

**Passport to Teaching:
Career Choices and
Experiences of American
Board Certified Teachers**

Final Report

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A. INTRODUCTION

Since their inception in the 1980s, alternative certification programs have grown to account for about one-third of all new teachers certified annually (Feistritzer 2007). Examples of alternative certification programs include Troops to Teachers; Transition to Teaching; and the more recent Passport to Teaching, offered by the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE). Several factors have contributed to the growth of alternative teacher-certification programs, including an aging teacher population, class-size-reduction initiatives, difficulties in attracting quality minority candidates to the profession, and shortages of individuals prepared to teach math, science, and special education. Despite the large and growing role of alternative certification programs, much remains to be learned about the teachers certified through these programs and their experiences after receiving certification.

In this report, we examine the career trajectories of those who have successfully completed the American Board Passport to Teaching certification. To elicit information on the career choices of Passport holders (referred to as “alumni”), Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR) designed a survey that addressed the following questions:

1. Who obtains a Passport and what career choices did they make?
 - 1a. Who obtains a Passport to Teaching certificate?
 - 1b. For what reason(s) had these individuals chosen to seek American Board certification?
 - 1c. What is the current employment status of Passport alumni?
2. What happens to those who become teachers?
 - 2a. What kinds of schools do they teach in?
 - 2b. What is their teaching assignment?
 - 2c. How much support have they received on the job?
3. What other experiences did they have after receiving a Passport to Teaching?
 - 3a. Why are some Passport holders not currently teaching?
 - 3b. How many Passport holders enter and leave teaching after being certified?

To set a context for interpreting the findings of the alumni survey, we provide in Section B a brief history of the Passport to Teaching program. Section C describes the survey, and Section D reports on the career choices of alumni who responded to the survey. The final section summarizes the key findings.

B. HISTORY OF THE PASSPORT TO TEACHING PROGRAM

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation of 2001 fueled interest in alternative certification chiefly because it required states to ensure that all teachers are highly qualified in the subjects they teach. ABCTE was formed through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to develop an alternative certification for teachers who needed to earn certification as well as for professionals seeking to change careers and become teachers. The goal was then and continues to

be to provide an affordable, flexible, and high-quality route to certification that is also nationally recognized and portable. Unlike many other alternative routes to certification, ABCTE does not require any formal course work or classroom-teaching practice prior to certification. Rather, the certification centers on a set of exams, one in content and one in pedagogy.

In 2003, ABCTE began offering the Passport to Teaching certification in Elementary Education (K-6), and one year later certifications were also available in English Language Arts (6-12) and Mathematics (6-12). To earn Passport to Teaching certification, candidates must hold a bachelor's degree in any subject area, pass a federal background check, pass an ABCTE examination in the subject(s) they want to teach, and pass the ABCTE professional teaching knowledge exam. All exams are administered online at testing centers around the world, thus affording maximum flexibility to the prospective candidate for a fee of approximately \$500. The first enrollees in the program received teaching certificates in late 2004 and were eligible to teach only in charter and private schools in all states but Idaho, where they could teach in any traditional public school.

Currently ABCTE offers Passport to Teaching certification in Elementary Education (K-6), English Language Arts (6-12), Mathematics (6-12), General Science (6-12), Biology (6-12), Physics (6-12), Chemistry (6-12), Special Education (K-6), U.S. History (6-12), and World History (6-12).¹ Passport to Teaching is recognized under the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 as an approved way to demonstrate that a teacher is highly qualified. It is now an approved route to state licensure in eight states: Pennsylvania, Idaho, Utah, New Hampshire, Florida, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Missouri. At the time of the survey on which this report is based, the state of Missouri has had not yet recognized the Passport for state certification. Each of these states recognizes one or more of the available certifications and may impose additional requirements on Passport holders who wish to teach there. Appendix A provides the date each of these states recognized the Passport certifications and which certifications each state currently accepts as an alternative route to state licensure.

There is very little systematic data on the Passport to Teaching credential to date. Earlier studies by Mathematica have reported on principals' attitudes toward Passport holders based on the first cohort of alumni who were teaching (Glazerman and Tuttle 2006) and on the relationship between scores on the American Board exams required for Passport certification and the similar Praxis II exams required by most states for certification (Chaplin et al. 2007).

C. SURVEY METHODS AND PARTICIPANTS

As of October 1, 2007, 609 individuals had successfully completed the Passport to Teaching certification. In characterizing alumni and their career choices, we wanted to explore how similar or different the earlier cohorts of Passport recipients were from those who obtained Passport certification in later years. Consequently, for this report we group Passport alumni into three cohorts. The first people ever to receive a Passport to Teaching certificate were certified in late 2004, and we include these individuals in Cohort 1 along with those certified in 2005. Cohort 2 includes those certified in 2006. Cohort 3 includes those certified in 2007. An important goal of the alumni survey is to monitor the characteristics of alumni and their career choices by cohort.

¹ A reading endorsement, although available to all certified teachers, satisfies the specific requirements of Florida and Idaho.

Differences between cohorts may signal increased recognition over time of the Passport to Teaching as an alternative route for teaching in America's schools.

MPR designed a brief survey to monitor the career choices of Passport alumni once they had received their certification. The first of three planned rounds of the alumni web survey was conducted November 2006 through January 2007 and a report was issued in May 2007 (see Baxter et al. 2007). ABCTE provided us the names and contact information for those certified before October 1, 2007. As noted, this represents the first three cohorts of alumni. Because this round of the survey used the entire list, it constitutes a population census of all Passport to Teaching certificate program alumni, not a sub-sample.

Of the 605 eligible respondents from all three cohorts, 508 completed the survey, for a response rate of 84.0 percent. Our figures exclude four Passport holders who are deceased (and therefore not considered part of the eligible sample for data collection). Four individuals logged on but did not answer any questions and are treated as eligible incompletes.

D. CAREER CHOICES AND EXPERIENCES OF PASSPORT ALUMNI

This section reports on the findings relating to the research questions listed in the introduction.

1. Career Choices

Question 1a. Who obtains a Passport certificate?

Given the high response rate, we expected the survey sample would look like the population from which it was drawn, and the data we obtained from Passport to Teaching applications of the alumni confirm this expectation. Table 1 shows characteristics of the respondent population compared to the full set of Passport alumni and the two groups are similar. Like the full set of alumni, respondents are predominantly white and female, although 35 percent are male. The average age of 39 years suggests that many are either career changers or experienced teachers, as opposed to traditional beginning-teacher candidates who are typically one or two years out of college or graduate school and therefore in their early- to mid-20s. There is an apparent difference in race/ethnicity between all Passport alumni (column 1) and those who responded to the survey (column 2). The data in column 1 came from information collected by ABCTE when an individual registered to enter the Passport to Teaching program. We were able to use our survey to fill in the administrative data that were missing or unavailable for these Passport candidates. In doing so, we learned that most ABCTE candidates who did not specify a race/ethnic category when they enrolled in the program identified themselves as white on our survey. The Passport to Teaching program had many applicants from the Philippines, which helps account for the 12 percent who identify themselves as Asian or Pacific Islander.

