

# NATIONAL BOARD

for Professional Teaching Standards®

## Policy Priorities: Overview

## Board Certification: A Vehicle for Transforming Teaching

*To ensure that all students receive an excellent education that prepares them to succeed in today's world,* we must systematically increase the quality of our teaching workforce. In short, great teaching must be the norm, not the exception.

Other professions, especially medicine, set high standards for practice as the expectation for all practitioners. Board certification provides the assurance that those standards have been met. As in the medical profession, the teaching profession must include a series of steps that begins with preparation, leads systematically to Board certification, and then spreads the professional expertise of excellent teachers. To ensure great teaching is the norm and that Board certification is the expectation for all teachers, we need policies that strengthen the coherence of the teaching career continuum.

[A decade's worth of research](#) in teaching shows that students of Board-certified teachers learn more than students in other classrooms. When policies leverage board certification and capitalize on Board-certified teachers to strengthen teaching, the result is a high-quality teaching workforce that enables every student to meet the demands of the knowledge economy and today's society. To that end, the National Board proposes the following policy recommendations, distinct to each stage of the career continuum.

National Board Certification, a voluntary advanced professional certification for PreK-12 educators, identifies teaching excellence through a performance-based, peer-reviewed assessment.

More than 80% of Americans – from across the political spectrum – believe teachers should achieve Board certification, beyond licensure, as in other professions (2014 PDK/Gallup poll).

Learn more at  
[nbpts.org/policy](http://nbpts.org/policy)



## Build a Pipeline to Accomplished Teaching and Board Certification

To ensure every student is taught by well-prepared teachers who have the supports they need to be on the trajectory to Board certification, it is critical that state leaders:

- Improve teacher preparation and induction by supporting the implementation of high-quality initial licensure assessments, including **teacher performance assessments**; strengthening clinical experiences to include year-long **residency experiences**; expanding **induction supports** for novice teachers; and requiring that preparation and induction programs are aligned to **professional standards**.
- Connect teacher preparation and development to real-world practice by using Board-certification as a qualification for **clinical faculty**, **cooperating teachers** for student teachers, and **mentor teachers** for novice teachers.

## Raise Teaching Standards by Investing in Board Certification

To strengthen the teaching workforce and create the conditions for Board certification to become the expectation for all teachers, it is critical that state leaders:

- Reward and retain accomplished teachers through differentiated pay by embedding **compensation** increases for Board-certified teachers into the salary structure.
- Strengthen the **state licensure** system by creating voluntary pathways for teachers who achieve and maintain an active Board certificate to receive professional or advanced licenses and/or renew their licenses.
- Ensure great teachers reach the students that need them the most by providing an additional compensation increase to Board-certified teachers who are teaching in **designated high-need schools or areas**.
- Increase the effective use of professional development resources by defraying the cost for pursuing Board certification through **grant or loan programs** and investing in **support programs** that provide candidates for Board certification with mentors and cohort-based support groups.

## Spread the Expertise of Board-Certified Teachers

To capitalize on the expertise of Board-certified teachers, it is critical that state leaders:

- Mobilize Board-certified teachers to provide instructional leadership to address school, district, and statewide improvement priorities through **formal teacher leadership roles** that include roles to lead without leaving the classroom.
- Engage **Board-certified teachers** in developing and informing school, district, and state policy through formal mechanisms for these teachers to serve on standards boards, advise policymakers, and provide system-wide leadership.