

# **REVIEW OF FLORIDA TEACHERS WHO HAVE EARNED CERTIFICATION FROM THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS**

## **BACKGROUND**

The 1998 Florida Legislature, recognizing the essential role that teachers play in preparing Florida's students for high academic achievement, life-long professions and careers, and for successful, productive citizenry, passed the Excellent Teaching Program Act. The program was renamed the Dale Hickam Excellent Teaching Program (DHETP) in 2002. The 2008 Florida Legislature adopted substantial changes to the program. The original purposes of this program were to provide incentives for teachers to seek National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification and to reward teachers who demonstrate teaching excellence by attaining NBPTS certification and sharing their expertise with other teachers. Further, its intent was to retain excellent teachers in the classroom as evidenced by the State Board Rule requirement that recipients teach students a majority of the time. The program was very successful in accomplishing its purpose as is shown by the 88% retention rate of NBPTS certified teachers over the past several years.

Recent legislative changes to the program eliminated the State Board Rule and specified its intent to reward teachers who demonstrate teaching excellence via bonuses primarily to teachers who attain certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) and secondarily to NBPTS certified teachers who mentor non-NBPTS Florida teachers.<sup>1</sup>

The NBPTS charges two types of fees for a teacher who desires to become nationally certified, a \$65.00 processing charge and a \$2,500.00 assessment fee. The NBPTS requires that the candidate submit the processing charge at the time an application is submitted. However, the candidacy does not officially start until the candidate submits a nonrefundable \$500 initial fee, which will be applied to the \$2,500 assessment fee. Once NBPTS receives an application processing charge and \$500 initial fee payment, the candidate is sent a verification packet and portfolio materials.<sup>2</sup>

## **FEDERAL AND STATE SUBSIDIES**

Two types of federal and state subsidies have been provided for teachers under the Dale Hickam Excellent Teaching Program.

- Fee subsidies
- Bonuses

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<sup>1</sup> Florida Department of Education Web site, Dale Hickam Excellent Teaching Program, homepage, <http://www.fldoe.org/etp/>.

<sup>2</sup> National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Web site, Fees and Financial support page, [http://www.nbpts.org/become\\_a\\_candidate/fees\\_financial\\_support](http://www.nbpts.org/become_a_candidate/fees_financial_support).

## FEE SUBSIDIES

Until recently there were both federal and state funds available to subsidize the assessment fee. The state funded fee subsidy was eliminated by the Florida Legislature in their special session during the fall of 2008. For the next application cycle, for 2010, only federal funds allocated to the state of Florida will be used for providing fee subsidies for new candidates. These limited funds have been allocated to each district based on its teacher population and are to be assigned only to teachers who teach in high needs/low performing schools within the district. From those federal funds, each eligible candidate will receive a fee subsidy equal to 50% (\$1,250) of the NBPTS application fee. The candidate will be responsible for paying the remaining portion of the certification fee and the non-refundable \$65 application processing fee. To receive a fee subsidy, the candidate must apply between June and November 30, 2009. A new candidate must complete each of the following steps by the state deadline of November 30, 2009, to apply for funds through the Dale Hickam Excellent Teaching Program.<sup>3</sup>

1. Visit the NBPTS Web site, [www.nbpts.org](http://www.nbpts.org)
2. Pay the \$65 application processing fee
3. Complete the NBPTS online application
4. Wait for notification from the school district contact that they have been selected to receive a federal subsidy and need to pay the **non-refundable** \$500 initial fee to NBPTS via their online system by November 30, 2009.
5. Submit all required documentation to the district DHETP contact by the district's application deadline.

A number of organizations and businesses have established scholarships to assist candidates in paying the assessment fees. Although some of the scholarships are available to teachers teaching any subject and in any location, many of the scholarships are limited as to subjects taught and locations served. Additional information on those scholarships may be viewed on the NBPTS Web site at [http://www.nbpts.org/become\\_a\\_candidate/fees\\_financial\\_support/scholarships](http://www.nbpts.org/become_a_candidate/fees_financial_support/scholarships).<sup>4</sup>

## BONUSES

In prior years Florida has offered two separate bonuses, the certification bonus and the mentoring bonus, to those teachers who achieve National Board Certification.