As expected, alumni tend to reside in states that recognize Passport certification as a route to licensure. Of those who were living in non-ABCTE states when they applied for the credential (8 percent, shown in column 1), some may have moved to ABCTE states in order to teach. The same may be true of overseas applicants. Further, most are certified in one of the three subject areas that were first offered by ABCTE: Elementary Education (48 percent), English Language Arts (20 percent), and Mathematics (14 percent).

We can learn about changes over time by comparing the first three cohorts of alumni. For example, there has been a shift toward a greater percentage of males (from 32 to 35 to 37 percent) and a shift toward more overseas alumni. There has also been a rising percentage certified in the more recently offered subject areas, such as the sciences, as one might expect.

Table 1. Background Characteristics of Passport Alumni (percent, unless specified otherwise)

Characteristic	Respondents and Nonrespondents	Survey Respondents by Year of Certification			
	All	All	2004 or 2005	2006	2007
Gender					
Male	34.8	35.3	32.3	34.7	36.7
Female	65.2	64.8	67.7	65.3	63.3
Age (in Years)	38.5	38.7	40.5	40.2	37.1
Race					
White, non-Hispanic	52.8	80.4	89.9	81.3	76.2
Black, non-Hispanic	1.3	1.8	1.0	1.3	2.3
Hispanic	1.6	1.8	1.0	2.0	2.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	11.9	11.7	5.1	10.7	14.8
Native American	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.4
Multiracial	1.3	1.6	1.0	2.0	1.6
Not specified	30.6	2.6	2.0	2.7	2.7
Location					
ABCTE states ^a	79.2	84.8	91.1	84.8	82.5
Other states	7.5	3.1	4.4	4.1	2.0
Overseas	13.4	12.1	4.4	11.0	15.5
Certification Subject Area(s)^b					
Elementary Education	46.1	47.9	56.6	47.3	45.0
English Language Arts (6-12)	20.5	19.9	21.2	24.0	17.1
Mathematics (6-12)	13.2	14.0	14.1	11.3	15.5
Biology	5.5	5.1	2.0	6.0	5.8
Elementary Education and Special Education (K-12)	2.0	3.9	2.0	2.0	5.8
General Science	4.9	3.0	0.0	0.7	5.4
Elementary Education and English Language Arts (6-12)	1.0	1.6	1.0	1.3	1.9
Other	3.1	4.5	3.0	7.3	3.5
Sample Size	614	507	99	150	258

Source: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. 2007 Survey of Passport to Teaching Alumni.

^aABCTE states (Florida, Idaho, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Utah, Mississippi, and South Carolina) are those that were accepting Passport to Teaching as an alternative route to state licensure at the time of the survey.

^bForty-two alumni have more than one certification, including 35 with two areas of certification and 7 with three areas. We counted individuals certified in more than one subject separately from individuals who were certified in a single subject.

Question 1b. For what reason(s) had these individuals sought American Board certification?

Most of those who obtained a Passport to Teaching certificate were seeking to enter the profession, but a substantial minority were seeking to continue in their current position. Of the 507 survey respondents who answered the question, 59 percent reported seeking certification to allow them to enter teaching (Table 2). Just over one-third of the alumni (34 percent) sought certification to allow them to retain their current teaching position, change teaching positions, or become re-certified in an area for which their certification had lapsed. The remaining 7 percent sought certification to advance their career in a nonteaching position (for example, tutoring) or for some other reason (such as home schooling their children). The share of Passport holders that obtained the credential in order to enter teaching has risen steadily from fewer than one-half of the first cohort to more than three-fifths of the most recent cohort.

Table 2. Reasons For Seeking American Board Certification

Reason	All Survey Respondents		Certified in 2004 or 2005	Certified in 2006	Certified in 2007
	N	%	%	%	%
To enter the teaching profession	297	58.6	49.5	55.3	64.0
To retain current position	107	21.1	18.2	21.3	22.1
To obtain another teaching position	66	13.0	21.2	14.7	8.9
To advance career in education in a nonteaching position	12	2.4	4.0	2.0	1.9
Other reason	25	4.9	7.1	6.7	3.1
Total Survey Respondents	507	100	100	100	100

Source: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. 2007 Survey of Passport to Teaching Alumni.

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

The Passport to Teaching appears to be the choice of mid-career professionals, even though it was used both to enter teaching and move laterally within the profession. Alumni who sought certification to retain or obtain another teaching profession were 39 years old, on average, at the time of the survey, which took place between zero and three years after they were certified. Yet alumni who sought certification to enter teaching for the first time were almost the same age, 38 years old, on average.

Question 1c. What is the current employment status of Passport alumni?

Although more than 90 percent of Passport alumni reported seeking certification to enter or stay in teaching, not everyone who successfully achieved Passport certification became and remained a K-12 teacher. Of the 505 alumni who responded to the question, approximately two-thirds currently hold a teaching position. Table 3 shows that 4 percent are teaching at the prekindergarten

or postsecondary level and 3 percent are employed in other types of instructional positions, such as tutoring or substitute teaching. That leaves 59 percent teaching in K-12 grades in the United States.

Table 3. Current Employment Status

Employment Status	All Survey Respondents		Certified in 2004 or 2005		Certified in 2006		Certified in 2007	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Teaching in United States								
Teaching K-12	296	58.6	64		95	63.3	137	53.3
Teaching pre-K or postsecondary	20	4.0	4	4.1	8	5.3	8	3.1
Other teaching (substitute, tutor)	16	3.2	2	2.0	3	2.0	11	4.3
Teaching Outside United States	17	3.4	2	2.0	4	2.7	11	4.3
Not Teaching	156	30.9	26	26.5	40	26.7	90	35.0
Total Survey Respondents	505	100	98	100	150	100	257	100

Source: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. 2007 Survey of Passport to Teaching Alumni.

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Three in ten Passport alumni did not have a teaching position at the time of the survey. The rate at which Passport holders are employed in teaching K-12 in the U.S. (“placement rate”) with each subsequent cohort decreased from 65 to 63 to 53 percent teaching in K-12 in the U.S. Some of this pattern is to be expected because more recent cohorts have had less time in the job market with an American Board certificate. Another possible explanation is the mix of candidates, which has included a larger number of overseas applicants who have shown lower rates of job placement in U.S. teaching positions than their counterparts already living in the U.S. Table 4 presents the percentages of alumni who have obtained K-12 teaching positions in the U.S. by applicant characteristic. Overseas applicants had the lowest placement rates (25 percent) and applicants from Idaho, Utah, and Florida had the highest placement rates (all over 70 percent). Only 40 percent of applicants from New Hampshire were teaching at the time of the survey.

