

# Strengthening the Continuum: From Answering Questions to Changing Policies

The National Conference of State Legislatures' recent report, [Today's Board Certification for Teachers: Answers To Legislators' Questions](#), provides the latest information about National Board Certification and the certification process, research on the effectiveness of Board-certified teachers, and state policies that legislators can use to strengthen teaching through Board certification. Building on the foundation of that report, this follow-up guide with model policy language offers concrete illustrations of policy exemplars.

This document – the first in a series – provides statutory language from leading states that are supporting Board certification by:

1. rewarding and retaining accomplished teachers through differentiated pay for Board-certified teachers
2. offering additional compensation for Board-certified teachers who serve in high-need schools
3. providing resources to help teachers with the cost of certification
4. strengthening the state licensure system by aligning it with Board certification
5. granting Board-certified teachers, who are already licensed in other states, professional licenses without imposing additional conditions when they move across state lines

## **1. Reward and retain accomplished teachers through differentiated pay for Board-certified teachers**

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States can recognize accomplished teaching and attract teachers to high professional standards by embedding compensation increases for Board-certified teachers into the salary structure. Some states award Board-certified teachers an annual percentage increase based on their baseline salary. For example, in North Carolina, Board-certified teachers, as well as instructional coaches in Title I schools, earn an annual 12% salary supplement. Other states, including West Virginia, award an annual stipend to Board-certified teachers for as long as teachers maintain their certification. Where possible, language that integrates increased pay into the salary schedule is preferred as it provides a more sustainable source of funding to teachers, providing them greater assurances that it will be in place should they certify.

## **North Carolina**

North Carolina Session Law 2015-241, House Bill 97

*TEACHER SALARY SCHEDULE SECTION 9.1.(b)*

*(1) Licensed teachers who have NBPTS certification shall receive a salary supplement each month of twelve percent (12%) of their monthly salary on the salary schedule.*

## **West Virginia**

West Virginia Code § 18A-4-2a

*(b)(1) \$3,500 shall be paid annually to each classroom teacher who holds a valid certificate issued by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards for the life of the certification, but in no event more than ten years for any one certification.*

*(2) \$3,500 shall be paid annually to each classroom teacher who holds a valid renewal certificate issued by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards for the life of the renewal certificate, but in no event more than ten years for any one renewal certificate.*

*(c) The payments:*

*(1) Shall be in addition to any amounts prescribed in the applicable state minimum salary schedule;*

*(2) Shall be paid in equal monthly installments; and*

*(3) Shall be considered a part of the state minimum salaries for teachers.*

## **2. Offer additional compensation for Board-certified teachers who serve in high-need schools**

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Colorado, Hawaii, and Washington are several of the states using Board certification as part of their efforts to recruit and retain accomplished teachers in high-need schools. These policies are reinforced by recent research that shows (1) [that the impact of Board-certified teachers is greatest on low-income and minority students](#) and (2) [that additional stipends to National Board Certified teachers can have the intended effect of increasing the number of accomplished teachers in such schools, through hiring and grow-your-own efforts.](#)

### **Colorado**

Colorado Revised Statutes § 22-2-504

*National board for professional teaching and principal standards certification compensation--study*

*(1) Beginning with the 2009-10 school year, the department, subject to available appropriations, shall award an annual stipend of one thousand six hundred dollars to any teacher or principal who is employed in a school district, a program operated by a board of cooperative services, a charter school authorized by a school district pursuant to*

part 1 of article 30.5 of this title, or a charter school authorized by the state charter school institute pursuant to part 5 of article 30.5 of this title, and who holds a certification from the national board for professional teaching or principal standards. For any stipends that are awarded, the department shall allocate the stipend moneys to the school district that employs the teacher or principal who is to receive the stipend, and the school district shall then make payment directly to the eligible teacher or principal. A school district may, at its discretion, withhold any required employer retirement and medicare contributions associated with the stipend pursuant to this section from the one thousand six hundred dollar stipend amount. For any stipends that are awarded, the stipend shall be:

(2) Beginning with the 2009-10 school year, subject to available appropriations, an additional annual stipend of three thousand two hundred dollars shall be awarded to any teacher or principal who meets the criteria set forth in subsection (1) of this section and who is employed as of May 1 in a given school year in a low-performing, high-needs school. Subject to available appropriations, a teacher or principal shall continue to receive the additional stipend award pursuant to this subsection (2) if he or she remains employed in a school that was previously a low-performing, high-needs school but improved sufficiently to implement an improvement or performance plan pursuant to [section 22-11-210](#). The additional stipend for such teachers and principals shall be subject to the same restrictions and requirements as set forth in subsection (1) of this section...