### Certification Bonuses

The certification bonus was originally equal to 10% of the previous year's state-wide average teachers' salary, including retirement benefit on the bonus, plus the employer's share of FICA. Recent legislation provides the option of prorating the salary bonus based on budget availability,

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<sup>3</sup> Florida Department of Education Web site, Dale Hickam Excellent Teaching Program, Fee Subsidy page, <http://www.fldoe.org/etp/feesub.asp>.

<sup>4</sup> National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Web site, Scholarships page, [http://www.nbpts.org/become\\_a\\_candidate/fees\\_financial\\_support/scholarships](http://www.nbpts.org/become_a_candidate/fees_financial_support/scholarships).

eliminated state funded retirement contribution on the bonus and limited the bonus eligibility period to ten years for initial certification only.

To be eligible to receive the certification bonus, a teacher must:

1. hold a valid NBPTS certificate or notice of certificate award;
2. be currently employed by the district school board or by a public school within the school district; and
3. be certified annually by the district to have demonstrated satisfactory “teaching” performance pursuant to Section 1012.34, Florida Statutes.<sup>5</sup>

### Mentoring Bonuses

The mentoring bonus was also originally equal to 10% of the previous year’s state wide average teachers’ salary, including retirement benefit on the bonus, plus the employer’s share of FICA. Recent legislation also provides the option of prorating of the mentoring bonus based on budget availability, eliminated state funded retirement contribution on the bonus and limited the bonus eligibility period to ten years for initial certification only.

To be eligible to receive the mentoring bonus, a teacher must:

1. hold a valid NBPTS certificate or notice of certificate award
2. be currently employed by the district school board or by a public school within the school district;
3. be certified annually by the district to have demonstrated satisfactory “teaching” performance pursuant to Section 1012.34, Florida Statutes; and
4. have provided (as previously agreed to in writing) the equivalent of 12 workdays of mentoring and related services to public classroom teachers pursuant to Section 1012.72, F.S., and that the 12 equivalent workdays were not completed during student contact hours during the 196 days of required service.<sup>6</sup>

### RECENT LEGISLATION REGARDING NBPTS CERTIFICATION

Recent legislation changed the intent of the program to that of rewarding Florida public school teachers who attain National Board certification.<sup>7</sup> Those changes provide the option of prorating both bonuses based on budget availability, with a priority on the certification bonus, and limiting the bonus eligibility period to ten years for initial certification only. If budget is insufficient to pay both bonuses at the full 10% level, certification bonuses will be paid at the full 10% level first, if budget allows, then the mentoring bonuses will be prorated with any remaining budget. If budget is insufficient to pay the full 10% for certification bonuses, the certification bonuses

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<sup>5</sup> Florida Department of Education Web site, Dale Hickam Excellent Teaching Program, Bonuses page, <http://www.fldoe.org/etp/bonuses.asp>;

<sup>6</sup> Idem.

<sup>7</sup> Florida Department of Education Web site, Dale Hickam Excellent Teaching Program, Substantive Programmatic Changes page, slide 2, <http://www.fldoe.org/etp/pdf/dhetp-08-legislative-changes.pdf>.

will be prorated at the greatest percent possible based on available budget, and mentoring bonuses will not be paid.<sup>8</sup>

## **LOCAL INCENTIVES**

A number of Florida school districts have established local incentives to encourage teachers to become certified by the NBPTS. The types of incentives vary by district and may include salary supplements, additional leave days to work on required portfolios, and/or award of in-service points toward state recertification. The tables in Attachments 1 and 2 summarize the numbers of NBPTS certified teachers in Florida school districts during the 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 school years, disaggregated to Career and Technical Education (CTE) Teachers and non-Career and Technical Education (non-CTE) teachers and the types of incentives provided by the local school district.<sup>9</sup>

According to Crystal Spikes, Director of the Excellent Teaching Program, district incentives vary from year to year but her office does not maintain a current listing of incentives. However, there is a listing of incentives provided by Florida School Districts included on the NBPTS website. That Web site indicates that only 21 Florida school districts provide any incentives beyond what is provided by the federal and state governments. Those incentives vary from providing support systems to assist teachers to meet the requirements to become NBPTS certified (Marion) to paying a salary supplement of \$2,500 per year for the ten year life of the certification (Duval).<sup>10</sup>

It is difficult to determine whether the local incentives achieve their goal of encouraging teachers to become NBPTS certified because there is no apparent correlation between the incentives provided by the district and the percentage of teachers in that district who are NBPTS certified. For 2007-2008, the percentages of CTE teachers and non-CTE teachers that are NBPTS certified in the district with the greatest salary supplement (Duval, with \$25,000 over a ten year period) are the same as the statewide average percentages, four percent and five percent respectively. In the Brevard and Leon school districts, which do not pay salary supplements, the 2007-2008 percentages of CTE and non-CTE teachers that were NBPTS certified were seven percent and eight percent, respectively.