Income, occupation, and highest degree earned at the time of application also appear related to placement rates. Applicants with advanced degrees had higher placement rates than those with only a bachelor’s (71 versus 63 percent). Applicants who reported a previous occupation in the education field had an 80 percent placement rate compared to 45 percent for those from other occupations. This may indicate that the key to obtaining a teaching job is to have one already. Finally, there were differences in placement rates among applicants from different household income categories, but there was no obvious pattern. The only exception was that those who did not report any income or did not respond to the question had the lowest placement rate, 57 percent.

2. Teaching Experiences

Of the 505 respondents who provided their employment status, 349 (69 percent) reported that they were teaching at the time of the survey. Question 2 focuses on these individuals, especially the 296 alumni (59 percent of all respondents) who were teaching in K-12 positions in the United States, and asks about the kinds of schools in which they were teaching and the nature of their teaching assignments.

Table 4. Percentage of Passport Alumni Teaching K-12 in the U.S.

Characteristic	All Survey Respondents		Certified in 2004 or 2005		Certified in 2006		Certified in 2007	
	N	% Teaching K-12	N	% Teaching K-12	N	% Teaching K-12	N	% Teaching K-12
State of residence at application								
Idaho	190	76.8	53	77.4	54	90.7	83	67.5
Florida	130	70.8	11	63.6	36	72.2	83	71.1
Pennsylvania	75	62.7	17	70.6	28	50.0	30	70.0
Other states	54	53.7	14	50.0	15	46.7	25	60.0
Outside the United States	58	25.4	4	25.0	17	35.3	37	21.6
Degree at time of application								
Bachelor's only	367	62.8	72	69.4	103	65.0	192	59.4
Higher than bachelor's	135	71.1	26	65.4	45	75.6	64	70.3
Previous occupation								
Education	253	80.2	34	82.4	87	77.0	132	81.8
Other than education	191	46.1	18	66.7	48	52.1	125	40.8
None reported	63	60.3	47	59.6	15	66.7	1	0.0
Household income								
Less than \$25,000	38	60.5	4	75.0	11	54.5	23	60.9
\$25,000 to \$49,999	110	77.3	11	81.8	34	82.4	65	73.8
\$50,000 to \$74,999	57	68.4	5	60.0	13	76.9	39	66.7
\$75,000 to \$99,000	26	69.2	1	100.0	8	100.0	17	52.9
\$100,000 or more	21	81.0	3	100.0	7	100.0	11	63.6
Missing	255	57.2	75	65.3	77	55.8	103	53.4
All Respondents	507	64.9	99	68.7	150	68.0	258	61.6

Question 2a. What kinds of schools do they teach in?

Passport alumni were in a variety of schools including private and charter schools. Of those who were teaching K-12, 71 percent were teaching in public non-charter schools, 12 percent in charter schools and 15 percent in private schools (Table 5). The share of Passport teachers in private schools declines with each subsequent cohort, falling from 21 percent among the first cohort down to 12 percent among of the most recent cohort. This latter figure is more in line with the proportion of all school-age children in the U.S. who are in private schools, estimated to be 11 percent in 2007 (NCES 2008).

Table 5. Type Of School

Type of school	All Respondents	Certified in 2004 or 2005	Certified in 2006	Certified in 2007
Public, non-charter	70.5	71.2	63.3	75.0
Public, charter	12.2	6.1	16.3	12.3
Private (independent or religious)	15.1	21.2	16.3	11.5
Other	2.2	1.5	4.1	1.4
Sample Size	312	66	98	148

Source: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. 2007 Survey of Passport to Teaching Alumni.

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Teachers were asked to identify the schools in which they teach. In an effort to characterize these schools, we attempted to match the named schools to the 2005 Common Core of Data (CCD), maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the most recent publicly available file. We present findings for schools in ABCTE states which we could match to the CCD file -- for public schools only, since private schools are not included in these files. This results in a total sample of 216 public schools for this analysis, most of which are in Idaho (97) and Florida (70). Table 6 presents the average characteristics of public schools in which Passport holders are teaching.

To provide a perspective on the geographic distribution of Passport to Teaching alumni in schools, Figure 1 shows a map of the United States with the number of Passport teachers in each county shaded. Darker shading indicates a larger number of Passport teachers. The figure shows the strong presence in Idaho and Florida, the two states that first began accepting Passport to Teaching certification. Other shaded areas around the country show a Passport presence in additional ABCTE states as well as in other states where teachers have found positions in charter schools and private schools. Figures 2-5 show more detail by presenting maps for the four U.S. Census regions (Northeast, South, Midwest, and West).

Question 2b. What is their teaching assignment?

We compared the subject areas in which alumni were certified to their teaching assignments. That is, are alumni teaching courses for which they have been certified? In general, they are. Table 7 shows the number of alumni by certification area, the number of such alumni who were teaching in K-12 positions, and the number who were teaching in at least one of the areas in which they were certified. Finally, the table shows the percentage of all respondents and the percentage of teachers who were teaching in their area of certification. Overall, 86 percent of those who obtain teaching positions do teach in an area for which they were American Board certified. This represents 56 percent of all teachers, if one factors in the alumni who did not obtain teaching positions.

Looking within subject area, we find that Passport holders typically teach in the area for which they were certified regardless of what that area is. The lowest rate at which alumni were teaching in certification field was biology, at 71 percent. Next were elementary education at 83 percent and English/language arts at 85 percent. The others were between 90 and 100 percent. The rates of in-field teaching were considerably lower once the non-teachers were factored in. As a percentage of all respondents, alumni in most certification areas (or combinations of areas) failed to obtain a

teaching position in their field at a rate of roughly one-third to one-half. The exceptions were the alumni certified in both elementary and special education, where only 15 percent failed to obtain a certification-related placement, and the alumni who had other combinations of credentials, where only 13 percent failed to obtain such a placement.

Question 2c. How much support have they received on the job?

The Passport to Teaching program offers prospective teachers the opportunity to enter the classroom with very little or no pre-service training in pedagogy. Therefore, it might be hoped that schools would provide resources for these newly minted teachers to ease their transition into the classroom. A common approach to integrating new teachers into the classroom is through teacher induction, a central component of which is mentoring by a veteran educator (Smith and Ingersoll 2004). We asked Passport alumni with teaching positions to tell us about their experiences with mentoring, specifically whether they had a mentor (“an experienced educator who gives you regular advice on instruction, classroom management, or other teaching responsibilities”) and if so, how many minutes per week they meet with their mentor.

