



ABCTE Finishers

2025-2026

**POINT
PARK**
UNIVERSITY

Your Name: Kelly Pyle



School District: Bedford Area School District

City of School District: Bedford

Name of School Building: Bedford
Elementary

Certification: Special Education PreK - 12

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

I graduated from college in 1989 with a degree in Psychology. I worked as a Social Worker at the Hollidaysburg Veteran's Home. I became a stay at home mom after having my 3 kids. My true passion was to become a teacher. Once my youngest started Kindergarten, I became a substitute teacher. I then took a position as a paraprofessional in a Special Education classroom. I decided to pursue a PA Teacher Certification through ABCTE because it provided the flexibility that I needed. I continued to work full time and raise my 3 children while I was pursuing my passion. A position came available as a 4th grade Learning Support teacher at our elementary school. Our school superintendent knew of my plans and hired me to fill the position. I am wrapping up my student teaching this December. Once I earn my certification in Special Education, I plan on testing into Elementary Education as an add on. I have worked with amazing advisors and professors and would recommend this program to anyone wishing to pursue their passion in education.

Jessica E Johnson



School District

City of School District: Philadelphia

Name of School Building: Kenderton

Certification: Pre-K -4

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

In 2021, I graduated with a double master's degree and a certification in trauma informed practices. Despite my academic achievements, I needed an Instructional Level 1 certification to become a teacher. After completing my coursework, I realized I was not interested in pursuing another academic program.

Thankfully, my compliance officer recommended the ABCTE program, and it turned out to be the best decision I could have made. Through the ABCTE program, I gained valuable insights into effective teaching practices and classroom management. It provided a practical, streamlined pathway to meet the requirements for Pennsylvania teacher certification without the need for extensive additional coursework.

The program's focus on real-world teaching skills and its flexibility made it an ideal fit for my goals. I am grateful for how the ABCTE program prepared me to become a confident, competent educator, and I am excited to begin my teaching career as a certified PA teacher.

Raydell Hymon



Reading School District

City of School District: Reading

Name of School Building: Amanda E. Stout
Elementary

Certification: Special Education PreK - 12

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

I had begun substitute teaching around 12 years ago. At the time I was coming to the end of a 16 year career working in wraparound with emotional and behavior children. I never had any intentions of becoming a full time teacher until I did a long term position for a Life Skills teacher in Reading, PA. I fell in love with the population and the school and when offered the position, jumped at the opportunity.

The ABCTE Program has worked for me for many reasons. It has allowed me to continue to work, raise my family, and contribute to the community that I have loved and volunteered in for the past 25 years all while learning the fundamentals needed to become the best teacher I possibly can for my students today and going forward.

Jack Merckle



Fort Cherry School District

City of School District: McDonald, PA

Name of School Building: High School

Certification: 7-12 Social Studies

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

The ABCTE program was the right path to certification for me because it fit the realities of my life. I needed a route that let me keep working, parenting, and student teaching without delaying my progress. ABCTE gave me the flexibility to set my own pace while still offering a clear structure and high expectations.

The program also pushed me to strengthen my content knowledge while reflecting on my teaching, and it prepared me to enter the classroom with confidence. Choosing ABCTE wasn't just convenient, it was the option that supported my growth and moved me toward becoming the teacher I want to be.

Amanda Briegel



South Fayette School District

McDonald, PA

High School

Certification: Biology

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

The ABCTE program was the right path for me because it allowed me to work towards my teaching certificate without having to upend my life and go back to school full-time. When I started the program, I had just finished an intensive research program in biomedical sciences to earn my Master's, and I did not want to go back to school full-time. I was able to finish my teaching license through ABCTE without taking out a large amount of loans.

The program is also unique in that it allowed me to work as an independent classroom teacher during the mentorship portion. While it was challenging to not have a cooperating teacher, my colleagues supported me and I grew through the challenges.

