





Questions and Answers about National Board Certification® 2005





National Board Certification Delivers Better Teaching, Better Learning, Better Schools



Great schools begin with great teachers. Any effort to improve student learning in our schools ultimately must deliver in the one place that matters most: the classroom. National Board Certification® does.

National Board Certification is a nationwide program designed to identify, recognize and reward teachers and school counselors who meet the highest standards of their

profession. To achieve certification, teachers must demonstrate thorough mastery of the subjects they teach, the methods of instruction to use, and the skill to apply that mastery in classrooms every day.

More than 40,000 teachers and school counselors have achieved National Board Certification, a process developed and administered by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards® (NBPTS).

Those National Board Certified Teachers® (NBCTs) know that National Board Certification is much more than an advanced teaching credential. It is a rigorous professional development experience that requires teachers to demonstrate how every aspect of their work — both inside and outside the classroom — improves student learning.

Study after study shows that having an NBCT in the classroom helps students learn more. Last year alone, researchers found that:

- North Carolina elementary students of NBCTs improved an average of seven percent more on their year-end state math and reading tests than students of non-NBCTs.
- Arizona elementary students of NBCTs outperformed peers taught by non-NBCTs on the Stanford-9 achievement test, scoring as if they had received more than a month's worth of additional instruction.
- Miami, Fla., math teachers who had achieved National Board Certification helped high school students achieve larger testing gains than did colleagues who had not earned certification.

 NBCTs tend to be particularly effective when they teach low-income, ethnically diverse and special-needs students.

If results like those get your attention, we hope you will use the information in this brochure to learn more about how National Board Certification can improve teaching and learning in your community's schools.

If you are a teacher or school counselor, we hope you will consider seeking National Board Certification. If you are a principal, superintendent or school administrator, we hope you will encourage your teachers and school counselors to pursue National Board Certification — and explore how it can support your overall school improvement and professional development goals.

In the following pages you will find information about National Board Certification in general, the standards on which it is based, how the process works, and how teachers and school counselors can take the first steps toward becoming National Board Certified Teachers.

Joseph A. Aguerrebere President, NBPTS





Overview

What is National Board Certification?

National Board Certification, offered by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, is a voluntary performance-based assessment through which candidates demonstrate in-depth content knowledge and teaching practices measured against high and rigorous standards. NBPTS offers 24 certificates covering a variety of subject areas and student age groups. NBPTS certificates are applicable to more than 95 percent of all teachers in American schools. The National Board Certification process is available to pre-kindergarten through 12th-grade teachers and school counselors.

As the highest symbol of professional teaching excellence, National Board Certification is a credential attesting to the fact that a teacher or school counselor has been judged by his or her peers as one who is accomplished, makes sound professional judgments about students' learning and acts effectively on those judgments.

The advanced system of National Board Certification complements, but does not replace, state licensing. States and local education agencies utilize National Board Certification as a means to identify, reward and retain highly accomplished educators. In addition, many use it as an option for advanced licensing status.

Equally important, National Board Certification is a path to professional growth and improvement. Candidates describe the process as a way to deepen subject-matter knowledge and become more skillful in daily classroom instruction and student assessment, ultimately resulting in improved student learning.

Candidates achieve National Board Certification if they meet or exceed NBPTS standards. Candidates in all certificate areas are required to take a content-knowledge exam consisting of computer-delivered written exercises designed to probe the depth and breadth of their subject-matter knowledge. Furthermore, all candidates must submit a teaching portfolio that includes extensive, detailed, written analysis of their classroom teaching and of student learning. Student work samples and videotapes of their own classroom teaching are submitted with the portfolio as supporting evidence of their accomplished teaching practice. A candidate who achieves National Board Certification has then earned the right to be called a National Board Certified Teacher.

What is the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards?

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards developed and administers the National Board Certification process. It is an organization of teachers and others committed to teaching who are working to strengthen the teaching profession and to improve student learning.

NBPTS, created in 1987, is a nonpartisan, independent and nonprofit organization.