We found mentoring to be fairly common for Passport alumni. Somewhat more than one-half (57 percent) of respondents reported having a mentor. The average amount of time that these teachers met with their mentors was 47 minutes per week. When we include teachers who did not have a mentor (hence, with zero weekly mentor minutes), the average across all teachers was 27 minutes per week.

Table 6. School Characteristics (percentages, public schools only)

Characteristic	All States N = 216	Idaho N = 97	Florida N = 70	Pennsylvania N = 25	Other ABCTE States N = 15
Race/ethnicity of students					
White, non-Hispanic	67.5	82.4	50.8	50.9	77.9
Black, non-Hispanic	13.4	1.1	21.7	38.6	9.3
Hispanic	15.8	13.1	24.2	8.6	8.7
Asian or Native American	4.3	3.4	3.3	2.1	4.1
Urbanicity					
Large or midsize city	23.2	21.7	18.6	36.0	26.7
Urban fringe	40.3	20.6	65.7	52.0	33.3
Large or small town	11.6	18.6	1.4	4.0	26.7
Rural	25.0	39.2	14.3	8.0	13.3
Percentage of students eligible for free- or reduced-price lunch					
	38.5	40.8	42.1	26.5	28.8
Title I status					
Not eligible	46.8	29.9	67.1	32.0	73.3
Eligible (targeted assistance)	33.3	55.7	1.4	44.0	20.0
Eligible (school-wide)	19.9	14.4	31.4	24.0	6.7
Type of school					
Traditional public school	80.6	87.6	82.9	48.0	80.0
Charter school	12.5	9.3	4.3	52.0	6.7
Magnet school	3.2	0.0	8.6	0.0	6.7
Special education/alternative	2.8	2.1	4.3	0.0	6.7
Vocational school	0.9	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Number of Passport teachers in the school					
1	88.9	83.5	91.4	92.0	100.0
2	9.7	13.4	8.6	8.0	0.0
3	0.9	2.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
4	0.5	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Source: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. 2007 Survey of Passport to Teaching Alumni; NCES Common Core of Data 2005.

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding. Percentages are based on the number of schools, not teachers with each school counted once.