For the 2006-07 and 2007-08 school years, the percentages of Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers who are NBPTS certified compares very favorably on a statewide basis with the percentages of non-CTE teachers so certified. Table A, on page 5, compares the certification percentages for the two years with data including teachers in “special districts” (e.g., university laboratory schools).

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<sup>8</sup> Florida Department of Education Web site, Dale Hickam Excellent Teaching Program, Substantive Programmatic Changes page, slide 3, <http://www.fldoe.org/etp/pdf/dhetp-08-legislative-changes.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> Teacher data for 2006-07 and 2007-08 provided by the Education Data Warehouse are included in Attachments 1 & 2, respectively.

<sup>10</sup> Local Incentives Supporting National Board Certification in Florida, extracted from the NBPTS Web site, is included in Attachment 3.

**Table A. Comparison of Percentages of CTE and non-CTE Teachers Who Are National Board Certified, Including Teachers in “Special Districts”**

Types of Teachers	2006-2007			2007-2008		
	Number	NBPTS	Percentage	Number	NBPTS	Percentage
CTE	11,300	507	4.49%	11,380	477	4.19%
Non-CTE	45,064	2,513	5.58%	47,388	2,453	5.18%
Total	56,364	3,020	5.36%	58,768	2,930	4.99%

Source: PK-20 Education Data Warehouse, 8/12/09 (EDW 428).

Table B compares the certification percentages for the two years, with data excluding teachers in “special districts.”

**Table B. Comparison of Percentages of CTE and non-CTE Teachers Who Are National Board Certified, Excluding Teachers in “Special Districts”**

Types of Teachers	2006-2007			2007-2008		
	Number	NBPTS	Percentage	Number	NBPTS	Percentage
CTE	11,192	495	4.42%	11,279	467	4.14%
Non-CTE	44,519	2,433	5.47%	46,827	2,383	5.09%
Total	55,711	2,928	5.26%	58,106	2,850	4.90%

Source: PK-20 Education Data Warehouse, 8/12/09 (EDW 428).

### Teachers of CTE Courses

In 2007-2008, the latest year for which data are available, 46 Florida school districts did not provide any type of local incentive for teachers to be NBPTS certified. Thirty-three of those 46 districts reported employing at least one NBPTS certified teacher instructing in their CTE courses. The percentages of NBPTS certified teachers in those CTE courses ranged from 0% (numerous) to as high as 13% (Lafayette) but 12 of the 33 districts had only one NBPTS certified teacher instructing in their CTE courses.

### Teachers of Non-CTE Courses

Thirty-eight of the 46 districts with no local incentives reported employing at least one NBPTS certified teacher instructing in their non-CTE courses. The percentages of NBPTS certified teachers in those non-CTE courses ranged from 0% (numerous) to as high as nine percent (Hardee and Seminole) but seven of the 38 districts had just one NBPTS certified teacher instructing in their non-CTE courses.<sup>11</sup>

## **AREAS OF CERTIFICATION**

Teachers may achieve NBPTS certification in any one or more of 26 curriculum areas. As expected, in both the 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 school years, the majority of NBPTS certified

<sup>11</sup> Locally produced Excel spreadsheet combining data from PK-20 Education Data Warehouse, 8/12/09 (EDW 428), provided by the Education Data Warehouse, with data from National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Web site, Resources – Florida page, [http://www.nbpts.org/resources/state\\_local\\_information/FL](http://www.nbpts.org/resources/state_local_information/FL) (See Attachment 4).

teachers who were teaching CTE courses were certified in Career and Technical Education and the majority of NBPTS certified teachers teaching non-CTE courses were certified in other subjects. However, there was some crossover. Some CTE certified teachers taught non-CTE courses and some non-CTE certified teachers taught CTE courses.

2006-2007

Among the NBPTS certified teachers teaching CTE courses in 2006-2007, 54% were certified in the CTE area. Of the remainder, 27% were certified in basic academic (English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign languages) areas. An additional 13% of those teachers were certified in Special Education (see Table C.).