The National Board's mission is to advance the quality of teaching and learning by: maintaining high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do; providing a national voluntary system certifying teachers who meet these standards; and advocating related education reforms to integrate National Board Certification in American education and to capitalize on the expertise of National Board Certified Teachers.

How involved are teachers in NBPTS?

The National Board Certification process was created by teachers for teachers. Teachers serve on standards committees and assessment development teams, pilot test portfolio entries and assessment center exercises and score the performances submitted by candidates for National Board Certification. Most members of the NBPTS Board of Directors are classroom teachers.

The NBPTS Standards and Certificates

What are the NBPTS standards?

At the core of the National Board Certification process are standards that describe the highest level of teaching in different disciplines and with students at different developmental levels. These standards represent a consensus among accomplished teachers and other education experts about what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. NBPTS standards are also powerful professional development tools for all teachers and school counselors, whether or not they are seeking National Board Certification. Many school systems use the NBPTS standards as the basis for ongoing teacher and school counselor professional development. In addition, many colleges and universities incorporate the National Board's standards for accomplished teaching into their teacher education programs.





What teacher attributes do NBPTS standards reflect?

NBPTS seeks to identify and recognize teachers and school counselors who effectively enhance student learning and demonstrate the high level of knowledge, skills, abilities and commitments reflected in the Five Core Propositions.

The Five Core Propositions

- I. Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
- II. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.
- III. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
- IV. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
- V. Teachers are members of learning communities.

NBPTS standards for every field and developmental level are centered on these propositions that express the effectiveness, knowledge, skills, dispositions and commitments of the accomplished teacher.

What certificates are available in 2005?

NBPTS offers 24 certificates that are based on the standards. Certificates cover specific subject areas and student age categories.

Art

- Early and Middle Childhood/Art
- · Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/Art

Career and Technical Education

• Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/ Career and Technical Education

English as a New Language

- Early and Middle Childhood/English as a New Language
- Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/English as a New Language

English Language Arts

- Early Adolescence/English Language Arts
- Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts

Exceptional Needs Specialist

• Early Childhood through Young Adulthood/Exceptional Needs Specialist

Generalist

- Early Childhood/Generalist
- Middle Childhood/Generalist

Library Media

• Early Childhood through Young Adulthood/Library Media

Literacy: Reading-Language Arts

• Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading-Language Arts

Mathematics

- Early Adolescence/Mathematics
- Adolescence and Young Adulthood/Mathematics

Music

- Early and Middle Childhood/Music
- Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/Music

School Counseling

• Early Childhood through Young Adulthood/ School Counseling

Science

- Early Adolescence/Science
- Adolescence and Young Adulthood/Science

Social Studies-History

- Early Adolescence/Social Studies-History
- Adolescence and Young Adulthood/Social Studies-History

Physical Education

- Early and Middle Childhood/Physical Education
- Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/ Physical Education

World Languages Other than English

• Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/World Languages Other than English (Languages Available: French and Spanish)

What are the age categories?

Early Childhood =	Ages 3-8	}	
Middle Childhood =	Ages 7-1	2	
Early and Middle Childhood	d =	Ages 3-12	
Early Childhood through Young Adulthood	=	Ages 3-18-	+*
Early Adolescence =	Ages 11	-15	
Adolescence and Young Ad	ulthood	= ,	Ages 14-18+
Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood	=	Ages 11-1	8+

^{*}For the Early Childhood through Young Adulthood/Exceptional Needs Specialist certificate, the ages covered are birth-21+.



For complete information about these certificates, visit www.nbpts.org.





How were NBPTS standards developed?

Standards committees of outstanding educators — mostly practicing classroom teachers working in collaboration with the NBPTS Board of Directors — developed NBPTS standards for each certificate field. Standards committees also included teacher educators, developmental experts and leaders in the discipline. The committees reflected the diversity of perspectives, specialties and teaching contexts that exist in the field, as well as racial, ethnic, regional and gender diversity.