Figure 1. U.S. Counties With Passport Teachers

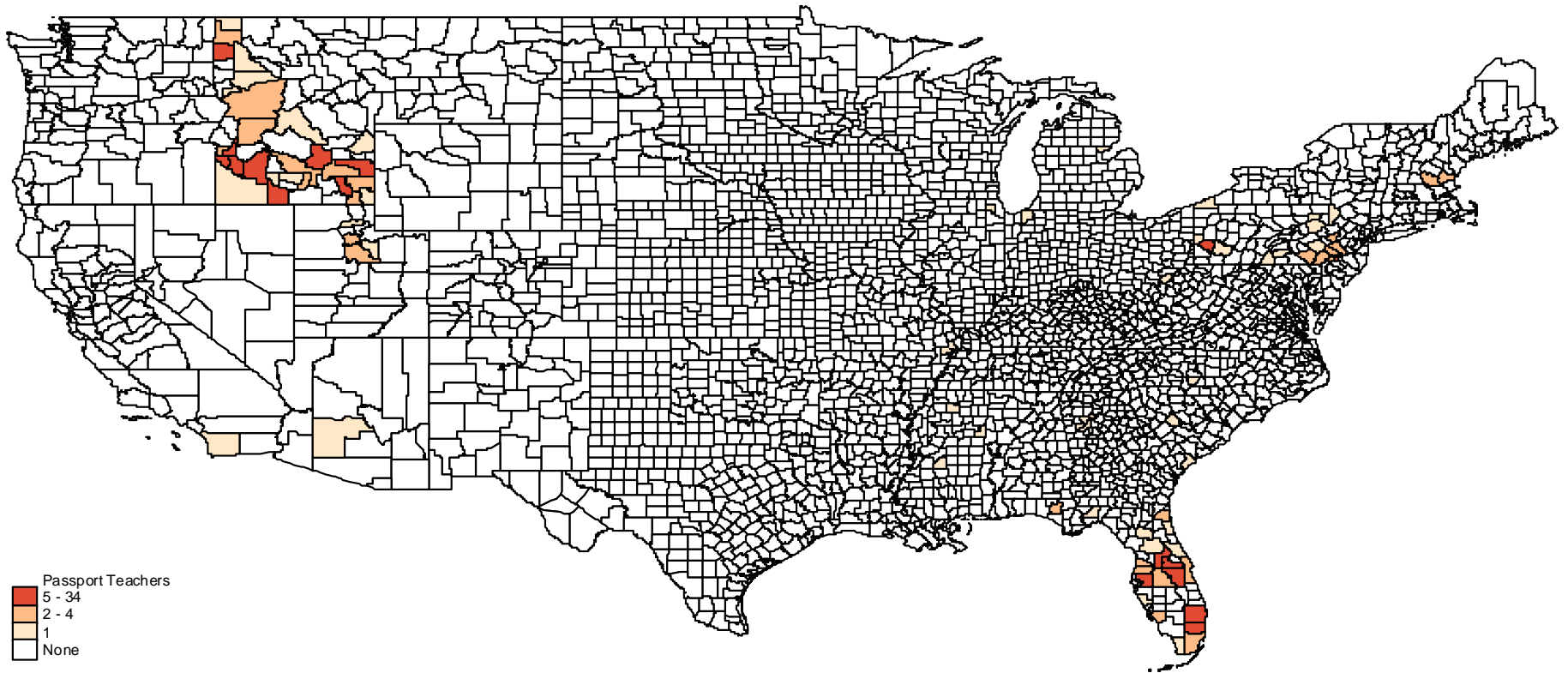


Figure 2. U.S. Counties With Passport Teachers: Northeast Region

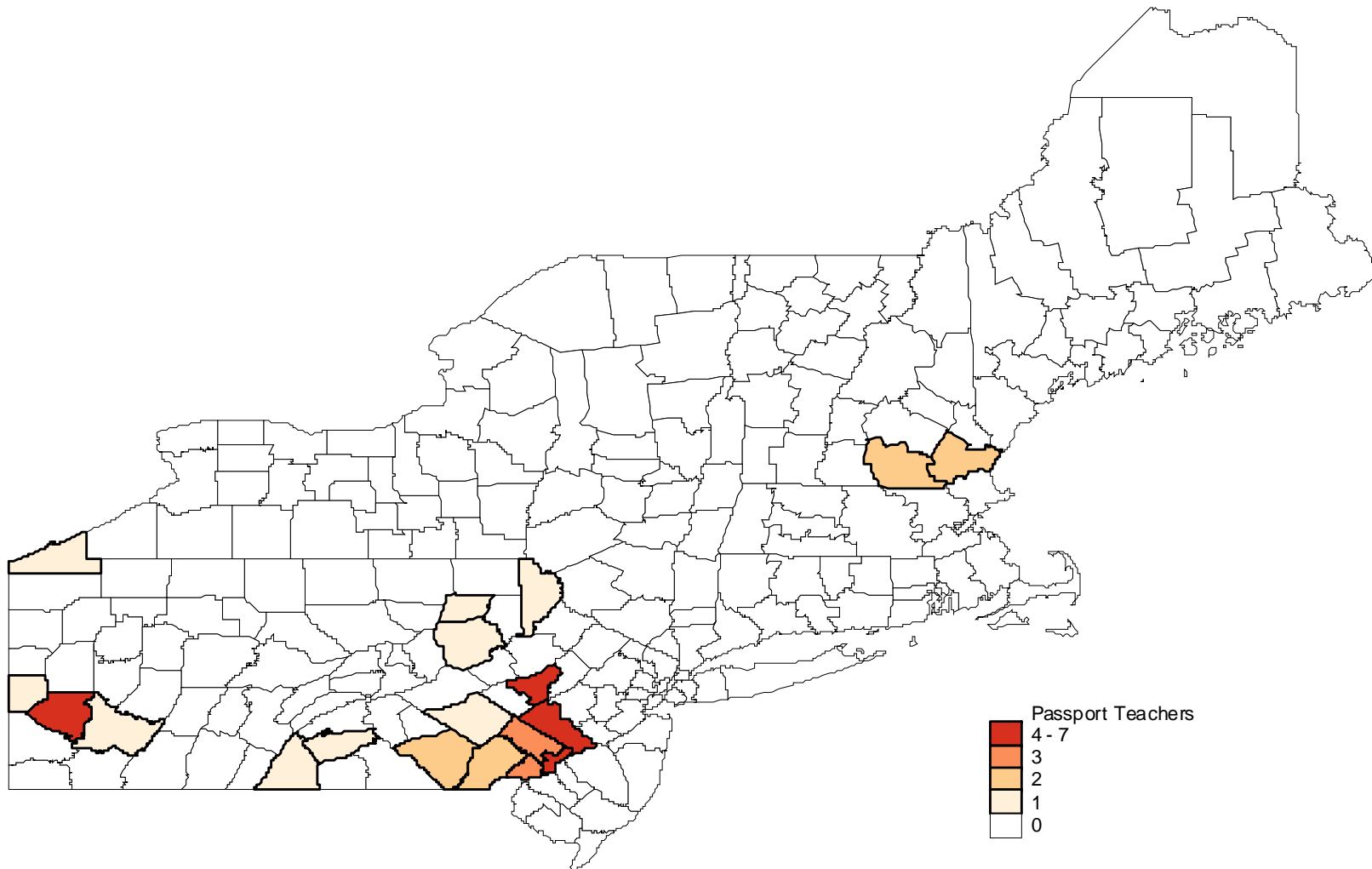


Figure 3. U.S. Counties With Passport Teachers: South Region

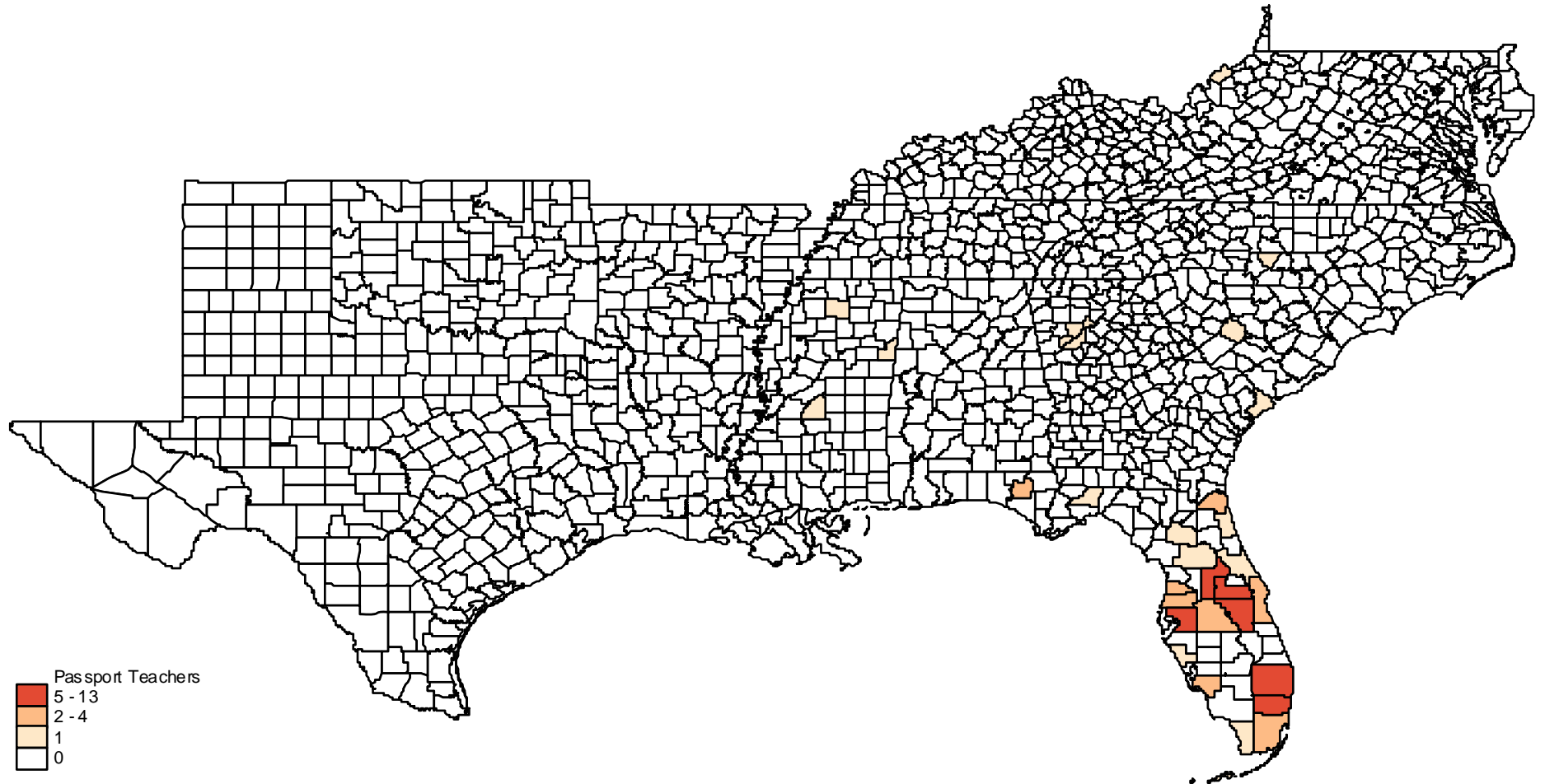


Figure 4. U.S. Counties With Passport Teachers: Midwest Region

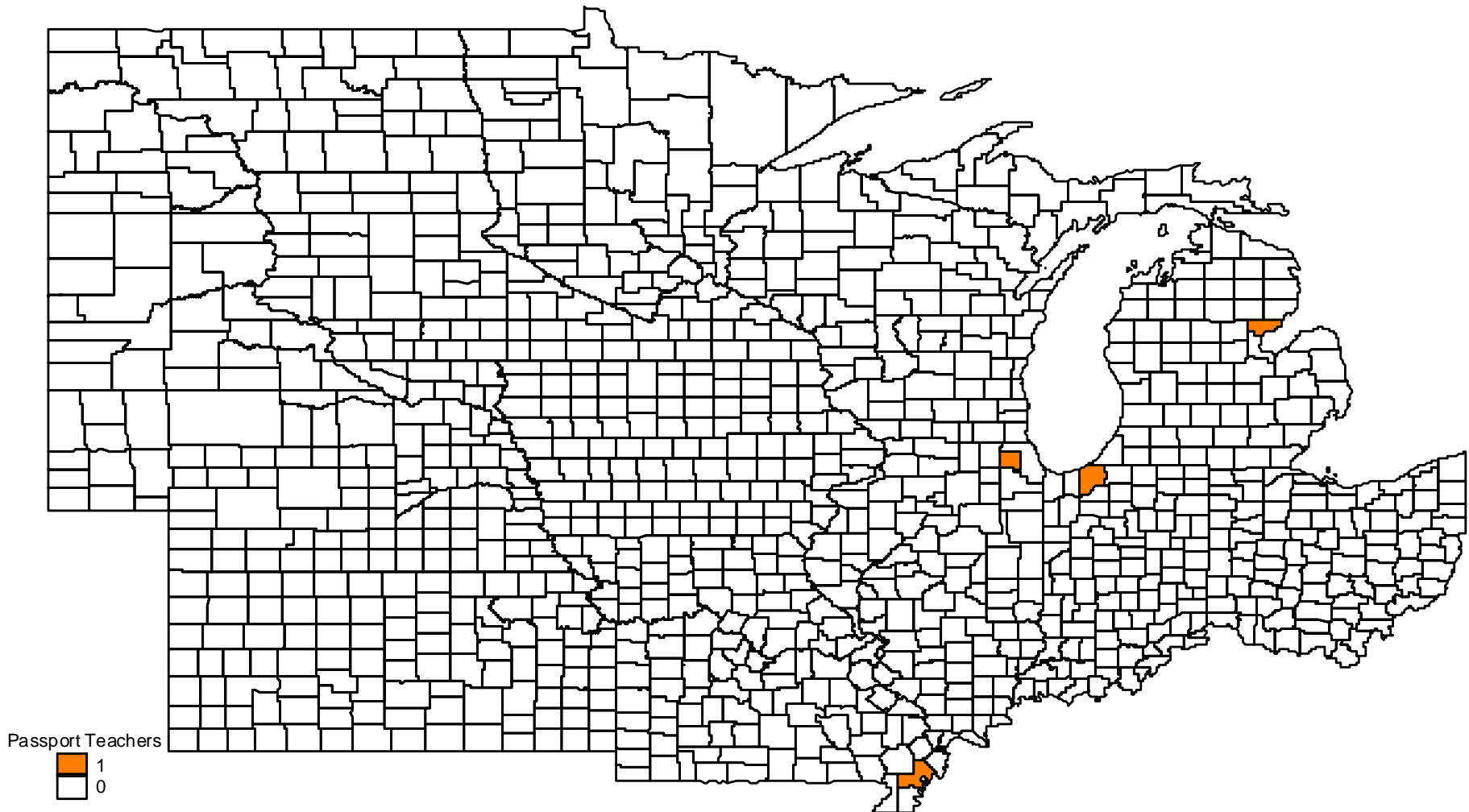


Figure 5. U.S. Counties With Passport Teachers: West Region

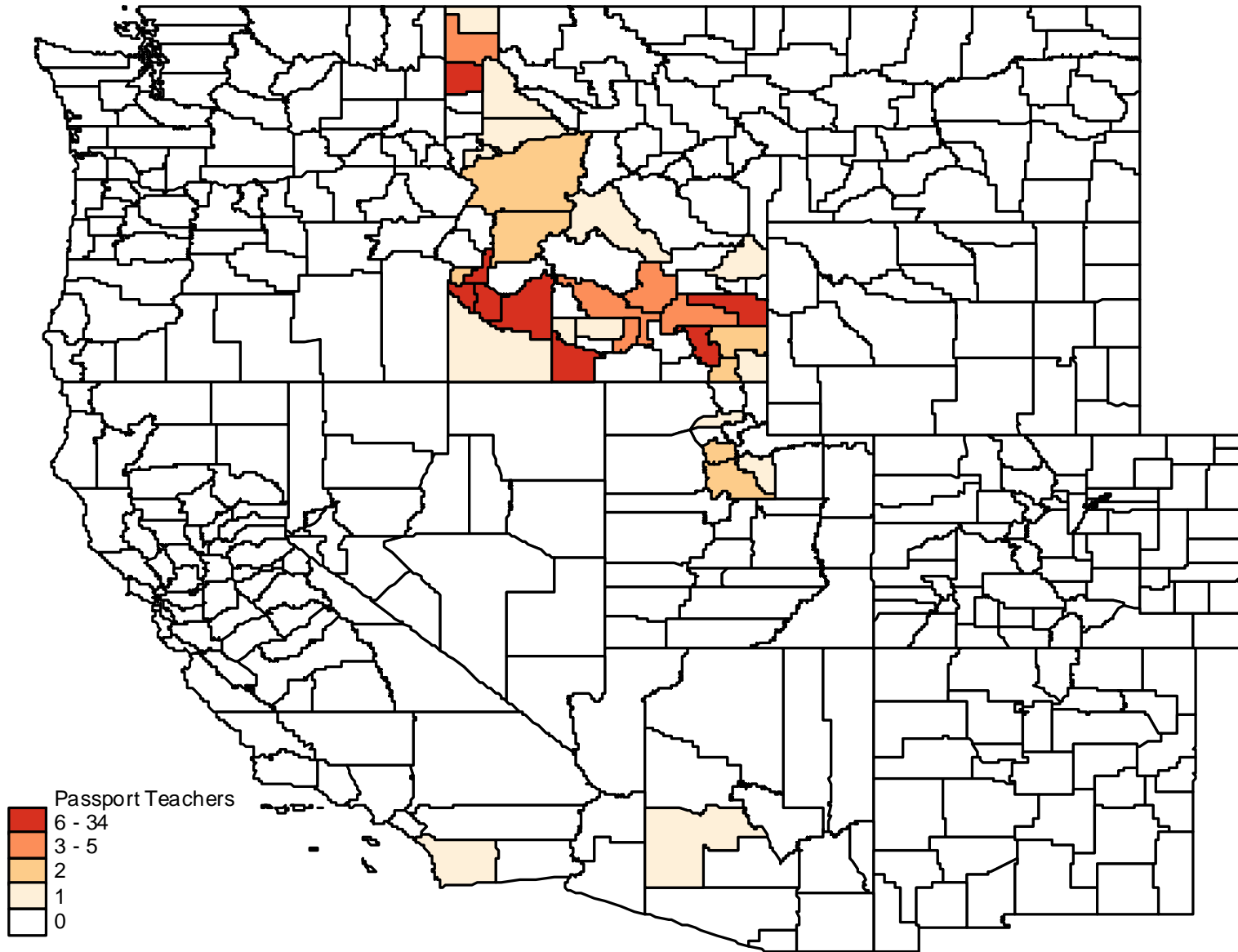


Table 7. Teaching Assignment by Certification Area

Certification Area	Respondents Teaching in Area of Certification	All Respondents	Percent of Respondents Teaching in Area of Certification	Respondents Teaching in K-12 Schools	Percent of K-12 Teachers in Area of Certification
Elementary Education	125	243	51.4	151	82.8
English Language Arts (6-12)	57	101	56.4	67	85.1
Mathematics (6-12)	38	71	53.5	42	90.5
Biology	12	26	46.2	17	70.6
Elementary Education and Special Education (K-12)	17	20	85.0	18	94.4
General Science	8	15	53.3	8	100
Elementary Education and English Language Arts (6-12)	5	8	62.5	5	100
Other	20	23	87.0	21	95.2
Total	282	508	55.5	329	85.7

Source: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. 2007 Survey of Passport to Teaching Alumni.

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Table 8 presents the mentor experiences for Passport teachers divided into several subgroups. The overall intensity of mentoring (measured by minutes per week for all teachers, in the last column of Table 8) has increased for more recently certified teachers from 17 to 30 minutes. The variation by state suggests that Idaho schools offer the most mentoring, with 74 percent of teachers having a mentor and the average meeting time for those teachers being more than 50 minutes per week. In contrast, only 35 percent of Florida teachers reported having a mentor and the mentored teachers in that state reported meeting for an average of 40 minutes per week.