Among the NBPTS certified teachers teaching non-CTE courses in 2006-2007, only four percent were certified in the CTE area. Most (68%) were certified in basic academic areas and 16% were certified in Special Education. A few teachers teaching in both the CTE and non-CTE course areas were certified in other areas, including art and music, physical education, and counseling.

**Table C. Percentages of Teachers Certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards During the 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 School Years, By Certification Areas**

National Board Certification Areas for Teachers Teaching in the Identified Course Areas	2006-2007		2007-2008	
	Course Areas		Course Areas	
	CTE	Non-CTE	CTE	Non-CTE
Career and Technical Education	54.24%	3.57%	54.64%	3.71%
Art and Music	1.58%	6.22%	1.48%	9.92%
English Language Arts & Literacy	8.48%	22.68%	6.54%	24.42%
Special Education	13.21%	16.14%	15.19%	6.87%
Early & Middle Childhood	3.35%	3.43%	4.22%	4.31%
Library Science	0.00%	0.28%	0.00%	0.16%
Mathematics	2.17%	16.32%	1.69%	17.38%
Physical Education	0.20%	1.59%	0.21%	1.62%
Counseling	0.00%	0.18%	0.00%	0.12%
Science	12.23%	12.86%	10.55%	14.34%
Social Studies	4.34%	10.95%	5.49%	11.58%
Foreign Languages	0.20%	5.79%	0.00%	5.57%
Totals	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: PK-20 Education Data Warehouse, 8/12/09 (EDW 428) (See Attachment 5).

2007-2008

Among the NBPTS certified teachers teaching CTE courses in 2007-2008, 55% were certified in the CTE area. Of the remainder, 24% were certified in basic academic (English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and foreign languages) areas. An additional 15% of those teachers were certified in Special Education.

Among the NBPTS certified teachers teaching non-CTE courses in 2007-2008, again only four percent were certified in the CTE area. Most (72%) were certified in basic academic areas and only seven percent were certified in Special Education. From 2006-2007 to 2007-2008, the number of Special Education certified teachers teaching non-CTE courses dropped from 457 to 174.

## **SUMMARY**

The purpose of the Dale Hickam Excellent Teaching Program has been changed from the original intent to provide bonuses for teachers who achieved National Board certification and mentored non-Board certified teachers to simply rewarding Florida public school teachers who attain National Board certification. State funds to assist candidates to pay a portion of the costs of becoming National Board certified have been deleted from the budget. As a result, candidates must pay the \$65.00 processing charge and half of the \$2,500.00 assessment fee. A limited number of scholarships are available for candidates to help defray those costs.

Less than half of Florida's school districts provide any type of incentive for teachers to become National Board certified. The local incentives range from providing support systems to aid candidates to meet certification requirements to annual salary subsidies of up to \$2,500.00. There is no apparent correlation between the district subsidies and the percentage of teachers in the district who are National Board certified. At least one district (Gilchrist) has made provisions for providing an incentive but report having no National Board certified teachers in its employ. On the other hand, many of the districts that have no local incentive report employing one or more National Board certified teachers.

Secondary teachers who are teaching CTE courses are about as likely as secondary teachers teaching non-CTE courses to be National Board certified. In 2006-2007, four percent of all teachers of CTE courses and six percent of all teachers of Non-CTE courses were National Board certified. In 2007-2008, those percentages were four percent and five percent, respectively.

In those two school years, 54% and 55%, respectively, of the National Board certified teachers who were teaching CTE courses were certified in Career and Technical Education. However, 24% in 2006-2007 and 27% in 2007-2008 were National Board certified in basic academic areas, and another 13% and 15%, respectively, were certified in Special Education. A small percentage (less than four percent both years) of National Board certified teachers who were teaching non-CTE courses were certified in the CTE area.

Five Attachments:

1. 2006-2007 Comparison of CTE and non-CTE Teacher with NBPTS certification, by district;
2. 2007-2008 Comparison of CTE and non-CTE Teacher with NBPTS certification, by district;

3. Local Incentives Supporting National Board certification in Florida;
4. 2007-2008 Comparison of CTE and non-CTE Teachers With National Board certification, by district; and
5. National Board certification comparisons between CTE and non-CTE Teachers, by Curriculum Area, for 2006-2007 and 2007-2008.