



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION
Washington, D.C. 20240

FEB 23 2015

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Memorandum

To: All BIE Operated School Principals/Administrators/Superintendents
All BIE Tribally Controlled School Principals/Administrators/Superintendents

From: Dr. Charles M. Roessel 
Director, Bureau of Indian Education

Subject: National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

The Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) is pleased to announce its partnership with the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) to provide professional development, support and mentoring for teachers and counselors who want to pursue National Board Certification (NBC). Our goal is to improve learning and achievement for Indian students with NBC educators. We are striving for 1,000 NBC educators in all BIE-funded schools by 2017. Registration is open now for Component 1 and will continue through February 28, 2015.

We recognize that new educational reforms emerging in our schools will require significant change in the classroom. The adoption of higher academic standards with the Common Core State Standards represent a change from the fact-based style of instruction to one that fosters critical thinking and program solving. The new generation of high-stakes standardized assessments, college and career ready curricular focus, and the marking and measuring of individual student progress at every step of the learning experience also will require the development of new skills for both students and teachers. To meet these new standards, we understand that educators will have to expand their repertoire of teaching practices, and BIE and schools will have to make greater investments in effective professional development for all educators and school leaders. With the additional Congressional budget increases, BIE is able to begin making a significant and meaningful investment in educator learning, for both BIE-operated schools and Tribally-controlled schools.

As we considered the various professional development approaches, we wanted to offer an approach that is research-based and improves student outcomes; allows educators the flexibility to tailor the professional learning experience to meet their needs; provides mentors to support educators in their classrooms; and enables educators to build a network of accomplished teachers in their local communities for their continuous learning and development.

Thus, BIE awarded a contract to NBPTS because of the potential value to our Indian students, teachers, and schools. For our Indian students, research shows that NBC educators have a greater impact on student learning and achievement than non-certified teachers, with their students outperforming their peers in other classrooms. For our teachers, NBC affords educators the opportunity to reflect on best practices, hone their skills, and find immediate application of what they have learned. For our schools, NBC educators typically form strong professional communities in their schools, transforming the culture to a collaborative, student-focused learning environment.

Attached is information about the program, resources, registration and the BIE incentives. We encourage teachers and counselors to pursue National Board Certification and become part of a larger network of accomplished educators shaping the profession and the futures of students.

Thank you for all you do to support our students and their families.

Attachment

cc: Deputy Bureau Director, BIE
Associate Deputy Director – BIE Operated Schools
Associate Deputy Director – Tribally Controlled Schools
Associate Deputy Director – Navajo

National Board Certification Information

About the Bureau of Indian Education's National Board Certification Professional Development Opportunity

The Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) will fund the professional development preparation leading to National Board Certification for teachers and counselors who meet the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) eligibility requirements (See below). This opportunity applies to teachers and counselors (collectively referred to as “educators,” herein) in both BIE operated and Tribally-controlled schools. There are four components to achieving National Board Certification. BIE has contracted with NBPTS for Component 1. BIE will announce when Components 2 through 4 are available. It is anticipated that it will take an educator about three years to obtain National Board Certification.

Component 1: Content Knowledge Assessment. This is the starting block to becoming certified.

Component 1 demonstrates the content knowledge and pedagogy in the core discipline selected by the educator. The list of core disciplines can be found at: www.nbpts.org/nbct-search.

Counselors must have a valid state certificate as a school counselor to pursue NBC as a counselor. A valid state teaching certificate is not necessary to pursue National Board Certification for teachers.

Eligibility Requirements for NBC

To be eligible for NBC, you must:

- Be an educator in a Tribally-controlled school or BIE-operated school;
- Hold a Bachelor's degree (Exception: Career and Technical Education teachers must have met the licensure requirement for the state);
- Have completed three full years of teaching or school counseling; and
- Possess a valid state teaching or school counseling license (Exception: If you are teaching where a license is not required or you have taught in schools recognized and approved to operate by the state).

Registration for BIE's NBC Professional Development Opportunity

The registration for Component 1 is open until **Saturday, February 28, 2015**. Educators can register online at www.boardcertifiedteachers.org. **It is important that you register for Component 1.**

About Component 1, The Starting Block

Component 1 will consist of the following learning sessions.

- General Orientation – Learn about NBC and how to select a core discipline - March 2015
- Assessment Review – Prepare and practice for the computer-based assessment - April 2015
- Mentoring Support – Group support and assistance - April 2015
- Assessment – A computer-based test which demonstrates an educator’s content knowledge in the core discipline selected by the teachers and counselors - April to June 15, 2015
- Results from NBPTS – Results on Component 1 will be available for BIE and educators by November 2015.