Table 8 also describes the mentoring experiences of teachers by their subject of Passport certification, their experience level, and school type. Teachers certified in elementary subjects received more mentoring than teachers certified in other areas, while teachers certified in secondary math and science reported less. We would expect first-year teachers to receive more attention from mentors, and indeed a higher percentage of them reported having a mentor (83 percent) than teachers at other experience levels, but the average duration of mentor support does not track closely with experience. Regarding school type, Passport teachers in charter schools reported the lowest rates of mentor assignment but the longest duration when mentor meetings took place.

Table 8. Teaching Experiences of Passport Holders

Category	Number of Respondents Teaching K-12	Percent Had a Mentor	Average Minutes Per Week with Mentor (Teachers with Mentor)	Average Minutes Per Week with Mentor (All Teachers)
Year certified				
2004 or 2005	65	46.2	36.8	16.7
2006	98	63.3	46.0	28.9
2007	147	58.5	51.6	30.0
School location				
Idaho	145	73.8	50.1	36.7
Florida	91	35.2	40.0	14.1
Pennsylvania	46	47.8	45.4	21.7
Other ABCTE States	16	75.0	44.6	33.4
Other states	12	41.7	47.0	19.6
Certification subject area(s)				
Elementary Education	139	61.1	49.4	29.9
English Language Arts (6-12)	64	53.1	42.0	22.3
Mathematics (6-12)	39	43.6	36.6	16.0
Biology	17	41.2	47.1	19.4
Elementary Education and Special Education (K-12)	18	83.3	49.4	41.9
General Science	8	37.5	40.0	15.0
Elementary Education and English Language Arts (6-12)	4	50.0	60.0	30.0
Other	21	71.4	54.7	
Teaching experience				
First year	71	83.1	48.3	40.0
Second year	49	75.5	47.2	35.4
Third year	40	55.0	42.5	23.4
Fourth year	54	31.5	36.4	11.4
5-9 years	64	45.3	47.7	21.2
10-19 years	19	42.1	66.9	28.2
20 or more years	13	46.2	55.8	25.8
