

May 1, 2009

SUBJECT: 2009-2010 National Board Certification Federal Subsidies

TO THE ADMINISTRATOR ADDRESSED:

The Texas Education Agency is pleased to announce that federal funds for National Board Certification are now available for the 2009-2010 cycle for teachers, librarians, and counselors who may be interested in applying for the candidate subsidy program. The funds are provided through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education and are disbursed on a first come, first serve basis. Priority, however, is given to teachers from high poverty/low performing school districts.

National Board Certification is the highest symbol of professional teaching excellence. The certification:

- § **Recognizes achievement for both the teacher and their students;**
- § **Strengthens and reaffirms teaching strategies;**
- § **Adds credibility to the teaching profession;**
- § **Represents the profession's highest standards; and,**
- § **Positively impacts student learning.**

National Board Certification is available in twenty-five (25) subject areas and school counseling. In order to seek National Board Certification, a teacher, librarian, or counselor must meet the following requirements **prior to applying**: (1) Hold a bachelor's degree, (2) Have completed three full years of teaching/counseling experience, and (3) Possess a valid state teaching/counseling license for that period of time, or, if teaching where a license is not required, have taught in schools recognized and approved to operate by the state.

- § First-time candidate fees can be subsidized for up to one-half of the \$2,500 fee (\$1,250 per candidate). The application for a federal subsidy must be submitted no later than **December 31, 2009**.
- § A candidate cannot apply for a federal subsidy until a candidate number has been assigned by NBPTS and an initial payment of \$500 has been made to NBPTS.
- § Federal subsidy funds cannot be allocated to a candidate who has previously utilized subsidy funding.
- § Retake candidates *who have not previously received* subsidy funds can receive subsidy funds of up to \$350 per exercise for up to two retake exercises. *Both exercises must be taken within the same candidate cycle.* Applications for retake candidates must be submitted no later than **January 31, 2010**.
- § Federal subsidy funds cannot be allocated to NBCTs seeking certification renewal.
- § Federal subsidy funds cannot be used for *Take One!*® participants.
- § **Some** school districts in the state offer additional support and/or incentives for candidates and National Board Certified Teachers. Go to: www.npbts.org and click on the "Become a Candidate" tab.

Instructions to apply for National Board Certification can be found at: www.sbec.state.tx.us under the **Master Teacher Programs** link. If additional information is needed, please email: glendelia.zavala@tea.state.tx.us or call (512) 463-6443.

Sincerely,

Glendelia M. Zavala, Ed.D.

Manager, Educator Initiatives and Performance