

# NATIONAL BOARD

*for Professional Teaching Standards®*

Luke Correia-Damude

You're listening to National Board conversations. It's a podcast that takes listeners coast to coast in discussion with National Board-certified teachers who offer their advice and insights into the process. Each episode is an exploration into the amazing journey that each of these teachers has undertaken to achieve National Board certification. This is our first episode and we are so excited to be sharing this with you. The intention with this podcast is to connect you the listener with National Board-certified teachers and allow them to tell their story, maybe offer up some insights and wisdom and possibly answer some questions you may have if you were considering whether National Board certification is right for you. Today's episode is going to feature Patricia Candelaria or as her friends call her Patty. And after speaking to her for this podcast, I feel like we're friends. So, I'm going to call her Patty. Patty lives and works in Austin, Texas, and she has over 20 years' experience as a teacher.

However, she is a relatively new National Board-certified teacher. She was certified in 2018. So, this is an interesting conversation because she can recall her experience pretty readily as it's still fresh in her mind. Patty is a mother of two and has great tips on how to manage your time as you pursue National Board certification. She is a huge supporter of the community that she feels she has gained from this process. She's really a champion of bolstering and fostering the network of National Board-certified teachers while helping the candidates along their journey. It was a great conversation with her. So, I'm so excited to share it with you. All. My name is Luke Correia-Damude and I'm your host. Without further ado, let's meet Patty.

Hey Patty.

Hi Luke.

How are you?

I'm doing good.

Good, good. Thank you so much for being a part of the podcast. Why don't we just dive right in? Give me a little introduction. Tell the audience about yourself a little bit.

Patty Candelaria

Okay. Okay, perfect. Hi, my name is Patty Candelaria. This is my 21st year as a teacher. I am a proud wife and a proud mom to an eighth-grader and a sixth-grader. And I am so proud to be a teacher to serve our future. The National Board, to me, means working with others as a community and helping pay it forward with other teachers who are willing to pursue the National Board certification. When I was a child, my mom had a green chalkboard in our garage and she would sit with us. She'd be patient. She'd be kind and just go over the concept. We didn't understand in school that day or something. She wanted to teach us. And she inspired me to continue that with the kids in my neighborhood when we played school and whether we played hangman or just playing math games on our green chalkboard, we just all work together. We collaborate together and that inspired me to continue my journey to become a teacher because I wanted to form those bonds with the students in my classroom, as well as inspire them to continue their education and their learning for life.

Luke Correia-Damude

Tell us about when you first, your first year, how did you feel becoming a teacher? What was it like to be a new teacher?

Patty Candelaria

When I was in college, my major was elementary education. I knew I wanted to work with either pre-K kindergarten or first, because I just felt like it was just so much bonding with the kids and nurturing them, building those relationships with the younger students, I just felt was my calling. So, it was great, but it was also a little overwhelming at times when you're, you're trying to do like 18 different things, but you want to make sure that you're doing this. And so you have to learn how to balance your life, balance your work, and also find the important aspects of the curriculum and keep going. When I became a teacher, it was, it was so like, my dream came true and I taught kindergarten for nine years. I taught first grade for eight years and I taught pre-K was my first year as a teacher when I moved to Austin, Texas nine years ago.

Patty Candelaria

I belong to education Austin, which is our teacher union and my brothers and sisters of my union planted that seed in me to pursue my National Board certification. My husband has always encouraged me to start the journey. And when I met my education Austin union, they were just so enlightened about the idea of National Board. They were already National Board-certified, but they're like, it's the best thing you could do for our practice. It's the best thing you can do for our profession. It's the best thing you could do for you as a teacher. So that curiosity to start, my journey was started, but I knew my kids were little, there were two and four. So, I wanted also to remember that I was a mom and I had a balance, you know, life work and home, but that seed grew and grew in me. I applied for the National Board certification in 2017 and I became part of the 2017 cohort.

Luke Correia-Damude

That's--that's great. So maybe we talk about, you'd mentioned, like you didn't know about the National Board previous to moving to Austin. Right? Tell me about,

Patty Candelaria

Okay. Well, I didn't know about National Board. So when I met people that told me you got to do National Board certification for teachers, you just got to do it. I hadn't heard of it. I said, well, what is it? Oh, what do you have to do? And they gave me some information about how it's best for your practice. So that curiosity, I had to go look it up and see what it was all about. But I was grateful because I knew that there were other teachers on this journey and it shaped me. You've got to do it. You've got to figure out a way and apply and start the journey. And that's how I started.

Luke Correia-Damude

Great. And then why, why did you want to do it? I know that you, your, your peers were saying it was great, but what about that made you feel like I want to be a part of it

Patty Candelaria

Because I felt like the most respected professionals are National Board. And when those teachers were talking about National Board certification and how it changed their, their teaching, I said, I don't want to be up there. I want to give my story of how it changed me as a teacher, but I also wanted to find out how it changed them as a teacher. And why did it change them as a teacher and what was the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards? When I first started my journey, I realized it was going to be a commitment of my time of my energy and finding different ways to make this work. So, I had to be organized and balanced in finding that time and setting goals and sticking to it. And if it was one night, a week where I told my husband, you can't bother me that night. I just wrote. And as a mom, I had to learn to tell my kids, you know, mommy's going to be doing her work. You have to rely on daddy. And just finding that balance of where I committed myself and set that goal for myself to write whether it was a Wednesday or a Saturday night, but I wrote.

Luke Correia-Damude

Was there some kind of aha moment for you? Like, like that changed the way you approached your practice or something that you, you learned through this process that, you know, really sticks out every day when you're teaching that you, you could share?