Heather Blasko



Greater Johnstown School District

Johnstown, PA

Morrell Neighborhood School

Certification: Pre-K-4

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

Since graduating in 1997 with a bachelor's degree in child development, I have worked with children from birth to age five in a variety of settings. In 2021, I accepted a position as an Assistant Teacher in my local Pre-K Counts classroom. The following school year, I was asked to become emergency certified to fill in for a teacher who had left the program. When the school experienced difficulty hiring a permanent replacement, I was asked if I would consider earning my certification and stepping into the role permanently. At first, I was hesitant, I wasn't sure I wanted to return to school at my age. However, I truly enjoyed my work and wanted to remain in my position, so I began researching pathways to certification. Through this process, I discovered the ABCTE program. I found it to be the most efficient, affordable, and flexible option, and I was able to complete the program while continuing to teach in my own classroom.

Heather Chaney



School District: Forbes Road

City of School District: Waterfall, PA

Name of School Building: Forbes Road
Middle/Sr. High School

Certification: English (grades 7-12)

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

The ABCTE program was the perfect fit for me because, as a mother of three boys, I was ready to return to work after the birth of my twins and wanted to contribute to my family financially once they started school. At the same time, I felt a growing pull toward a dream I'd had since childhood—becoming a teacher. Although I had set that dream aside during my bachelor's degree, I eventually realized that my heart truly belonged in a middle school or high school classroom. When my children entered kindergarten, I accepted a job as a classroom aide at their school, and after my interview, I was offered a long-term substitute position as an English teacher. I was overwhelmed at first but quickly realized I was exactly where I was meant to be. Today, I work as a secondary English teacher at Forbes Road Middle/High School and absolutely love what I do. The ABCTE program not only helped me achieve my dream of becoming a teacher, but it genuinely equipped me with the knowledge and confidence I needed for my own classroom. With a BA in Communication from the University of Pittsburgh and a master's in teaching and leadership from Point Park University, I am now nearing the completion of my certification process, and I remain forever grateful for the flexibility and support the ABCTE program has provided.

Shaun Hall

School District: School District of
Philadelphia

City of School District: Philadelphia, PA

Name of School Building: Penrose School

Certification: Mathematics 7 - 12

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

I was ready to become a teacher in the most straightforward path, and the ABCTE program allowed me to get certified without having to go back and get another degree. The ABCTE program was affordable and time-efficient, both of which were important to me.

The mentorship process to end the program was incredibly beneficial, as the seminars were relevant and the feedback given by my mentor was helpful for making changes to my teaching in real time.

Dr. Aissa Doumbouya



School District of Philadelphia

City of School District: Philadelphia

Name of School Building: Lincoln High School

Certification: Special Education PreK -12

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

The ABCTE program was definitely the right choice for me. I felt like I found my passion as a teacher, and I needed a certification program that was flexible around my schedule. I also did not want to get an additional degree in order to become a teacher. The program offered me the flexibility I needed, and the level of training that I needed in order to feel confident in my ability to provide for my students. I found the self study portion of the program to be very easy to understand and complete. In addition, the two classes that I took were very informative. Finally, my mentor was excellent and provided me with a lot of constructive feedback that I could use.

Christopher Chelli



School District of Lancaster

City of School District: Lancaster, PA

Name of School Building: Wickersham Elementary School

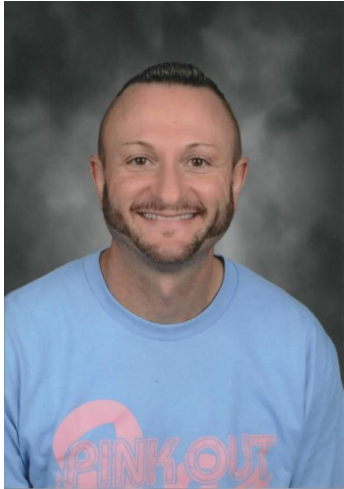
Certification: PreK - 4th

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

ABCTE was the right path to Pennsylvania teacher certification for me because it fit my life as it is now, not who I was years ago. At 37, with a family and plenty of real-world work experience, I needed a program that was flexible, straightforward, and practical. ABCTE let me make the shift into teaching without pressing pause on everything else, while still pushing me to meet high standards and really prepare for the classroom.

Becoming a parent completely changed how I look at learning and purpose, and it made me realize I wanted a career that felt meaningful at the end of each day. ABCTE gave me a clear, doable path to certification in Pennsylvania and let me focus on what matters most—supporting students and growing into the kind of teacher I'd want for my own kids.

