

A Distinction that Matters:

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



“National Board Certification offers teachers an unparalleled opportunity for growth and development as educators. These highly talented teachers are the key to improved instruction, skilled mentoring, and ultimately, student success.”

– Paul D. Houston
Executive Director
American Association of School Administrators



National Board Certified Teachers Promote . . .

Better Teaching, Better Learning, Better Schools

As the number of National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs®) increases, school administrators and superintendents like you are embracing the National Board Certification process as a way to improve student performance. National Board Certification is the only reform option available to school administrators that sets a nationally recognized standard for evaluating and encouraging quality teaching. NBCTs and teachers who want to achieve National Board Certification want to help you take your schools to the next level of achievement.

The Benefits of National Board Certification:

- Improves teacher quality;
- Encourages accomplished teachers to remain in the classroom;
- Provides schools with a fair and rigorous means of identifying, recognizing, and rewarding accomplished teachers; and
- Provides an opportunity for schools 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.

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.

"National Board Certified Teachers set a standard of excellence in teaching and are emerging as strong leaders in their schools and communities."

– **Sylvia Auton**, Director,
Staff Development, Fairfax County, Va.

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 (NBCTs) 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, and that 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.



There are thousands of National Board Certified Teachers in the United States, representing every state and the District of Columbia. By 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 an NBCT is a rigorous process. Candidates report that it takes 200 to 400 hours of work to complete the process. 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 Administrator?

NBCTs 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. This modeling benefits the entire school system and is often more effective than professional workshops.

"Throughout the district, we found that students generally scored higher with teachers who are National Board Certified compared to students with non-board certified teachers."

—John Deasy, Superintendent,
Santa Monica-Malibu Unified
School District, Calif.

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

According to a study by the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, NBCTs consistently demonstrated a higher level of expertise on all 13 attributes of exemplary teaching defined in the

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study. The same study found that students of NBCTs 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 encourage teachers to pursue National Board Certification:

- Encourage accomplished teachers to consider National Board Certification;
- Establish incentives to encourage teachers to pursue National Board Certification;
- Publicize and provide information about local and state incentives for National Board Certified Teachers;
- Invite National Board Certified Teachers to share their experiences with other staff;
- 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; and
- Celebrate National Board Certified Teachers in your district.

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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TEACHING
STANDARDS®**

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