Each of the resulting standards documents identifies the specific knowledge, skills and dispositions of accomplished teaching in the field, shows how a teacher's professional judgment is reflected in observable action and describes how the standards come to life in different settings. As they developed the standards, the committees also drew on other standards and research in the field during the development process. Each standards document was finalized following a nationwide public comment period and rigorous review by the entire NBPTS Board of Directors.

NBPTS periodically reviews each standards document to ensure that the standards remain up-to-date with current research, content, pedagogy, technology and classroom realities in the field.

The Value of National Board Certification

Does National Board Certification really recognize accomplished teaching?

Yes, with more than 160 studies, reports and papers commissioned on the value of National Board Certification, the process recognizes accomplished teachers who measurably improve student performance. Three studies released in 2004 confirm that having NBCTs in the classroom improves student achievement, and that National Board Certification is a smart investment in our schools and for our children.

• When researchers from the University of Washington and The Urban Institute studied more than 600,000 records from third-, fourth- and fifth-grade students in North Carolina, they found that teachers who achieve National Board Certification do a measurably better job in the classroom. Their students improved an average of seven percent more on their yearend math and reading tests than students of non-NBCTs. The performance differential was most pronounced for younger and lower-income students, whose gains were as high as 15 percent.

This independent large-scale student study, released in March 2004, confirmed that the NBPTS assessment process effectively identifies teachers who contribute to relatively larger student learning gains.

• Another study by researchers at Arizona State University showed that third, fourth, fifth, and sixth graders taught by NBCTs in 14 Arizona school districts outperformed their schoolmates on the nationwide Stanford Achievement Test 9th Edition in almost 75 percent of reading, math and language arts measures used in the study. On average, students of NBCTs scored as if they had received more than a month's worth of additional instruction. In Arizona, which spends nearly \$7,000 per year per student, that extra classroom time is the equivalent of almost \$1,000 worth of additional learning for each student.

The study, which was released in September 2004, also found that 85 percent of principals surveyed said NBCTs in their schools were among the best teachers they had ever supervised; 91 percent said they believe National Board Certification helps improve teacher quality.

Students of National Board Certified Teachers did a
measurably better job than other ninth- and 10th-graders
on year-end math tests in Miami-Dade County (Fla.) Public
Schools. The research, conducted by The CNA Corporation
and released in November 2004, accounted for other factors
that could have resulted in high scores.

All else being equal — student characteristics, school environment and teacher preparation — the research showed that Miami-Dade math teachers who had achieved National Board Certification helped their students achieve larger testing gains than did colleagues who had not earned certification.

The study of more than 100,000 student Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) records found that NBCTs are particularly effective with students who have special needs, and provides some evidence that Black and Hispanic students may also receive extra benefits.

The three 2004 research reports add to the growing body of evidence that National Board Certified Teachers do a measurably better job of improving student learning.





How will National Board Certification help meet the "highly qualified" teacher requirements of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act?

NBCTs teaching at the middle and secondary level, and teaching within the subject field they earned their National Board Certification, meet the federal definition of a "highly qualified" teacher as described in the federal NCLB Act.

NBCTs teaching at the elementary level meet the definition of a highly qualified teacher so long as the state has indicated within its "HOUSSE" (high, objective and uniform state standard of evaluation) regulations that National Board Certification meets subject-matter competency requirements. Since the creation of National Board Certification, subject-matter competency has been a central component of the certification process. Content knowledge exams are required in all certificate areas and for all grade levels.



For more information contact your state department of education or visit www.nbpts.org.

The National Board Certification Process

How does a candidate achieve National Board Certification?

Candidates achieve National Board Certification after they successfully complete the assessment process and meet the NBPTS standard for accomplished teaching in their selected field. Over the course of a school year, candidates for National Board Certification assemble a portfolio that provides description, analysis and reflection of their practice. They also complete computer-delivered exercises designed to measure content knowledge in their selected certificate area.

Candidates may take up to three years to achieve National Board Certification.