## **Hawaii**

### Hawaii Revised Statutes § 302A-706

(a) There is established within the department the teacher national board certification incentive program to recognize and support exemplary teaching practice by supporting public school teachers who have achieved national board certification under the certification program of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. The teacher national board certification incentive program shall provide:

(1) A \$5,000 bonus per year for each public school teacher who maintains current national board certification;

...

(4) An additional \$5,000 bonus per year for each public school teacher who maintains current national board certification and who teaches at:

(A) A school in a focus, priority, or superintendent's zone, or other similar designation, as determined by the department;

(B) A school with a high turnover rate, as determined by the department; or

(C) A hard-to-fill school, as determined by the department.

## **Washington**

### Revised Code of Washington § 28A.405.415

(1) Certificated instructional staff who have attained certification from the national board for professional teaching standards shall receive a bonus each year in which they maintain the certification. The bonus shall be calculated as follows: The annual bonus shall be five thousand dollars in the 2007-08 school year. Thereafter, the annual

bonus shall increase by inflation, except that the bonus shall not be increased during the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years.

(2) Certificated instructional staff who have attained certification from the national board for professional teaching standards shall be eligible for bonuses in addition to that provided by subsection (1) of this section if the individual is in an instructional assignment in a school in which at least seventy percent of the students qualify for the free and reduced-price lunch program.

(3) The amount of the additional bonus under subsection (2) of this section for those meeting the qualifications of subsection (2) of this section is five thousand dollars.

### **3. Provide resources to help teachers with the cost of certification**

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Because cost can be a barrier to teachers pursuing board certification, a number of states defray the cost of certification through grants, reimbursements, or loans. West Virginia reimburses candidates for half the cost as they begin the process and reimburses the second half once the candidate has completed the assessment. Maryland, in partnership with local school districts, pays up front for the certification process, although candidates are required to repay the cost if they fail to complete the process.

#### **West Virginia**

West Virginia Code § 18A-4-2a

*For initial certification, one half the certification fee shall be paid for reimbursement once to each teacher who enrolls in the program for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification and one half the certification fee shall be paid for reimbursement once to each teacher who completes the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification.*

#### **Maryland**

Maryland Code, Education, § 6-112

*(e)(1) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, each teacher selected by the State Board to receive aid shall receive from the State an amount equal to the certification fee charged by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.*

*(2) Each county shall pay to the State one-third of the cost of certification for each teacher who participates in the Program who teaches in the county.*

*(3)(i) A teacher who does not complete all the requirements for assessment by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards shall reimburse the State the full amount of the aid received to participate in the Program.*

*(ii) The State shall reimburse the county the amount received under paragraph (2) of this subsection on receipt of the reimbursement of aid from a teacher under this paragraph.*

(iii) The provisions of subparagraph (i) of this paragraph do not apply to a teacher who completes all the requirements for assessment by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards but who does not receive certification.

## 4. Strengthen the state licensure system by aligning it to Board certification

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State licensure systems establish the baseline knowledge and skills teachers must have before they are allowed to practice independently. Because Board-certified teachers have demonstrated they can perform at an accomplished level, they should be able to use their Board certification to fulfill licensure and renewal requirements. In Washington, Board-certification is a voluntary pathway to the professional (second-tier) license, and the state license remains valid as long as the teacher's Board certification remains valid. In Georgia, Board-certification is a pathway to a top-tier license and the top-tier license remains valid as long as the teacher maintains their Board certification.