These learning sessions will occur over several months, beginning in March 2015 through April 2015. The location, dates and times for each session will be announced once the registration period has closed. These sessions will occur outside of the normal duty day, and generally on the weekends to minimize the educational disruption to students and educators. BIE will pay the cost of all Component 1 sessions, as well as any travel, transportation and per diem expenses should it be necessary for educators to travel to a location outside their commuting area for any of the sessions. Educators also may receive their daily rate of pay when they attend and complete a session.

The Assessment may be taken multiple times. However, BIE will pay for two attempts for Component 1. Educators will be responsible for any additional sittings of the test should they be necessary to receive a passing score. It is not necessary to pass the Assessment before moving on to Component 2. However, educators must pass all four components before they are certified.

BIE Incentives

Bonus: Educators in BIE-operated schools will receive a one-time \$1,000 bonus for each Component (total of 4) that is successfully completed. For educators in Tribally-controlled schools, BIE will encourage tribes to provide this same incentive, and BIE will provide funding to tribes so that they can provide the incentive to their educators. For example, if an educator completes Component 1, the educator will receive a one-time bonus of \$1,000 starting January 2016. If an educator completes all four Components successfully, the educator will receive a total of \$4,000 in bonuses.

Professional Development: For Component 1, educators in BIE-operated schools will receive their daily rate of pay when attending the required learning sessions. For educators in Tribally-controlled schools, BIE will encourage tribes to provide this same incentive, and BIE will provide funding to tribes so they can provide the incentive to their educators. In Component 1, there are four sessions, which can be offered concomitantly depending on the number of participants and location of the sessions.

- General Orientation
- Assessment Review
- Group Mentoring
- Assessment

Salary Increases: Upon receipt of National Board Certification, educators in BIE-operated schools will receive a \$2,500 annual salary increase for as long as they maintain the National Board Certification. For educators in Tribally-controlled schools, BIE will encourage tribes to provide this same incentive, and BIE will provide funding to tribes so they can provide the incentive to their educators. Completion of a component or the National Board certification must be validated by NBPTS and educators must submit their certificate to their Associate Deputy Director, who will forward it to the BIE Washington, D.C. office by December 31st every year to be eligible for the bonus or the salary increase.

Informational Resources

- General information about National Board Certification: www.nbpts.org
- Online Registration: www.boardcertifiedteachers.org
- National Board Customer Support services Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. CDT, by calling 1-800-22TEACH.
- First-time candidate, email questions to: NBPTSCandidateSupport@Pearson.com.
- Candidate Support Line: 1-800-22TEACH
- BIE: David Brown, david.brown@bia.gov, 202-208-4424

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What happens if an educator does not pass Component 1?

There is no negative impact for educators who do not pass Component 1. The NBPTS indicates that 40 percent of the first time participants successfully pass Component 1. Educators may retake the assessment as often as necessary to obtain a passing score. Educators may retake the test one additional time at BIE-expense. All subsequent sittings of the test will be at the educator's expense.

2. Will educators who become Board certified be required to sign a period of service agreement?

Educators in BIE-operated schools who become Board certified utilizing BIE funds, will be required to sign a service agreement to remain with BIE for two school years. The service may be served at either a BIE-operated school or a Tribally-controlled school. Tribally-controlled schools can establish their own period of service requirement. Educators in Tribally-controlled schools who become Board certified should check with their principal if there are any periods of service requirements.

3. Will Tribally-controlled schools receive additional funding to provide the bonus and salary incentives?

BIE will provide schools with funds to offer a \$1,000 bonus to educators upon successful completion of each of the four Components. BIE will encourage tribally-controlled schools to offer a \$2,500 salary increase for educators who obtain National Board Certification.

- 4. If an educator completed Component 1 prior to the implementation of BIE's program, can the educator be reimbursed for the cost of the training and test?**
No. The BIE contract, which provides the authority and funding for the professional development, did not become effective until late September 2014. There is no legal authority to retroactively reimburse the educator. However, if BIE awards a contract for Components 2 through 4, the educator may continue their training under the BIE program.
- 5. Is the \$75 registration fee for Component 1 covered under the BIE contract?**
No. However, each school is able to reimburse an educator for the registration fee using their own funds and authority. This applies to both Tribally-controlled schools and BIE-operated schools.
- 6. What happens if an educator is no longer employed with a BIE-operated or Tribally-controlled school, may the educator continue National Board Certification under the BIE contract?**
No. The BIE contract applies only to educators who are employed in BIE-operated or Tribally-controlled schools.
- 7. Will an educator be required to reimburse the BIE for the cost of the training if the educator terminates his or her enrollment in any of the Components?**
The BIE will review the reason (s) for curtailing the professional development and make a determination of whether the termination was through no fault of the educator. If the termination was through no fault of the educator, the educator will not be required to reimburse the BIE or Tribally-controlled school for any or all costs of the professional development experience.