Portfolio Entries: Candidates submit four portfolio entries. Three of the entries are classroom-based and include videotapes and examples of student work as supporting documentation. The videos and student work examples are supported by commentaries about the goals and purposes of instruction, analysis about what occurred, the effectiveness of the practice and the rationale for the candidate's professional judgment. A fourth entry requires candidates to document their work outside the classroom with families and the larger community

and with colleagues and the larger profession. This entry asks candidates to present evidence of their accomplishments and comment on their impact on student learning.

Assessment Center Exercises: At computer-based assessment centers, candidates are presented with six computer-delivered prompts (each allowing up to 30 minutes for response) that are designed to elicit knowledge of subject-matter content. Candidates for certificates in Music and World Languages Other than English are tested at separate locations due to the oral and written requirements of those assessments.

Scoring: Once the portfolio entries and the assessment center exercises are submitted to NBPTS, they are scored by classroom teachers and school counselors who have successfully completed intensive training and have qualified for scoring by demonstrating an understanding of NBPTS standards, directions to candidates and scoring guides. Each assessor scores only a portion of each candidate's submission, ensuring that at least 12 different assessors have reviewed each candidate's work.

How does a teacher or school counselor become a candidate?

A teacher or school counselor who wants to become a candidate needs to complete an online application.



Candidate applications are available online at www.nbpts.org.

Comprehensive information is available online with links to numerous helpful resources such as the NBPTS standards, certificate overviews, portfolio instructions, sample assessment center prompts, locations of assessment centers nationwide and scoring guides that include the rubrics used for scoring.

Before submitting an online application, candidates are required to read the online "Guide to National Board Certification" to ensure they understand the assessment calendar, eligibility prerequisites and NBPTS policies. Candidates seeking funding from their state need to also familiarize themselves with their state requirements for becoming a candidate before submitting an application to NBPTS. Both the "Guide to National Board Certification" and the information on each state's requirements can be found at www.nbpts.org.



NBPTS standards and portfolio instructions are available for downloading at no cost at www.nbpts.org. Teachers and school counselors are encouraged to review this material in advance of applying in order to make good choices about National Board Certification.





What costs are involved?

The 2005 assessment fee is \$2,300.A non-refundable \$300 application fee (part of the total \$2,300 assessment fee) and a \$65 processing charge are payable when the candidate submits an application. As soon as NBPTS receives those payments, the candidate will receive the assessment materials and is considered to be an active candidate.

Are there scholarships, loans or federal funds available for candidates?

Although many teachers and school counselors find the National Board Certification process well worth paying for on their own, partial financial support is available to help candidates pay the assessment fee. Many states and local school districts provide loans and scholarships, and financial support is also available in each state through the federal Candidate Subsidy Program. This program, made possible through annual appropriations from the United States Congress, provides funds to a limited number of candidates in each state to help offset the assessment fee. States are urged to give priority to candidates teaching in high need areas.



For more information about state funding or the federal Candidate Subsidy Program, visit www.nbpts.org for the name of the state contact person managing these funds.

Financial assistance is also available through the National Board Scholarship Program, which provides scholarships for teachers and school counselors seeking National Board Certification. Through the generosity of its founding sponsor, the Washington Mutual Foundation, and other generous donors, scholarships are available to a growing number of candidates. Candidates are encouraged to apply as soon as possible if they would like to be considered. Scholarships are allocated only to teachers and school counselors who have applied to be a candidate and have paid the nonrefundable \$300 assessment application fee.



Information about the National Board Scholarship Program is available either by visiting www.nbpts.org/scholarshipinfo/



or by calling 1-888-908-FEES (3337).

The National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) also offer loans to teachers pursuing National Board Certification.



For more information about NEA's loan program, call 1-800-603-3953.

For more information about AFT's loan program, call 1-888-AFT-JOIN.

What is the submission calendar?

Registration for 2005 opens on January 1, 2005, and closes on December 31, 2005. Candidates are permitted to collect evidence anytime during the 12 months prior to their March 31, 2006, portfolio due date. Candidates who are retaking portfolio entries have an April 15, 2006, portfolio due date.