### **Washington**

Washington Administrative Code §181-79A-145 and §181-79A-251

*Levels and validity of certificates.*

*Professional certificate. The professional certificate is valid for five years and shall be subject to renewal pursuant to [WAC 181-79A-250](#). Provided, That a professional teacher's certificate based on the possession of a valid teacher's certificate issued by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards National Board Certification pursuant to [WAC 181-79A-257 \(3\)\(b\)](#) or [181-79A-206 \(3\)\(a\)](#) shall be valid for five years or until the expiration of the National Board Certificate, whichever is greater. Provided further that a professional educational staff associate certificate for school counselors based on the possession of a valid school counselor's certificate issued by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards National Board Certification pursuant to [WAC 181-79A-257](#) or [181-79A-206](#) shall be valid for five years or until the expiration of the National Board Certificate, whichever is greater.*

*Residency and professional certification.*

*Provided, That a professional certificate may be renewed based on the possession of a valid teaching certificate issued by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards at the time of application for the renewal of the professional certificate. Such renewal shall be valid for five years or until the expiration of the National Board Certificate, whichever is greater.*

### **Georgia**

Georgia Official Compilation, Rules & Regulations 505-2-.06

*Advanced Professional Certificate*

*(1) Purpose. The Advanced Professional certificate is a renewable certificate that is part of Georgia's tiered teacher certification system and provides a statewide structure to recognize expert classroom practice and professional growth resulting in higher levels of student learning.*

*(2) Requirements. The Advanced Professional certificate is issued to employed educators evaluated by the statewide evaluation system meeting the requirements outlined below.*

*(a) Have a minimum of five (5) years of acceptable educator experience, as defined in GaPSC Rule 505-2-.25 EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, and hold a Georgia professional teaching certificate and/or out-of-state professional teaching certificate for a minimum total of five (5) years. Three (3) of the five (5) years of experience must be earned in the state of Georgia and satisfied within five (5) years preceding the date of application while holding a professional teaching certificate.*

*(b) Receive “Exemplary” performance on the annual summative performance evaluation while holding a Georgia professional certificate. (The number of “Exemplary” performance evaluations will be determined when sufficient data on the distribution of Teacher Effectiveness Measure [TEM] ratings from the statewide evaluation system, Teacher Keys Effectiveness System [TKES] is available.) No annual performance ratings for the most recent five (5) years of acceptable educator experience should be below the “Satisfactory” or “Proficient” level;*

*(c) Meet Georgia's Standards of Conduct;*

*(d) Hold one of the following:*

*1. Advanced degree in any teaching field held by the educator beyond an initial preparation program and reflected on the Georgia educator certificate as outlined in GaPSC Rule 505-2-.33;*

*2. Valid professional certificate in Curriculum and Instruction or Instructional Technology; or*

*3. Valid National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification; and*

*(e) Have the employing Georgia local unit of administration (LUA) request the certificate according to procedures outlined in GaPSC Rule 505-2-.27.*

*(4) Renewal.*

*(a) The Advanced Professional certificate may be renewed by meeting the following requirements:*

*1. Satisfy professional learning requirements as outlined in GaPSC Rule 505-2-.36; or*

*2. Hold a valid National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification; and*

*3. Have a minimum of one (1) year of successful teaching experience evaluated by TKES, earned within five (5) years of the date of renewal;*

*4. Receive “Exemplary” performance on the annual summative performance evaluation while holding a Georgia professional certificate. (The number of “Exemplary” performance evaluations will be determined when sufficient data on the distribution of TEM ratings on TKES is available.) No annual performance ratings received during the validity period of the certificate should be below the “Satisfactory” or “Proficient” level;*

5. Meet Georgia's Standards of Conduct; and

6. Have the employing Georgia LUA request renewal of the certificate according to procedures outlined in GaPSC Rule 505-2-27

## **5. Grant Board-certified teachers, who are already licensed in other states, professional licenses without imposing additional conditions when they move across state lines**

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Because Board-certified teachers have demonstrated they are accomplished practitioners, out-of-state Board-certified teachers should be able to use their credentials to fulfill state licensure requirements. States that reduce the burdens for Board-certified teachers to receive their state certification may be more successful in attracting accomplished teachers into their state.

### **Virginia**

Virginia Administrative Code Title 8, 20-22-100

*Conditions for licensure for out-of-state candidates by reciprocity.*

*An individual coming into Virginia will qualify for a Virginia teaching license with comparable endorsement areas if the individual holds national certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) or a nationally recognized certification program approved by the Board of Education.*

### **Arkansas**

Code of Arkansas Rules 005.16.3-5.00

*5.06 The Department will issue a standard Arkansas teaching license to any National Board certified teacher, building-level principal, or building level assistant principal trained in and licensed by a state other than Arkansas who moves to Arkansas, provided that the NBCT status is current at the time of license application and that the applicant passes the required criminal background check.*