


A Distinction that Matters:

What Principals Should Know About National Board Certification®



“Nothing is more important to a school’s success than a highly qualified, innovative and committed teaching staff. The challenging National Board Certification process elevates and reinvigorates the teaching profession.”

– Vincent Ferrandino,
Executive Director, National Association
of Elementary School Principals

“With high expectations and greater public accountability for academic achievement, it is imperative that schools are staffed with the best trained, most capable faculty possible. It is through National Board Certification that principals can best support and develop the teachers in their schools, and thus greatly improve teaching and learning.”

– Dr. Gerald N. Tirozzi,
Executive Director, National Association
of Secondary School Principals



National Board Certified Teachers Promote...

Better Teaching, Better Learning, Better Schools

Today's principals have a new resource to call on—National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs®). Some of them may be in your building right now. Other teachers may consider becoming candidates for the credential with your encouragement and support. Whichever the case, NBCTs and the National Board Certification process can lead to better teaching and better learning.

The Benefits of National Board Certification:

- Provides principals with a fair and rigorous means of identifying, recognizing and rewarding accomplished teachers;
- Develops teachers who can serve as mentors to other teachers;
- Gives a measure of teacher quality within the school;
- Encourages accomplished teachers to remain in the classroom; and
- Provides professional development that some teachers say is the best they've ever encountered.

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.

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, please visit our Web site at www.nbpts.org.

What Is National Board Certification?

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

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

NBCTs Help a Principal Succeed

Teachers at Georgia's Luella Middle School who are taking on the rigorous National Board



Luella Middle School Principal Roger Gangi receives an A+ for his support of National Board Certification.

Certification process not only receive the much-needed support from family and friends—but also from their boss. Roger Gangi is principal at the Henry County School (approximately 35 miles south of Atlanta) and an advocate for National Board Certification.

“The more training teachers have in instruction, the better they are going to be in the classroom and that will highly benefit our customers,” says Gangi. “National Board Certification brings prestige not only to the teachers who achieve it, but also our school.”

There is plenty of action behind Gangi's words. In his school, teachers undergoing the process are provided with three days of leave time during the school year. They are given a quiet place at school to work on their portfolios and, if available, a laptop computer.

“It's a benefit to our school once our teachers achieve National Board Certification,” adds Gangi. “I can't see any reason why anyone wouldn't want to encourage it.”

“He is a big proponent of professional development,” says Gail Sherer, NBCT, Early Adolescence/English Language Arts, the first National Board Certified Teacher in Henry County. “He is a leader in our county.”

National Board Certification process consistently rate it the best professional development experience of their careers.

“Having NBCTs on the staff has helped change the culture of our school. Our NBCTs have a wealth of knowledge and expertise that they share with others. These are the teachers who mentor and to whom other teachers go to get information on teaching concepts and motivating kids.”

— **Geraldine Young**, Asst. Principal,
Chapel Hill High School, Chapel Hill, N.C.

There are thousands of National Board Certified Teachers in the United States, representing 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 the NBPTS 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 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.

Principal of the Year: An NBCT Supporter

Sharon Buddin is the principal of Ridge View High School in Columbia, S.C., where she leads a staff of 120 teachers; 13 have already achieved National



Board Certification and another 16 are currently candidates. The high numbers are due to local and state incentives, plus the extra push she gives her staff.

Sharon Buddin, NASSP High School Principal of the Year, speaks about her role in supporting accomplished teaching during an NBPTS Board of Directors meeting.

“I encourage all teachers to consider National Board Certification. When I conduct their yearly evaluations, after they have three years worth of teaching experience, I ask them,

“Now, when are you going to go through the process?” When a teacher completes his or her portfolio, I also ask for a copy and read it. Then I refer to it for ideas when I assist other staff members who are trying to improve their teaching practice.

“I think National Board Certification gives teachers a chance to examine their own skills. Whether they achieve certification or not, it gives them a chance to analyze and improve.” Buddin also believes as the number of NBCTs at her school increases, they will have an even greater impact on raising student achievement scores.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals recently named Buddin its 2002 National High School Principal of the Year.

- 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 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 Principal?

National Board Certified Teachers can have a tremendous impact in their schools. The process requires reflection to improve teaching, and this makes it a rich developmental activity. Principals who work with National Board Certified Teachers talk about the value of having them model effective teaching practices for their staff.

National Board Certified Teachers can help by:

- Improving student learning;
- Supporting your role as an instructional leader;
- Understanding and promoting standards-based learning in your school;
- Modeling effective teaching practices and helping other teachers sharpen their skills; and
- Building a collaborative learning community in your school.

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

According to a 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.

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

To support and motivate teachers to pursue National Board Certification:

- Encourage your accomplished teachers to consider National Board Certification;
- Publicize local and state incentives for National Board Certified Teachers in your school;
- Establish teacher support groups for teachers working on National Board Certification;
- Provide support for videotaping and release time for teachers to complete the certification process;
- Celebrate National Board Certified Teachers in your school; and
- Invite National Board Certified Teachers to share their experiences with other staff.

To find out more about how you can help encourage National Board Certification, 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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Better Learning,

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National Board for
**PROFESSIONAL
TEACHING
STANDARDS®**

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This project is funded in part with grants from the U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. Through September 2001, NBPTS has been appropriated federal funds of \$109.3 million, representing approximately 51 percent of the National Board Certification project. More than \$106.3 million (49 percent) of

the project's cost will be financed by non-governmental sources.

The contents of this brochure were developed under a grant from the Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal government.

ISBN 999-8056-96-9



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