than the polling firm, and the majority of these individuals have favorable views of the organization.

The poll indicated that 82 percent of Floridians believe that “someone with several years of real-world experience in the subject they want to teach, who knows the strategies of excellent teaching but has never taught before,” would make an effective teacher, while 72 percent of respondents believe that “someone right out of college with a degree in education, but with no work experience other than experience in the classroom as a student teacher” would make an effective teacher.

Most importantly, the poll found that 28 percent of educated Floridians would consider changing careers and becoming teachers. Approximately 74 percent of Floridians rated the teacher shortage in their state as a serious or severe problem.

# Reliability & Rigor of Examinations



ABCTE's examinations, which are developed through a comprehensive eight-step process, are rigorous and reliable, which is essential to ensure teacher quality and increase student achievement.

ABCTE continually studies the validity and reliability of its examinations. Reliability refers to the degree to which scores are consistent from test-taker to test-taker, while validity ensures that a test is measuring the knowledge it is intended to measure.

The method used to measure the reliability of the ABCTE certification exams is the Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 (KR-20). Scaled from zero to one, a higher Kuder-Richardson 20 value for an exam indicates stronger reliability, while a lower KR-20 indicates a lower degree of reliability.

Several KR-20 values have been calculated to indicate the reliability of the certification exams, based on the exam forms. ABCTE has more than one form for each examination; questions (items) on the forms differ.

Examination	Exam Form Code	N=	KR-20
Professional Teaching Knowledge	03a	217	0.76
	04a	242	0.69
English	DD	134	0.91
	EE	126	0.92
Mathematics	DD	139	0.94
	EE	130	0.93
Multiple Subject Exam	DD	356	0.91
	EE	368	0.88
Biology	O1	54	0.91
	O2	53	0.90

## Exam Pass Rates

Examining the percentage of candidates who pass ABCTE's exams is an effective method of determining the rigor of the exams. ABCTE is known for its challenging process, and the exam pass rates validate this.

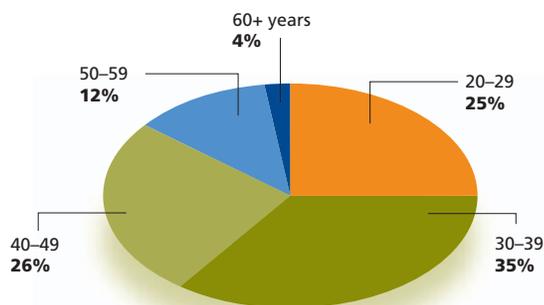
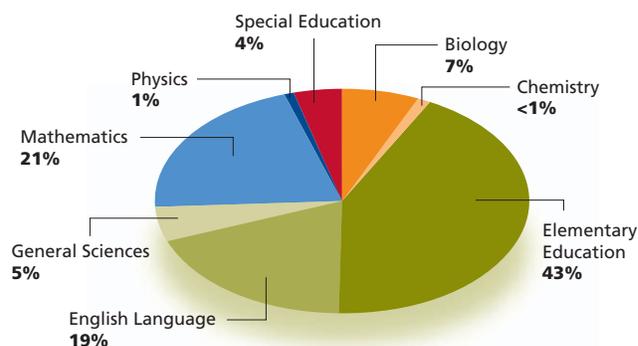
Exam	Taken	Passed	Pass Rate
Professional Teaching Knowledge	840	361	42.98%
English	190	103	54.21%
General Science	51	43	84.31%
Mathematics	209	67	32.06%
Multiple Subject Exam	549	276	50.27%
Biology	74	38	51.35%

# About ABCTE Candidates

*ABCTE is proud to have recruited more than 3,500 individuals into the Passport to Teaching program over the past three years. ABCTE's candidates have a higher average age than traditionally certified new teachers, have more real-world experience, and pursue high-need subject areas at higher percentages.*

## Certification Area

More than 39 percent of ABCTE's candidates are pursuing certification in subject areas that are traditionally classified as "high need," such as math, the sciences and special education. ABCTE continues to attract a high number of candidates into its elementary education program. While not traditionally considered a "high-need" area, one of ABCTE's primary recruitment regions, the state of Florida, faces a significant need for elementary teachers.

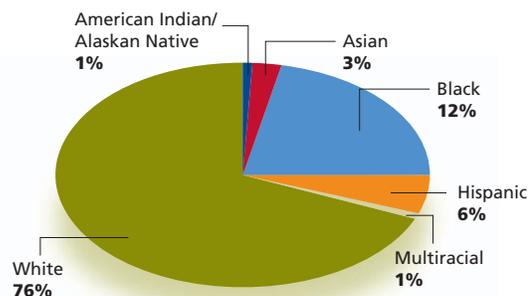


## Age

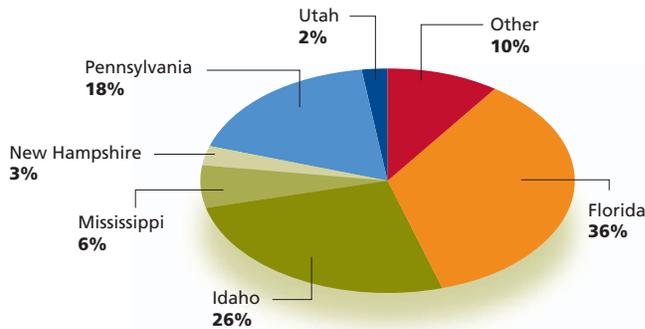
ABCTE candidates are mid-career changers with a mean age of 37. ABCTE teachers are bringing real-world expertise into the classroom. ABCTE is also recruiting a higher percentage of men (32.7 percent) into the Passport to Teaching program than other routes to certification (currently 25 percent).

## Ethnicity

ABCTE's demonstrated commitment to recruiting a diverse pool of teachers for America's schools is making an impact. Individuals of color constitute 24 percent of ABCTE's domestic pool of candidates. As a certification program with testing sites around the world, there are also highly educated, experienced international teachers pursuing the certification as a means of filling vacancies in high-need areas at the request of school districts.



# About ABCTE Candidates *(continued)*



## Residency

ABCTE has recruited candidates in all 50 states and in several foreign countries. The program, while officially accepted by six states as a route to state certification, is used by charter and private schools in many states as a method of validating teacher quality during the hiring process. As expected, however, the highest number of teachers hails from the state of Florida, where there exists a severe teacher shortage and a large base of educated professionals interested in teaching.

## Degree Status

ABCTE continues to recruit highly educated individuals into its Passport to Teaching program. More than 25 percent of candidates for Passport to Teaching certification hold advanced degrees. All candidates hold at least a bachelor's degree.

Advanced Degree	Number of Candidates
M.A.	220
M.Ed.	105
M.S.	265
M.B.A.	153
Ed.D.	10
J.D.	50
M.D.	10
Ph.D.	78

### Methodology

Candidate information is reported by candidates at the time of enrollment. Certain information is required (certification area, location of residence, and degree status), while other information is provided on a voluntary basis (age, gender, and ethnicity). Data were derived from an overall pool of 3,516 candidates or from the pool of 2,406 domestic candidates (for the ethnicity and location of residence statistics only). These data are current as of March 20, 2007. In instances where data were not provided for a candidate in a particular area of analysis, that candidate was removed from the pool of candidates for the purposes of the area analysis (response rate of the voluntary questions ranges is approximately 80 percent). Due to rounding, all charts may not equal 100 percent.



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**For more information  
visit [www.abcte.org](http://www.abcte.org)  
or call 877-669-2228.**

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