



Washington Office of Superintendent of **PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

National Board Bonus

1. **Purpose:**

The purpose of this program is to support the statewide coordination and oversight efforts for the National Board Certification Program. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards offers an advanced voluntary certification for teachers and counselors in 25 different certification areas. Teachers throughout Washington seek quality professional development through certifying with the highest and most rigorous certification available to the teaching profession. This program is essential to keeping this increasingly sought after advanced certification accessible for all teachers in Washington.

2. **Description of services provided:**

A bonus of \$5,593 is provided to eligible NBCTs via school apportionment. An additional bonus of up to \$5,000 based on FTE is provided to eligible NBCTs working within "challenging" schools.

3. **Criteria for receiving services and/or grants:**

Teachers must be certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and employed full or part-time by a Washington K-12 public school or district on an instructional contract. [WAC 392-140-970](#) through [392-140-975](#).

Beneficiaries in 2020-21 School Year:

Number of School Districts:	259
Number of Schools:	1903
Number of Students:	N/A
Number of Educators:	8,259
Other: Number of Educators receiving High Poverty Schools bonus:	2,665

Number of OSPI staff associated with this funding (FTEs): 0

Number of contractors/other staff associated with this funding: 0

FY21 Funding: State Appropriation:	\$73.034 million
Federal Appropriation:	\$0
Other fund sources:	\$0
TOTAL (FY21)	\$73.034 million

4. **Are federal or other funds contingent on state funding?**

No

Yes, please explain.

5. **State funding history:**

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
FY21	\$73.034 million	\$69,950,945
FY20	\$69.237 million	\$66,765,857
FY19	\$61.553 million	\$60,789,254
FY18	\$62.674 million	\$54,444,570
FY17	\$58.361 million	\$55,454,098
FY16	\$51.337 million	\$51,333,420
FY15	\$48.746 million	\$47,373,612
FY14	\$44.879 million	\$43,793,195
FY13	\$39.296 million	\$39,278,564
FY12	\$0	\$0
FY11	\$35.509 million	\$35,256,777
FY10	\$28.715 million	\$28,365,525
FY09	\$17.225 million	\$17,225,000
FY08	\$9.747 million	\$9,747,000

6. **Number of beneficiaries (e.g., school districts, schools, students, educators, other) history:**

School Year	Number of NBCTs
SY 2020-2021	8,259
SY 2019-2020	8,388
SY 2018-2019	8,248
SY 2017-2018	7,825
SY 2016-2017	6,700
SY 2015-2016	6,955
SY 2014-2015	6,879
SY 2013-2014	6,259
SY 2012-2013	5,945
SY 2011-2012	5,571
SY 2010-2011	4,822
SY 2009-2010	3,718
SY 2008-2009	2,505
SY 2007-2008	1,666

7. **Programmatic changes since inception (if any):**

The beginning of the National Board program in Washington State was grant funded. The three foundations that provided start-up funding made it clear from the beginning that sustainability would be a state responsibility. There is no legislative allocation for programmatic or administrative costs.

High Poverty Schools Bonus

In FY 2008, the legislature passed HB 2262, which allowed the “base” NBCT bonus to increase by inflation/COLA and an additional \$5,000 bonus for NBCTs teaching in “challenging schools” (later called “High Poverty Schools”). High poverty schools are designated by the prior year’s free and reduced lunch count for all students enrolled on October 1 of that year. In FY 2009, the high poverty school definition was set at 50% free and reduced lunch count for High Schools, 60% for Middle Schools, and 70% for Elementary Schools.

Washington State Conditional Loan Revolving Fund

In FY 2009, the final budget appropriated \$3 million to initiate the National Board Conditional Loan Program. This \$3 million was matched by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). \$2.2 million was appropriated and expended in 2009. The remaining \$800,000 was removed from the 2010 legislative budget. As a result, we did not receive the remaining \$800,000 matching grant from NBPTS. This appropriation, along with the federal grant from NBPTS, allowed OSPI to offer no-interest loans to offset the National Board candidate fee. To date, more than 5,000 teachers have benefited from loans. These loans are paid back to the state by the teacher upon certification by reducing the amount of their first NBCT bonus.

