

# NATIONAL BOARD

for Professional Teaching Standards®

Policy Priority:  
Investing in  
Board Certification

## Raising Teaching Standards by Investing in Board Certification

**Why invest in growing the number of Board-certified teachers?** Every student must be prepared to meet the demands of society and the global economy. Given the critical impact teachers have on students and their learning, we must do a better job of systematically developing a **high-quality, professional teaching workforce**.

**Board certification** can serve as a lever to accomplish that transformation, as it provides an assurance of a teacher's high quality of practice. For early-career teachers, it should be the **gold standard** to which they aspire from the moment they enter the profession. Once achieved, Board certification serves as a platform for teachers to grow professionally and to become **leaders in their schools, districts, states, and the profession**. Other professions have used Board certification in this way to systematically build the quality of the workforce.

**Why should states lead the way?** Students taught by Board-certified teachers learn more than other students, as evidenced by more than a decade of robust research in states and cities across the country. Despite this, only 3% of the teaching workforce is Board-certified. Board certification is an intensive process through which teachers must demonstrate their impact on student learning by completing content knowledge assessments, recording videos of their instruction, and writing reflective responses. Because Board certification is voluntary, teachers need compelling reasons to pursue this rigorous process. ***State leaders must create the conditions for Board certification to become the norm, not the exception, by supporting teachers to pursue Board certification and rewarding those teachers who achieve it.***

**Research** makes it clear that Board-certified teachers produce better learning outcomes for our students. In North Carolina, Gwinnett County, Georgia, and Los Angeles, researchers found that Board-certified teachers **produce better student outcomes** than non-Board-certified teachers, based on student achievement.<sup>1,2,3</sup> In some subjects, the students of Board-certified teachers averaged up to two months in **achievement gains** compared to students of non-Board-certified teachers.<sup>4</sup> Board-certified teachers also exert influence on their schools by serving as resources to other teachers in their schools.<sup>5</sup>

National Board Certification is a voluntary advanced professional certification for PreK-12 educators that identifies teaching expertise and excellence through a performance-based, peer-reviewed assessment.

### Did you know?

81% of Americans across the political spectrum believe teachers should achieve Board certification, beyond licensure, as it is in other professions ([2014 PDK/Gallup poll](#)).

Learn more at  
[www.nbpts.org/policy](http://www.nbpts.org/policy)

## What can policymakers do?

### Licensure

- Strengthen the state licensure system by creating voluntary **pathways** for teachers who achieve and maintain an active Board certificate to receive professional or advanced licenses and/or renew their licenses.

### Compensation Incentives

- Reward and retain accomplished teachers through differentiated pay by embedding **compensation increases for Board-certified teachers** into the salary structure.
- Ensure great teachers reach the students that need them most by providing additional compensation to Board-certified teachers in designated **high-need schools or areas**.

### Support

- Increase the effective use of professional development funds by **defraying the cost for pursuing Board certification** through **grant or loan programs**.
- Invest in support programs that provide candidates for Board certification with **mentors and cohort-based support groups**.

## What are other states doing?

**22 states** offer salary stipends and **15 states** subsidize or reimburse the assessment application fee. **Washington and Mississippi** provide examples of taking a comprehensive approach to investing in Board certification.

Washington	Mississippi
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State offers a \$5,090 annual bonus to Board-certified teachers.</li><li>• An additional \$5,000 is provided to teachers in high-need schools.</li><li>• Board certification is one pathway for teachers to earn or renew a professional teaching license.</li><li>• State offers an interest-free conditional loan to pay for three out of four components of the total cost of the assessment.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State offers a \$6,000 annual salary stipend for Board-certified teachers.</li><li>• Board certification renews a professional teaching license for five years.</li><li>• Teachers are reimbursed for assessment cost.</li></ul>

## How can I learn more?

Read these Profiles in Excellence to learn how coalitions have improved teaching through Board certification:

- **Montgomery County, Maryland** ([http://www.nbpts.org/sites/default/files/Policy/nbpts\\_mccasestudy.pdf](http://www.nbpts.org/sites/default/files/Policy/nbpts_mccasestudy.pdf))
- **Wyoming** ([http://www.nbpts.org/sites/default/files/Policy/nbpts\\_wymcasestudy.pdf](http://www.nbpts.org/sites/default/files/Policy/nbpts_wymcasestudy.pdf))
- **Washington State** ([http://www.nbpts.org/sites/default/files/Policy/nbpts\\_washcasestudy.pdf](http://www.nbpts.org/sites/default/files/Policy/nbpts_washcasestudy.pdf))

<sup>1</sup> Dan Goldhaber and Emily Anthony. "Can Teacher Quality Be Effectively Assessed? National Board Certification as a Signal of Effective Teaching." *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, 89(1): 134–150, February 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Strategic Data Project. "Learning About Teacher Effectiveness SDP Human Capital Diagnostic: Gwinnett County Public Schools, Georgia." Center for Education Policy Research, Harvard University, May 2012.

<sup>3</sup> Strategic Data Project. "SDP Human Capital Diagnostic: Los Angeles Unified School District." Center for Education Policy Research, Harvard University, November 2012.

<sup>4</sup> Leslie G. Vandevoort, Audrey Amrein-Beardsley, David C. Berliner. "National Board Certified Teachers and Their Students' Achievement." *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 12(46), September 2004.

<sup>5</sup> Gary Sykes. "National Board Certified Teachers as Organizational Resources." May 2006.