Patty Candelaria

Absolutely. When I started this journey, I knew that I had to have feedback and the process within my journey. So, I set up goals every day for myself and grows because there were some days that we didn't get through a lesson. And I had to reflect on what was my goal that day and what was my growth from that lesson. And if I could grow for a minute, what could I have done better? What could I have done differently? And then my goal did I meet the standard? I was trying to accomplish the concept. I was trying to teach my students what was best for my students that day. But this journey has changed me as a teacher of where I see what my best practices are and figure out what's essential for my students, as well as collaborating within my school, my team, my school community, and just finding different ways, different methods and be reflective of what I teach every day.

Luke Correia-Damude

That's great. And you know, as you, you mentioned like you're a mom, you have two kids, right? I have two children. So, say you're talking to someone who's who says like I'm a parent. I don't, I don't know. I don't think I have the time for this. Maybe. Could you talk to that?

Patty Candelaria

Sure. As a parent pursuing my National Board certification, I learned to find the support system within my family and my friends. And as well as in my district, my cohort, to find ways to make this work, I knew it was something, a goal, an aspiration that I wanted to pursue. And other people I talked to, I just was inspired. And I said, I, I started the journey and I'm going to finish it. Just like I told my students, we set goals for ourself and we just keep on going. And as a mom, I learned to tell my kids, mommy is on her journey and we're going to make this work. My students and my children knew my commitment to

the time and dedication. And you can do this, my own children. When I told them that I was National Board-certified, they were so excited for me.

They didn't know what it meant, but they knew that mommy accomplished her goal. And it's important to teach my children as well as my students. When you start a goal, you complete your goal and you find your dream and you follow your dream and just keep going. You got this. Yes. There's going to be some struggles along the way. There might be some sacrifices we make. Uh, we did it. And I told my kids, my kids, that this was our accomplishment because, and my husband, well, cause we did it together as a team. And mommy did it because we worked together.

Luke Correia-Damude

Do you think there are misconceptions? Have you talked to other people who are considering it and they have some misconceptions about the certification process?

Patty Candelaria

The only misconception I have seen and heard from other people is, I don't know if I have the time to do it. I just don't know how, if I have the time, I said, if it's a goal and aspiration for you, you'll make it happen. And like I said, you're you start a goal. You stay committed to it. You achieve your goal. And as a mom, there'd be times I take my roll card of National Board notebooks with me to my son's baseball game. I roll it with me. There'd be times I roll my NASA work cart to my daughter's volleyball game or to my daughter's PTA meeting or my son's PTA meeting. Or if I'm in a faculty meeting, I was writing notes of how I can best serve my community as a National Board-certified teacher. How can I do different things? So, you just find those little times, those little moments and those five minutes become 10 minutes and those 10 minutes become 15 minutes. And then those 15 minutes become dedicating a night to writing about your journey as a National Board-certified teacher.

Luke Correia-Damude

Now, in terms of actually the incentive in, in Texas, or maybe it's different in Austin, like what, what kind of incentives?

Patty Candelaria

Well, our district gives us a stipend per year and it's, it's divided over the 12 months, but in Texas, they have what's called the Tia teacher incentive allotment through house bill three, where each district in the spring of 2021, each teacher that's National Board-certified will get a stipend. And as teachers, we don't go in it for the income. We go in it for the outcome. So, getting that stipend, I felt like I was being and honored as a National Board-certified teacher. If I had to pay for my National Board certification, if I could go back in time, I would totally have invested in myself as a teacher, as an educator, as one, that's inspiring our future because it was the best professional development I could have ever achieved in my career. And I look back why didn't I do it sooner, but I'm glad I did it. And I'm glad I achieved it. In your opinion,

Luke Correia-Damude

What was the most beneficial part of getting this certification?

Patty Candelaria

The National Board certification wants you to show that clear, consistent, and convincing evidence for your student responses when you're pursuing your National Board certification, so that you have a knowledge of your students as learners, where you're encouraging active exploration, critical analyzing, where you're teaching and that you understand the nature of the writing process, as well as providing a contact that encourages students exploration. And as teachers, we're engaging in multi-purposes and multi audiences, because when you turn in your National Board certification components, you don't know who's reading it. So you got to have that clear, consistent, and convincing evidence of your practice. Another, see, I would add to this would be the community, the community of relationships I've built within the teachers in my school, as well as relationships within my students' parents, as well as the relationship within my state of Texas and even mentors and other people that I've met throughout the nation that are also National Board-certified teachers, where you are a community of learners, as well as of community of, of helpers to our future. I'm so proud to be a National Board-certified teacher. There are many opportunities for you to be engaged in your community as well as to inspire our future.

Luke Correia-Damude

Thank you, Patty. That, wow, thanks so much for talking with me. I think we've got some amazing words of wisdom for the audience here, and I don't have any other questions. I don't know if you have, uh, anything you want to add or any last thoughts that you want to just share.

Patty Candelaria

I just want to tell any teacher who's, who's going to pursue their National Board certification by you listening to this podcast. You're already a rock star, and you're already willing to take that first step to be a National Board-certified teacher and ask yourself like I said, why not? You, you deserve this for yourself, for your community, and for our profession. And I wish you the best and reach out to me to others to help you on your journey.

Luke Correia-Damude

Well, there you have it folks, thank you so much for joining us for our very first episode of National Board conversations. That was Patricia Candelaria. We talked with, uh, really want to thank her for talking with me and allowing us to share her thoughts and her story with you. I hope there was a lot of helpful insight there, but most of all, I hope you enjoyed the podcast. It was certainly a pleasure for me. So thank you for listening. My name is Luke Correia-Damude, and we'll be back with another National Board conversations very shortly. In the meantime, why don't you visit the National Board at [nbpts.org](http://nbpts.org) and learn more about National Board certification.