Educators who expire their candidacy or withdraw from the National Board process are placed on a repayment plan. In 2010, this became a self-sustaining program.

Federal Grant Funding

In September of 2013, the US Department of Education announced a grant to support NBPTS in six states, including Washington. This grant allowed OSPI to expand leadership skill development among NBCTs and create more sophisticated recruitment and support for candidates, especially teachers in challenging schools, teachers of color, and teachers with STEM expertise. This grant covered a stipend for ten NBCTs who serve as Regional Coordinators and .5 program FTE at OSPI. Unfortunately, the grant funding has come to an end. OSPI continues to contract ten NBCT Regional Coordinators to support candidates in each ESD.

In 2017, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards completed implementation of major revisions to their assessment process. While standards and rigor of the process did not change, the cost to candidates and timeline changed. WA has redesigned all of the support structures in place to continue to provide effective support to candidates. Candidates are now able to complete the process between 1-3 years with up to an additional 2 years for retakes if necessary.

8. Evaluations of program/major findings:

National Board Certification has been intensively researched for more than two decades. The majority of those studies report a vital finding: students of National Board Certified Teachers learn more than students in other classrooms (Bastian, forthcoming; Cowan, & Goldhaber, 2015; National Research Council, 2008; Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2017). This impact is consistent across elementary, middle, and high schools and for in states and districts across the country. On average, the learning gains for students of Board-certified teachers are roughly equal to 1-2 months of learning (Cowan, & Goldhaber, 2015; Strategic Data Project, 2012; Strategic Data Project, 2012a). These studies also find that the impact of Board-certified teachers is greater for students from low-income backgrounds and for students of color (Cavalluzzo et al., 2014; Goldhaber & Anthony, 2007).

The 2018 Cowan and Goldhaber report on the impact of bonuses for NBCTs in high-need schools fits within this context. The study uses a novel research design to provide new evidence on the role the bonus has had in strengthening teaching and learning in high-need schools. It finds:

- The Washington Challenging Schools Bonus led to higher teacher retention in high-need schools
- The Washington Challenging Schools Bonus led to more teachers pursuing Board-certification in high-need schools

The Washington Challenging Schools Bonus led to increased recruitment of Board Certified Teachers in high-need schools

9. **Major challenges faced by the program:**

This is a high-profile program that helps meet OSPI and Governor Inslee's priorities. Support for the NBCT stipends is critical and continues to grow as the number of NBCTs increases.

Since the revised NBPTS process began in 2014-2015 OSPI had to adjust the conditional loan amount to \$1,425 (the cost of three of the four components) from the original \$2,000. Candidates are required to purchase their first of four components out of pocket before the loan payment is made. This ensures candidate buy-in. Because a candidate can complete the four components over the course of three years and they are not required to submit or pay for everything in one year, we are starting to have candidates withdraw from the NBPTS process midway through their candidacy. OSPI currently does not have the capacity or resources to track partial loans as opposed to tracking one lump sum as we previously did. In 2020, NBPTS moved to a coupon-based system for third party payments and no longer requires candidates to register for each individual component. With this new payment system, OSPI cannot track which components a candidate plans to attempt that year prior to transmitting their loan funds to NBPTS.

Rule changes to teaching certification requirements made by the Professional Educator Standards Board in response to ESSHB 1341 in 2017 removed the mandate for teachers to pursue National Board Certification as one of two options for maintaining state certification in earning the professional teaching certificate. This has likely affected National Board candidate numbers. Additionally, changes in salary as a result of *McCleary v. Washington* may have an impact on the perception of bonus incentives for some teachers, potentially affecting candidate numbers. However, on a nationwide scale, Washington continues to have the largest growth in new NBCTs and candidates.

