


A Distinction that Matters:

*What School Board
Members Should
Know About National
Board Certification®*



“National Board Certification is an excellent benchmark for school districts seeking highly qualified teachers. Teachers who have achieved this distinction bring to the classroom the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of professionalism that are essential to high levels of student achievement.”

– Anne Bryant
Executive Director
National School Boards Association



National Board Certified Teachers Promote...

Better Teaching, Better Learning, Better Schools

Like so many school board members, you are dedicated to making a difference in the lives of all the children in the community you serve. That's why school board members across the country support National Board Certification as a way to ensure teacher quality and improve student performance. National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs[®]) model accomplished teaching throughout their district, so the entire school system benefits from the investment. With your support, National Board Certification will continue to recognize and reward the accomplished teachers needed to build competitive world-class schools.

National Board Certification:

- Encourages accomplished teachers to remain in the classroom;
- Elevates teaching to the same professional level as medicine and law;
- Provides school boards with a fair and rigorous means of identifying, recognizing, and rewarding accomplished teachers; and
- Provides an opportunity for school boards to capitalize on their investment in professional development.

National Board Certification emphasizes the importance to our nation's future of identifying and supporting accomplished teachers. Knowledge, hard work and effort should be recognized, honored and rewarded. National Board Certification offers that opportunity.

Many national education organizations, foundations, corporations and the federal government endorse the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) with bipartisan support in Congress. Among them are the National School Boards Association, whose presidents have offered advice and counsel as part of the NBPTS Board of Directors. In less than a decade, 48 states and more than 400 school districts have recognized the value of National Board Certification by establishing financial incentives to encourage teachers to complete the process. For a list

of state and local incentives and supporters, please visit our Web site at www.nbpts.org.

“National Board Certification is a great way for teachers to demonstrate their dedication to the profession and their desire for excellence in education. The program helps school boards recognize and award merit.”

– **Grace Mynatt**, Chair, Cabarrus County Board of Education, Concord, N.C.

What Is National Board Certification?

National Board Certification is a significant step in the career of an experienced teacher. Comparable to established accreditations in other professions, certification is a highly regarded process that acknowledges accomplished teachers as National Board Certified Teachers.

National Board Certification offers a way for teachers to take a new look at their teaching and engage in meaningful professional growth. National Board Certified Teachers have met rigorous standards developed by experienced teachers and others in the teaching profession. Teachers who complete the National Board Certification process consistently rate it the best professional development experience of their careers.

“This process has been of immense benefit to me as well as to my students. The entire process has altered the way I teach. I found the creation of my portfolio demanded much in terms of analysis and reflection on my teaching practices. I questioned my own ideas and methods, which led to the application of innovative approaches, which at the same time allowed me to recognize that which was good in what I did.”

– **Cynthia Evans**, NBCT, Early Childhood through Young Adulthood/Exceptional Needs Specialist, Alexandria, Va.



More than 16,000 National Board Certified Teachers in the United States currently represent every state and the District of Columbia. In 2006, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards expects those ranks to grow to more than 100,000 National Board Certified Teachers nationwide.

National Board Certification is currently available in 24 certificate fields, covering more than 95 percent of all teachers in American schools. For a complete listing of certification fields available, please visit our Web site at www.nbpts.org.

How Do Teachers Achieve National Board Certification?

National Board Certification is a yearlong process requiring teachers to demonstrate their knowledge and skills as professional educators. Each candidate's performance is individually examined by trained classroom teachers and assessed against the highest standards set by teachers in the profession.

The National Board Certification process requires teachers to:

- Complete four portfolio entries, three of which are classroom-based and include videotapes that

document the candidate's teaching practice and examples of student work. The videos and student work are supported by commentaries about the goals and purposes of instruction, analysis about what occurred and the effectiveness of the practice, and the rationale for the candidate's professional judgement. The fourth entry requires candidates to demonstrate their work with students' families and their community and collaboration with the professional community.

- Answer six assessment center prompts (each allowing 30 minutes for response) that are designed to elicit knowledge of subject matter content.

Becoming a National Board Certified Teacher is a rigorous process. Candidates report the process takes 200 to 400 hours of work to complete. To be successful, teachers must examine their skills and knowledge and be willing to take an honest look at their teaching practices to evaluate both strengths and areas for improvement. One thing is clear: whether or not teachers achieve certification, most agree that going through the process revolutionized their approach to the challenges of teaching. They became more reflective and improved their practice by making changes that improved student learning.

How Can National Board Certified Teachers Help Me as a School Board Member?

National Board Certified Teachers can have a tremendous impact in their school district. The process requires reflection to improve teaching, and this makes it a rich developmental activity. NBCTs can model accomplished teaching throughout their districts, which gives school board members the opportunity to capitalize on their investment in professional development. This modeling benefits the entire school system and is often more effective than professional workshops. The quality of the teaching is the single most important factor for student learning.

National Board Certified Teachers mentor new teachers, which helps to decrease high turnover rates and improves new teachers' practice. They fulfill many leadership roles, present content-based workshops, and provide support for candidates going through the process.

According to a recent study by the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, National Board Certified Teachers consistently demonstrated a higher level of expertise on all 13 attributes of exemplary teaching defined in the study. The same study found that students of National Board Certified Teachers demonstrated a deeper understanding of key concepts and understood those concepts at a deeper level than those taught by non-certified teachers.

“National Board Certified Teachers set a standard of excellence in our school system. As a school board member, I will turn to our National Board Certified Teachers for their input because I know I can learn from them about how to support teachers from the policy level. Additionally, the certification gives teachers a rigorous goal to strive toward that doesn't move them from the classroom into administration. Supporting it is one way I can encourage our best teachers to continue working with students.”

– **Julie Mikuta**, School Board Member,
District of Columbia

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What Can I Do to Encourage Teachers to Pursue National Board Certification?

To help support and encourage teachers to pursue National Board Certification:

- Financially support candidates with the assessment fee;
- Establish incentives to encourage teachers to pursue National Board Certification;
- Publicize those incentives and provide information about National Board Certification to your schools;
- Provide specific compensation for achievement on the salary scale;
- Recognize and celebrate National Board Certified Teachers in your school district; and
- Create new professional roles for accomplished National Board Certified Teachers to provide leadership as they remain in the classroom.

To find out more about how you can gain the benefits of National Board Certification in your district, please contact the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards at **1-800-22TEACH** or visit our Web site at www.nbpts.org.

NBPTS is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan, non-governmental organization.

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National Board for
**PROFESSIONAL
TEACHING
STANDARDS®**

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