Bryan Neghiu



School District: Ellwood City Area School District

City of School District: Ellwood City, PA

Name of School Building: Lincoln High School

Certification: Special Education Pre K-12

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

Pursuing Pennsylvania teacher certification through the ABCTE Program made sense for me because it matched where I am professionally and personally. At 45, while balancing my role as an instructional aide, supporting my family, and coaching 7th and 8th grade boys' and girls' basketball, I needed a program that was flexible, practical, and realistic. ABCTE allowed me to continue working directly with students while earning my certification, without putting my responsibilities on hold. I chose this path because I believe in the impact teachers have on students' lives, and at this point in my life, I know this work is meaningful. ABCTE gave me a clear, achievable way to grow professionally and fully commit to becoming the kind of educator students deserve.

Kate Peters



School District Altoona Area School District

City of School District: Altoona

Name of School Building: Penn Lincoln
Elementary School

Certification: Prek-4

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

The ABCTE program was the right fit for me for many reasons. The biggest being it fit with my busy life. As a busy mom of two, my life consists of running my children to their different practices, this program allowed me to work at my own pace. I have worked in the education field for 7 years, with 3 of them being with my school district in some capacity, this has allowed me to take my experience and use it to reflect on while completing the programs requirements. In the end I am so happy I chose the ABCTE program at Point Park because it was the right fit for me.

Katt Kersting



School District: Montour School District

City of School District: McKees Rocks, PA

Name of School Building: Montour
Elementary School

Certification: PreK - 4th

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

I went to Point Park for my undergrad receiving a BFA in Cinema Production back in 2022. After two years in the film industry and feeling defeated when I realized my true path was not the current one I was taking, I was excited to learn I wasn't too late to pursue my passion of teaching. The ABCTE Program was the perfect "fast-track" option to allow me to dip my toe into an educational career while doing my studies simultaneously. This program was also a cheaper option than a full tuition which is helpful for someone like me switching jobs and trying to get up on their feet. I am forever thankful for the experience, opportunities, and insight this program has granted me and how it has ignited my fire for teaching and allowed me to actually find a job that makes me happy, inspired, and feel fulfilled everyday I walk into the classroom. I'm now so excited for my future!

Nithya Mahesh

School District : Hempfield School District

City of School District: Lancaster

Name of School Building: Rohrerstown
Elementary School

Certification: Special Education PreK - 12

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

The ABCTE program was the ideal pathway to Pennsylvania teacher certification for me because it is accelerated, affordable, and fully online. I completed the program within six months, allowing me to progress efficiently toward my career goals. From the start, I felt confident that ABCTE was the right choice, and I continue to stand by that decision. The program is well structured with clear documentation, and the ongoing support from the Program Director, Mrs. Denise Beverina-Moore, has been outstanding, with timely and helpful responses throughout the process.

Alicia Terhune



School District: Private School

City of School District: Pittsburgh, PA

Name of School Building: River Academy of Excellence

Certification: Special Education PreK-12

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

My passion for special education began at home, shaped by my journey as a parent of children with multiple disabilities. After many years of advocating, adapting, and celebrating every milestone with my children, I knew I wanted to pursue a career that honored these experiences and allowed me to support other children and families in meaningful ways. With four children at home, however, flexibility was essential. I chose the ABCTE Teaching Program because it honored my role as a parent while empowering me to pursue my calling as an educator.

Through the ABCTE Program, I have grown in my understanding of special education, refined my teaching skills, and developed the tools needed to support diverse learners with compassion and purpose. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to do what I love every day!

Caitlin Weimer



School District: Pressley Ridge Day School

City of School District: Johnstown, PA

Name of School Building: Greater Johnstown
Career and Technology Center

Certification: Special Education PreK - 12

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

Choosing the ABCTE program as my pathway to Pennsylvania teaching certification was the right decision for me because it perfectly aligned with my professional experience, personal goals, and passion for working with students. Over the past year, I have been teaching in a self-contained classroom, and prior to that, I worked as a Behavioral Health Specialist for Pressley Ridge. Through both roles, I discovered how deeply meaningful it is to support students—especially those with special needs—in reaching their full potential. This work has been incredibly rewarding, and I knew I wanted to continue in this field while advancing my career.

The ABCTE program provided a flexible, practical path that allowed me to do exactly that. It gave me the opportunity to earn my certification while continuing to work with students every day, without having to completely pause my career or return to a full-time graduate program. The program's structure, resources, and pacing guides made it manageable to balance work, life, and professional development.