In both 2020 and 2021, NBPTS offered a series of exception options for candidates and renewing NBCTs during the COVID-19 pandemic. This allowed refundable withdrawal, deferment of payment to future years, and extensions to candidacy and renewal windows. Although the assessment rules were also adjusted to support teaching in a virtual setting, many candidates chose to postpone their National Board Certification, resulting in lower candidate counts and newly certifying NBCTs during these years, as well as fewer NBCTs renewing than leaving the profession or retiring.

10. **Future opportunities:**

The future holds great promise for the National Board Certification program. Washington state is regarded nationally as a model state for recruitment, retention, and support for National Board candidates and NBCTs. Several states have implemented similar loan programs and support structures. OSPI has been asked by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards to give presentations to other states' candidate subsidy administrators, and has been consulted by other states seeking to implement similar programs. This past February, Washington was ranked 2nd in new NBCTs, 3rd nationally in total number of NBCTs, and continues to have one of the highest number of candidates in process or beginning their certification. Over 30 Washington state school districts have been recognized by NBPTS as accomplished districts for their percentage of educators holding National Board Certification.

11. **Statutory and/or budget language:**

Budget Proviso: ESSB 5092, Sec. 1511 (2)(a) - \$69,237,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2020 and \$73,034,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2021 are provided solely for the following bonuses for teachers who hold valid, unexpired certification from the national board for professional teaching standards and who are teaching in a Washington public school, subject to the following conditions and limitations: (i) For national board certified teachers, a bonus of \$5,505 per teacher in the 2019-20 school year and a bonus of \$5,593 per teacher in the 2020-21 school year; (ii) An additional \$5,000 annual bonus shall be paid to national board certified teachers who teach in either: (A) High schools where at least 50 percent of student headcount enrollment is eligible for federal free or reduced-price lunch, (B) middle schools where at least 60 percent of student headcount enrollment is eligible for federal free or reduced-price lunch, or (C) elementary schools where at least 70 percent of student headcount enrollment is eligible for federal free or reduced-price lunch; (iii) The superintendent of public instruction shall adopt rules to ensure that national board certified teachers meet the qualifications for bonuses under (b) of this subsection for less than one full school year receive bonuses in a prorated manner. All bonuses in this subsection will be paid in July of each school year. Bonuses in this subsection shall be reduced by a factor of 40 percent for first year NBPTS certified teachers, to reflect the portion of the instructional school year they are certified; and (iv) During the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years, and within available funds, certificated instructional staff who have met the eligibility requirements and have applied for certification from the national board for professional teaching standards may receive a conditional loan of two thousand dollars or the amount set by the office of the superintendent of public instruction to contribute toward the current assessment fee, not including the initial up-front candidacy payment. The fee shall be an advance on the first annual bonus under RCW 28A.405.415. The conditional

loan is provided in addition to compensation received under a district's salary allocation and shall not be included in calculations of a district's average salary and associated salary limitation under RCW 28A.400.200. Recipients who fail to receive certification after three 10 years are required to repay the conditional loan. The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall adopt rules to define the terms for initial grant of the assessment fee and repayment, including applicable fees. To the extent necessary, the superintendent may use revenues from the repayment of conditional loan scholarships to ensure payment of all national board bonus payments required by this section in each school year.

12. **Other relevant information:**

This program is one that is extremely important to educators throughout the state. This advanced voluntary certification is essential to elevating the teaching profession to the heights of professions such as medicine, law, and architecture. National Board is one of the best ways to retain and reward accomplished educators. NBCTs also contribute significant leadership to schools and districts across the state. This program serves as signal for the status of effective education in Washington. It is unusual to have a program that the Governor, Washington Education Association, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Washington State Legislature all agree is a valuable tool for promoting rigorous standards for educators.

13. **Schools/districts receiving assistance:**

See [OSPI's Grantee List](#)

14. **Program Contact Information:**

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