School Type				
Public, traditional	219	59.8	43.4	25.9
Public, charter	38	52.6	63.4	32.6
Private	46	54.3	51.4	27.9
Total	310	57.4	47.2	26.9

Source: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. 2007 Survey of Passport to Teaching Alumni.

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

3. Other Experiences

Question 3 has three sub-questions that cover all alumni, including those who are not currently teaching. We asked the 181 alumni who are not teaching K-12 in the U.S. why they are not in the classroom and for those who are not teaching at all, whether they had been teaching but left. Finally,

we examine the responses of all survey respondents to an open-ended question about their experiences with ABCTE.

Question 3a. Why are some alumni not currently teaching?

The 181 respondents who were not teaching K-12 in the United States gave a variety of reasons for their status. Nearly 37 percent of them said they had not found a suitable teaching position, although they had completed all the requirements to teach (Table 9). Twenty-two percent of the alumni indicated they were not yet eligible to teach because they were certified after the hiring period ended for the district, they needed to meet additional state requirements before teaching, or ABCTE certification was not accepted in the state in which they wished to teach. A substantial number (27 percent) reported other reasons for not currently teaching, including low teacher salary or change of family circumstances. The trends over time indicate that recent cohorts of alumni, who have had less time to search for and obtain a position, were less likely to have done so as of the time of the survey (44 percent compared to 31 and 21 percent in 2006 and 2004-2005, respectively). The percentages who say they are not yet eligible or who provide other reasons for their lack of employment in the classroom make up nearly half of the Passport sample.