For me, ABCTE was more than just a certification program—it was a way to formalize my experience, expand my knowledge, and continue making a positive impact on the students I serve. It allowed me to stay in the classroom with students who inspire me, while also advancing my professional goals in education. I could not have found a program that fit my life and career ambitions so seamlessly, and I am grateful for the guidance, flexibility, and support that ABCTE provided along the way.

Lindsey Perry



School District: East Lycoming School District

City of School District: Hughesville

Name of School Building: Ashkar Elementary School

Certification: PreK-4th

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

As a career changer and a mom of three young children, I have spent the past four years working as a substitute teacher. Through this experience, I discovered my passion for working with children and realized that teaching is truly where I am meant to be. This past year, I made the decision to pursue my certification in Elementary Education. After exploring several certification options, I found that the ABCTE program was the best fit for me, as it offers the flexibility to study from home and progress at my own pace. The program is well-designed, and I have nothing but positive things to say about it. Thanks to ABCTE, my dream of becoming a teacher has now become a reality.

Patricia Fuentes

School District: Manheim Township

City of School District: Lancaster

Name of School Building: Manheim Twp High School

Certification: Biology 7 - 12

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

As a stay-at-home-parent for 10 years then a part-time aide at this school district, this seemed like a natural transition for me. I am no longer willing to go back to work full-time without my summers free to enjoy with my family. The ABCTE program together with the asynchronous classes at PPU gave me the flexibility I needed to complete my teaching certification and fit the bill. My experience with all staff at PPU was wonderful. I would recommend this program to anyone looking to switch into a career in teaching in PA.

Natasha Bilonick



School District: West Shore School District

City of School District: Camp Hill and Lewisberry

Name of School Building: Cedar Cliff and Red Land High Schools

Certification Area on the TTP: 7-12 General Science

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

When I discovered that I wouldn't be able to complete my student teaching through the district where I was employed, I didn't know what I was going to do because I had to keep working. I'm so glad I found this program. I graduated non-credentialed, and was still able to gain employment as a teacher through my school district while I completed the program. I appreciated how helpful the staff was, guiding me through every step of the way. This program made obtaining my certification extremely manageable while completing my first year as a teacher.

Canh Tran



School District: Pittsburgh Public Schools

City of School District: Pittsburgh, PA

Name of School Building: Brashear H.S

Certification: Chemistry 7 - 12

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

I had long 15 years career in IT & software development, working at Intel, Hewlett-Packard back when they were BIG companies of the IT industry and worked as technical consultant for clients such as federal government agencies in Washington D.C. Back in 2021, I saw the trends toward A.I and layoffs coming to the IT industry, and thus planned my pivot to education (it was in my blood – my mom was an elementary teacher). I examined many options, and decided that ABCTE Program best fitted my needs. I completed the 2 grad-level courses at Point Park and then passed the required Teaching Knowledge exam and Secondary Math exam in December 2023. Beginning with the Fall-23 semester, I embarked on what's now 3-years long-term substitute teaching gigs with the Pittsburgh Public Schools district. I taught year-long physics to 11th graders for 24-25 school year. At the beginning of Fall-25 semester, I was set to do Student Teaching in 10th grades math at Brashear H.S with a cooperating teacher. But, a chemistry teacher at Brashear H.S suddenly quit and created a vacancy emergency (in August). I happened to have chemistry background (got a 5 in AP chem when I was in high school years ago). Thus, I volunteered to take over Chem classes, studied for and passed ABCTE chem exam and about to finish Student-Teaching in chem at Brashear H.S this May 2026. I plan to add Math certification via Praxis testing this summer 2026. What a journey (for me), best of luck to everyone!

Alexis Gray

School District: Upper St. Clair School District

City of School District: Pittsburgh

Name of School Building: Wesley K-8

Certification: PreK-4th



Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

The Point Park ABCTE certification program was the right fit for me because it provided a flexible and practical pathway into teaching while allowing me to gain real classroom experience. I appreciated how the program focused on both educational theory and hands-on learning, which helped me build confidence in lesson planning, classroom management, and meeting the needs of diverse learners. The support from instructors and the connection between coursework and real teaching experiences made the program meaningful and effective. Overall, the program aligned with my goal of becoming a dedicated and well-prepared educator.

