



Washington Office of Superintendent of **PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

NBPTS Cert Salary Bonuses

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 (NBPTS) 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 \$6,019 is provided to eligible National Board-Certified Teachers (NBCT) via school apportionment. An additional bonus of up to \$5,000 (prorated by Fulltime Equivalent (FTE)) is provided to eligible NBCTs working within "high poverty" schools. Services and travel budget of \$94,000 for eight NBCT Regional Coordinators contracted with OSPI to provide support for cohort facilitation within each Educational Service District (ESD). Salary for one FTE OSPI employee to coordinate the National Board program, including bonus administration, conditional loan applications and processing, distribution of clock hours, contract management, general customer service and oversight of other National Board-related state policy.

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 the 2022-23 School Year:

Number of School Districts:	263
Number of Schools:	1,816
Number of Students:	N/A
Number of Educators:	7,591
Other:	2,632

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

No



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5. State funding history:

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2023	\$75,805,000	\$66,159,966
2022	\$71,644,000	\$71,566,164
2021	\$69,237,000	\$69,950,945
2020	\$61,553,000	\$66,765,857
2019	\$62,674,000	\$60,789,254

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

Fiscal Year	Number of Schools
2023	263 districts, 1,816 schools, 7,591 educators
2022	267 districts, 1,728 schools, 7,975 schools
2021	266 districts, 1,702 schools, 8,262 educators
2020	263 districts, 1,780 schools, 8,387 educators
2019	262 districts, 1,748 schools, 8,248 educators
2018	250 districts, 1,693 schools, 7,826 educators

7. Programmatic changes since inception (if any):

The beginning of the National Board program in Washington State was grant funded. The three foundations who 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. In 2018, rules for designating high poverty schools were amended to include that free and reduced meal counts for schools participating in the federal meal programs Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) or Provision 2 will be reviewed in either two years prior to participation in either of these programs to determine eligibility as a high poverty school. In 2022, schools who became ineligible as a high poverty schools between 2020 and 2021 were allowed to carry over free and reduced meal data from 2019 to determine their eligibility.



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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.

National Board Assessment Revision

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. Program evaluation or evaluation of major findings:

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



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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. 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.



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Further logistical challenges to the program include the distribution of clock hours by request for renewing NBCTs and candidates completing the assessment process – because of the nature of this process “by request” and dependency on the availability of data from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, not all eligible candidates and NBCTs receive clock hours before their employer’s salary advancement deadline. OSPI is currently in the process of changing this system so that any eligible educator may have immediate access to their clock hours. Additionally, the paper-trail tracking of conditional loans has created delays in loan transmittal and repayment. OSPI is working internally to secure funding for application development so that this system can be improved.

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 January, 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. 32 Washington state school districts have been recognized by NBPTS as accomplished districts for their percentage of educators holding National Board Certification. OSPI contracts with active NBCT teachers from all around the state to create and enhance professional development for candidates and NBCTs, ensuring that all candidates have an opportunity to receive support through their certification journey regardless of geographic location. OSPI is currently updating our conditional loan online application and repayment process to be streamlined within the Education Data System. The tracking of all loan applicants, candidate cohort participants, and loan repayments will be housed within the online application. OSPI plans to roll out these updates by 2025.

11. Statutory and/or budget language:

\$71,644,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2022 and \$75,805,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2023 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 \$5,705 per teacher in the 2021-22 school year and a bonus of \$6,019 per teacher in the 2022-23 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



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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 2021-22 and 2022-23 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 fully exhausting all years of candidacy as set by the national board for professional teaching standards 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.



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13. Schools/districts receiving assistance:

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14. Program Contact Information:

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