Table 9. Reasons Not Currently Teaching

Reason	Total Survey Respondents		Certified in 2004 or 2005		Certified in 2006		Certified in 2007	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Eligible but have not found a position	66	36.5	6	20.7	15	30.6	45	43.7
Not eligible at this time	40	22.1	4	13.8	10	20.4	26	25.2
Did not intend to teach K-12 in U.S.	26	14.4	8	27.6	11	22.5	7	6.8
Other reasons (personal, financial)	49	27.1	11	37.9	13	26.5	25	24.3
Total	181	100.0	29	100.0	49	100.0	103	100.0

Source: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. 2007 Survey of Passport to Teaching Alumni.

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Question 3b. Did many Passport recipients enter and leave teaching after being certified?

An important issue for alternate routes to the classroom is whether teachers who take such routes are more or less likely than traditional candidates to remain in the teaching profession. It is still early to measure such outcomes for the Passport program, and to do so properly would require a detailed employment history with precise start and stop dates, but we can estimate attrition from teaching using responses to a question about whether the respondents had ever taught since receiving their ABCTE credential.

The average attrition rate across all three cohorts of Passport alumni was 14 percent. That is, 406 respondents said they either were teaching at the time of the survey (351 respondents) or had taught in some capacity since receiving their Passport to Teaching certificate but were no longer teaching (55 respondents). The attrition rates for the three cohorts were 15, 17, and 11 percent, respectively. Unfortunately, we cannot group teachers by the year in which they started or the

duration of their career, so we cannot compute true attrition rates that are linked to length of service. It was not feasible to include that level of detail on the brief questionnaire.

We did ask respondents who had left their teaching positions for a reason for their departure. Several had left a teaching position because they wanted to raise children or home-school their children; because they found a better opportunity (school, work, or simply moved out of the area where the Passport credential would be useful); were laid off or not hired for the position they were seeking; had been student teaching, substituting, or some other job that was not expected to be permanent; or simply left because of stress or dissatisfaction. Tabulating the reasons would be difficult because respondents used language that could be interpreted in a number of ways. The reasons for leaving are most likely a combination of stated and unstated factors. For example, a respondent who leaves teaching for further education may be signaling dissatisfaction, choice of an alternative career, or a preference to delay entry into teaching. A more detailed examination of the causes and consequences of teacher mobility among alternative certified teachers would be useful for future research, particularly as the number of Passport certificate holders is increasing.

Table 10. Attrition of Passport Alumni from Teaching Positions

Cohort	Percent Who Left Teaching
2004 or 2005	15.1
2006	16.7
2007	10.6
All	13.5

E. SUMMARY

This report presented a portrait of those who completed the ABCTE’s Passport to Teaching in its first few years in existence. As of October 1, 2007, 614 individuals have been certified, and the numbers of alumni and the diversity of states and subject areas of certification are increasing each year, as are the applicants from overseas, who made up 15 percent of 2007’s alumni. The number of African American and Hispanic alumni has grown, but each of those two groups continues to represent less than two percent of the alumni. The states from which Passport alumni come has been expanding gradually beyond the base of Idaho and Florida, where the certificate was first accepted in public schools.

Passport alumni sought the credential for a variety of reasons. A growing majority aspired to enter the teaching profession, which is presumably most consistent with the goal of the program. Specifically, 59 percent of survey respondents said they sought the Passport to enter teaching. Of those who said they were seeking to retain their position or obtain another position, the program may have served to document their expertise in the field they were already teaching, legitimizing their role, or it may have enabled them to move laterally into a shortage area or a field in which they preferred to be teaching.

The current employment status of Passport alumni includes teachers in a variety of positions as well as many who are not teaching. In order to reach the desired maximum impact, all Passport holders would need to find a teaching position immediately upon being certified. However, no program can be expected to meet this ideal of 100 percent placement. The Passport to Teaching program resulted in 59 percent of its alumni obtaining a K-12 teaching position in the United States

(at the time of the survey). The percentages are higher for those who have held certification for a longer period of time -- 65 percent for those certified before 2006. Another 7 percent teach in pre-kindergarten, post-secondary institutions, or hold substitute or tutoring positions. The percentage of alumni who are teaching outside the U.S. has grown to 4 percent in 2007.

The alumni who were teaching at the time of the survey were in a variety of schools, including traditional public schools as well as charter and private schools. The majority of alumni who are teaching are doing so in their fields of certification, where mentoring is common, but not universal. Just over half (57 percent) reported having a mentor and of those, the average amount of time spent with a mentor was 46 minutes per week.

It is easier to measure the rates at which Passport holders become teachers and stay in their teaching positions than it is to understand why they may have failed to obtain a job or why they left a teaching position. The variety of self-reported reasons encompass all the types of explanations we might expect, including the inability to meet state certification requirements or U.S. immigration requirements, dissatisfaction with teaching, and an assortment of personal reasons, such as pregnancy and child-rearing or preference for an education-related job that is not a traditional classroom teaching position.

Taken together, the responses of Passport alumni to this brief survey provide an informative review of the program's main product—teacher candidates—over the nearly four years since the program began granting certificates. The future direction of Passport to Teaching will depend on the acceptance of the credential in more states and its growing reputation among charter and private school administrators. It will also depend on the ongoing recruitment efforts of ABCTE, which is actively pursuing minority candidates in Mississippi and Florida through the Teach and Inspire program in addition to its normal state-by-state and international recruitment efforts. Teach and Inspire provides scholarships for Passport to Teaching applicants and involves a greater degree of screening, mentoring, and placement assistance than the typical Passport to Teaching experience.

The next step for researchers is to continue following Passport alumni into the classroom and to endeavor to measure their job performance relative to teachers who reach the classroom through more traditional pathways. In particular, it will be important to estimate the impact Passport teachers have on student achievement and other outcomes.

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APPENDIX A

Table A.1. States That Accepted Passport to Teaching Certification at the Time of the And The Certifications Each State Accepted

State ^a	Date Accepted	Area of Passport to Teaching Certification							
		Elementary Education	Mathematics	English Language Arts	General Science	Biology	Physics	Chemistry	Special Education
Pennsylvania	November 2002	X	X	X					
Idaho	November 2003	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Florida	June 2004	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Utah	November 2004		X						
New Hampshire	December 2004	X	X	X	X	X			
Mississippi	July 2006		X	X		X	X	X	
South Carolina	July 2007		X	X	X	X	X	X	

Note: x indicates certification recognized by state.

^a As of February 2008, seven states recognized the Passport to Teaching as an alternative route to state licensure. States vary in the grade levels at which ABCTE certification is accepted. Missouri began accepting the Passport to Teaching in May 2008. Utah began accepting all subject areas in April 2008. ABCTE also began offering certification in U.S. History and American History, but no alumni had received these certifications by the time of our survey.