Christopher Stevenson



School District: **Northern Lehigh School District**

City of School District: **Slatington, Lehigh County, Pa.**

Name of School Building: **Northern Lehigh High School**

Certification: **Social Studies 7 - 12**

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

At the time of my decision to switch career paths to education, I was 36 and working in private industry with undergraduate and graduate degrees in anthropology. Although I had a strong desire to teach, I was reluctant to join a traditional M.Ed. program in advance of certification. The ABCTE Program at Point Park helped make my aspirations a reality through their streamlined program for professionals like myself. It is efficient, cost-effective, and fit my current station in life perfectly. This program gave me the tools, skills, and insight central to starting a career in public school teaching, as well as understanding how to market myself as a job candidate. I can safely say I will be completing the ABCTE program at Point Park with the confidence, knowledge, and perspective I intend to bring to my future classroom.

Nicole DeHart



School District: **Millcreek Township School District**

City of School District: **Erie, PA**

Name of School Building: **Tracy Elementary School**

Certification: Special Education PreK - 12

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

I have been a special education assistant for 8 years in Life Skills, Autistic Support and Learning Support classrooms. In order to continue working while getting my teaching certificate this was the best and easiest route to go. This program help me to get my certification while working full time. I have always wanted to be a special education teacher and am excited that not only did I finish this program but I also accepted a job as a special education teacher in a middle school autistic support classroom.

Lilly Eiswerth



School District: South Williamsport Area School District

City of School District: South Williamsport, PA

Name of School Building: Central Elementary School

Certification Area on the TTP: PreK-4

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

My senior year of college I finally decided I really wanted to become an elementary teacher. It was a little too late for me to change my major completely, so I graduated with my Bachelors in Art and immediately began searching for a teaching program. I heard from a friend about the ABCTE Program and knew that was the path I wanted to follow. I immediately enrolled into the ABCTE Program, began substitute teaching at my hometown elementary school to get as much experience as I could, and got to work. I completed the program in about a year and a half. I couldn't be any more proud of myself. I did my mentor teaching in a third grade classroom at my school and now I have the honor of being hired as a third grade teacher for that same school! This program provided such a well rounded experience in the field of education for me. I would recommend this program to anyone who is looking to become an educator! I am incredibly thankful to finally get to pursue my passion in the classroom thanks to the ABCTE Program!

Danielle Hutchinson



School District: South Park School District

City of School District: South Park

Name of School Building: South Park High School

Certification: Chemistry 7 - 12

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

I didn't begin my career in education, but I kept finding my way back to teaching — tutoring classmates, helping peers understand difficult concepts, and realizing how much I enjoyed supporting others as they learned. When I finally made the decision to pursue teaching as my profession, I was balancing a move back to Pennsylvania and raising two young children. I knew I wanted to earn my certification, and I already held a Master's in Education, but I needed a pathway that fit my life and allowed me to transition into the classroom as smoothly as possible.

The ABCTE Program was exactly that path. It provided the flexibility I needed while still giving me the opportunity to complete meaningful student teaching experiences. Through this program, I've been able to strengthen my instructional skills, grow through hands-on classroom practice, and prepare myself to confidently step into my own chemistry classroom.

I'm excited to begin my teaching career and to help students discover the curiosity, creativity, and joy that chemistry has to offer.

Jill Wolni

**City of School District: West Mifflin,
Pennsylvania**

**Name of School Building: Steel City
Academies**

**Certification: Special Education PK-
12**

Why the ABCTE Program was the right path to PA Teacher certification for me.....

The ABCTE Program was the right path for me to achieve PA Teacher certification because I was asked about getting certified by my boss, with full reimbursement when complete, but I did not want a degree in Special Education. After some research in the area of just obtaining the Pk-12 Special Education certification, I found ABCTE and began diving deeper into what they had to offer. When I saw that Point Park University was the affiliate with the program, and that this program was Special Education Pk-12 certification only, and I was a graduate from Point Park University with a degree in Elementary Education in 1996, it became no brainer and I registered. The program being reasonably priced, self-directed/taught and paced; I knew it was going to be the right path for me. Thank you ABCTE and Point Park University for offering this phenomenal certification program.