All 2005 candidates can make their assessment center testing appointment at any time between the date their \$2,300 assessment fee is fully paid and they are deemed eligible, and prior to June 23, 2006. All fully paid, eligible candidates will receive an Authorization to Test in the mail that signifies their testing appointment can now be made.

What is NBRIC?

NBRIC is the National Board Registration & Information Center — the online personal home page for candidates.

All candidates may access, update and print their candidate application data via this password-protected Web site. Plus, this personalized Web service shows candidates when their fees were posted to their account, when NBPTS received their eligibility forms and when NBPTS received their portfolios. In addition, scores are released — only to candidates — via NBRIC.

Each candidate has the ability to manage his or her own candidate profile with NBPTS, using this secure Web site. Candidates should use this Web site to make sure NBPTS has current and accurate contact information, providing updates whenever changes occur.

Candidates are strongly encouraged to access this site, establish their passwords, check their data and complete and update any missing information.



NBRIC is located at www.nbpts.org.



Candidates with questions regarding NBRIC should contact 1-800-22TEACH.

When do candidates learn if they achieved National Board Certification?

Scoring is a complex and thorough process that ensures fairness and equity for all candidates. Careful analyses are always performed before the release of any results. Scoring occurs during the summer, and candidates can expect to receive their score results on or before Dec. 31 of each year.





Confidentiality is built into the score reporting process: Only candidates can access their official score reports, provided via NBRIC, a private, password-protected and secure Web site. NBPTS policy strictly prohibits NBPTS from releasing candidates' scores to any third-party payer or anyone else. NBPTS's policy is to maintain the confidentiality of all candidates. NBPTS does, however, make public the list of National Board Certified Teachers.

May candidates retake portfolio entries or assessment center exercises if they don't achieve National Board Certification on their first attempt?

NBPTS encourages teachers and school counselors to achieve National Board Certification and realizes not every teacher or school counselor will achieve it on the first attempt. That's why NBPTS automatically banks candidates' scores and offers retake opportunities for candidates wishing to pursue certification. All candidates have up to three years to achieve National Board Certification. There is a \$350 retake fee for each portfolio entry or assessment center exercise that candidates seek to retake. After Sept. 1, 2005, retake candidates will also be assessed a one-time \$15 retake processing charge.



Score banking and retake information is available at www.nbpts.org.



or by calling 1-800-22TEACH.

Is graduate credit available for teachers and school counselors who have completed all requirements of the National Board Certification process?

Yes, a college or university may award graduate credit based on the recommendations made by the American Council on Education (ACE).

A review of National Board Certification completed by ACE has resulted in graduate credit recommendations that may be used by candidates for National Board Certification.

ACE will issue an official transcript reflecting the number of graduate credit hours they are recommending (three hours for completing the certification process and an additional three hours for achieving certification). The transcript can then be provided to the candidate's college or university for consideration. Credits may be used toward degree program requirements, licensure renewal or salary stipends, depending on local regulations and policies in effect. Only candidates and NBCTs who completed or achieved certification in November 1997 or thereafter are eligible to receive this transcript.

There is a fee charged to process the transcript request; the fee covers the transmittal of graduate credit eligibility information from NBPTS to ACE. Upon ACE's receipt of the eligibility information from NBPTS, the teacher or school counselor may log onto ACE's Web site and request a transcript.ACE will mail the official transcript to whomever the teacher or school counselor designates. Remember, it is up to the higher education institution (not NBPTS,ACE nor the state) to decide whether or not to accept or apply the credit.



To learn more about or to apply for ACE graduate credit recommendations, please visit www.nbpts.org/highered/ace.cfm.

How long is National Board Certification valid and can it be renewed?

An NBPTS certificate is valid for 10 years from the date of certification. An NBCT wishing to renew a certificate before it expires must complete the NBPTS Profile of Professional Growth before the expiration date of his or her certificate and can only renew certification in his or her original certificate area. The NBCT may formally begin work on the Profile of Professional Growth as early as year eight of his or her certification period.



For more information about certification renewal, visit www.nbpts.org.





Making the Commitment to National Board Certification

What are the eligibility requirements to seek National Board Certification?

