

## **National Board of Professional Teaching Standards: Building the Accomplished ESL and Bilingual Teacher Voice in New York State**

*by Colleen Glahe and Melanie Pores*

Are you looking for a way to bring your teaching practice to a whole new level? Just as doctors, lawyers, and accountants are encouraged to become Board-certified to improve their practice, educators can also commit to elevating their teaching practice by going through the National Board Certification (NBC) process. This process, an organized, well-researched, standards-based inquiry into accomplished teaching practice, is performance based and voluntary.

There are two certifications options for English as a New Language (ENL)—ENL Early Childhood and Middle Childhood, and ENL Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood. Within each of these options, there are paths for either bilingual teachers or English language development specialists. There are currently 1,466 teachers nationwide (26 teachers in New York State) with this certification, and the number grows every year.

The process requires candidates to demonstrate, analyze, and reflect upon their teaching performance with: two recordings of classroom interactions, submission of student work samples, comprehensive self-reflection of teaching practice, and an assessment of content knowledge. It is important to know that the standards, portfolios, and assessments were created by practitioners with a high level of current experience in our bilingual and ESL field. For this reason, every part of the process is directly applicable to the content and students you are working with *right now*.

There are compelling reasons to consider the National Board Certification process:

- **Relevance.** National Board Certification is completely aligned with New York State Teaching Standards and New York State's Annual Performance Professional Review (APPR). In fact, the NBPTS was one of several sources used when the NYS teaching standards were created in 2009.
- **Opportunity.** National Board Certification provides an exciting pathway for teachers to progress along a teacher-leader continuum. National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) are often invited to serve as mentors, coaches, and in a variety of other roles in their districts. Some teachers use it as a portable teaching license across states. Teachers with NBC may also serve as faculty members in New York State institutions of higher education.
- **Recognition.** Recognition of accomplished teaching can provide public distinction for you, your students, and your school.

There are many organizations to support you:

- NYSUT's National Board Fact Sheet includes "everything you wanted to know about NBC, but were afraid to ask!" [NYSUT.org/nationalboard](http://nysut.org/nationalboard)
- With the Albert Shanker Grant, the NYSED is currently offering financial support to defray certification costs:  
<http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/resteachers/albertshanker.html>
- NYSUT/Teacher Center-based Awareness Sessions and Regional Writing Institutes
- National Board Candidate Support: 1-800-22-TEACH, [www.nbpts.org](http://www.nbpts.org)

For more information on how to get started, please contact:

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- National Board Council of New York Network, <http://nbcny.org>

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