Teachers are eligible to seek National Board Certification if, at the time they apply, they:

- hold a baccalaureate degree
- have completed three years of teaching experience prior to submitting an application*
- have held a valid state teaching license for those three years, or where a license is not required, have taught in schools recognized and approved to operate by the state.

School counselors are eligible to seek National Board Certification in Early Childhood through Young Adulthood/School Counseling if, at the time they apply, they:

- · hold a baccalaureate degree
- have completed three years as a school counselor in one or more early childhood, elementary, middle or secondary school(s)*
- have held a valid state license as a school counselor for those three years.

*Teachers and school counselors who will not meet the three-year prerequisite until the end of the school year in which they apply are still eligible to apply in January through June, but no portfolio evidence may be collected until the teacher or school counselor meets all eligibility prerequisites.



Eligibility information is also available at www.nbpts.org.

How do candidates know which certificate to seek?

The first step in deciding which certificate is appropriate for a teacher or school counselor is to determine the age range of the students and the subjects they teach. This is especially important, as candidates must be able to demonstrate content and pedagogical knowledge across the full age range of the certificate area they pursue.

The next step is to review the NBPTS standards and select the one that best depicts the subject area and age range taught by the prospective candidate. All standards and portfolio instructions are available free-of-charge online in order to help interested teachers and school counselors make good choices prior to applying to be a candidate.



For more information about NBPTS certificates, visit the Certificate Knowledge Center at www.nbpts.org.

When is a teacher or school counselor ready for the process?

Teachers and school counselors should review the standards document for their certificate area to determine their readiness for National Board Certification. NBPTS standards in each field form the basis for National Board Certification.

Prospective candidates may also want to speak with National Board Certified Teachers or their state's subsidy administrator.



A directory of NBCTs and a list of current state subsidy administrators can be accessed at www.nbpts.org.

Are there other roles for teachers and school counselors who are not ready to seek National Board Certification?

Yes, NBPTS is always looking for classroom teachers and school counselors to help score candidate entries for National Board Certification. Serving as an assessor is a rewarding professional development activity.



To apply online to be an assessor, visit www.nbpts.org.





What other activities or roles are aligned with the NBPTS mission?

There are other ways to participate in the mission of the National Board, such as:

- reading and studying NBPTS standards with colleagues as part of continuing professional development
- promoting greater awareness in your community by hosting a National Board Certification meeting
- inviting a colleague to seek National Board Certification
- participating in other leadership activities listed on the NBPTS Web site at www.nbpts.org.



For more information on how to encourage teachers and school counselors to seek National Board Certification, visit www.nbpts.org/about/recruit.cfm.

What organizations support NBPTS?

- American Alliance for Health, Physical Education Recreation and Dance
- American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
- American Business Conference
- Association for the Advancement of International Education
- Association of Colleges and Schools of Education in State Universities
- American Association of School Administrators
- American Educational Research Association
- American Federation of Teachers
- Association of Teacher Educators
- Chamber of Commerce of the United States
- The Conference Board
- Council for American Private Education
- · Council of Chief State School Officers
- · Council of the Great City Schools
- Council of Growing Companies
- Council on Competitiveness
- · International Reading Association
- International Society for Technology in Education
- Music Educators' National Conference
- National Alliance of State Science and Mathematics Coalitions
- National Association for the Education of Young Children
- National Association of Black School Educators
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
- National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, Land Grant Colleges and Affiliated Private Universities
- National Association of Latino Elected & Appointed Officials
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- National Association of State Boards of Education
- National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
- National Council for the Social Studies
- National Council of La Raza
- National Conference of State Legislatures
- National Council of Teachers of English
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
- National Commission on Teaching & America's Future
- National Education Association
- National Governors' Association
- National Middle School Association
- National School Boards Association
- National Science Foundation
- National Science Teachers Association
- The Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives

NBPTS also recognizes numerous other organizations and institutions for their collaborative efforts.





National Board Certified Teachers Promote...

Better Teaching, Better Learning, Better Schools



National Office

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www.nbpts.org



1-800-22TEACH

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