



VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item: J

Date: February 27, 2025

Title: First and Final Review of Guidelines for Distributing National Board Certification Incentive Awards

Presenter: Mr. Rob Gilstrap, Assistant Superintendent of Human Capital

Purpose of Presentation

At the business session on December 3, the Board indicated their desire to provide National Board Certification Incentive funding pursuant to current FY 2025 budget language in different phases and to move forward with the first round of payment to teachers who have earned their National Board Certification immediately.

Bonuses for these teachers are \$5,000 the first year of the certificate and \$2,500 annually thereafter for the life of the certificate. The total amount distributed in that first round was \$4,305,000, which leaves \$692,500 left from the General Assembly's FY 25 appropriation of \$4,997,500.

The Board also requested that staff provide a recommendation at their February meeting for the distribution of remaining funds to other public school staff members and qualified individuals in specific schools as outlined in the FY 2025 budget language.

Executive Summary

As of 2/14/2025

Position Type	Count
Administrator	35
Central Office Support	33
Classroom Teacher	1628
Other-Support	21
(blank)	
Grand Total	1717

Total Incentive Awards:

1613 Continuing Awards (\$2500)

104 Initial Awards (\$5000)

Total Amount Awarded for Incentive: \$4,552,500

Total Increase from January Incentive Awards: \$247,500*

NBCT Candidate Breakdown:

Initial Fee: 128

MOC Fee: 29

Total: 157

Range: \$495 - \$1900

11 School Divisions Submitted

82 Schools

Total Candidate Funding Requested: \$229,180

Budget Breakdown:

Total Requested Funding for All Incentive Awards: \$4,552,500

Total Requested Funding for NBCT Candidates: \$229,180

Total Requested All Categories: **\$4,781,680**

Total Budget: \$4,995,000

Total Remaining: **\$213,320**

As of 2/14/2025, 95 school divisions have submitted data.

*Initial Awards were made in January. When Candidates were added, Divisions were allowed to adjust their initial and continuing submissions for Incentive Awards. This amount was \$247,500.

Individuals interested in seeking National Board Certification must have earned a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution, have completed three years of full-time teaching experience, and have held a valid state license without deficiencies (not an interim or emergency license) during the three years of employment, possess a valid five-year Virginia license, and be employed as a public-school teacher in a Virginia public school.

[Current State Board of Education Guidelines for Distributing National Board Certification Incentive Awards.](#)

REVISIONS TO THE GUIDELINES FOR DISTRIBUTING NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION INCENTIVE AWARDS

Draft to be considered by the Board of Education on February 27, 2025

Eligibility Criteria for the National Board Certification Incentive Awards

1. An individual seeking a National Board Certification Incentive Award must:
 - a. hold an active National Board Certificate issued by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and be employed in a public school in Virginia on September 30 of the current school year; **and**
 - b. be a public-school employee holding an active ten-year renewable license issued by the Virginia Board of Education; **or**
 - c. be a candidate working in a Title 1 school or a school eligible for participation in the Community Eligibility Provision pursuant to § 22.1-207.4:1 and who is pursuing initial national certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards; **or**
 - d. be a candidate working in a Title 1 school or a school eligible for participation in the Community Eligibility Provision pursuant to § 22.1-207.4:1 who is pursuing Maintenance of Certification (MOC) from the National Board for Professional Teaching.

Procedures to fill all awards

1. After funding active National Board Certified teachers, the first priority for funding will continue to be for existing classroom teachers new to NBCTIA. If there are remaining funds, the next funded group would be Title 1 and CEP teachers who are candidates for National Board Certification. If there are still remaining funds, the last category would be other public-school employees who meet the eligibility criteria as of September 30 of each year and whose names are reported to the Virginia Department of Education.
2. Funds will be distributed to employing school divisions on or before December 31 of the same school year for distribution to their eligible classroom teachers, candidates, and/or staff, where applicable. The incentive payment is taxable to the recipient, and the school division assumes responsibility for ensuring all taxes are remitted.
3. The procedure for disbursement of incentive awards following a year when no funds are appropriated or available, but funding is added later shall be as follows:
 - a. A classroom teacher who meets the criteria for an initial award would be granted such an award once funds are available; and
 - b. An individual who meets the criteria for a continuing award would be granted such an award once funds are available with classroom teachers and then Title 1

and CEP teachers who are candidates for National Board Certification. Last to be awarded would be all other public-school employees who meet the eligibility criteria as of September 30 of each year and whose names are reported to the Virginia Department of Education.

- c. Awards for previous fiscal years when funds were not available would not be granted.

Eligibility Criteria for National Board Pursuit Funding

CODE OF VIRGINIA 22.1-299.2 NATIONAL TEACHER CERTIFICATION INCENTIVE REWARD PROGRAM AND FUND

A. From such funds as may be appropriated for such purpose and from such gifts, donations, grants, bequests, and other funds as may be received on its behalf, there is hereby established the National Teacher Certification Incentive Reward Program (the "Program"), to be administered by the Board of Education, and a special nonreverting fund within the state treasury known as the National Teacher Certification Incentive Reward Program Fund (the "Fund"). The Fund shall be established on the books of the Comptroller, and any moneys remaining in the Fund at the end of the biennium shall not revert to the general fund but shall remain in the Fund. Interest earned on such funds shall remain in the Fund and be credited to it.

The State Treasurer shall manage the Fund, subject to the authority of the Board of Education to provide for its disbursement. The Fund shall be disbursed to award incentive grants to public school teachers obtaining national certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

To the extent funds are available in the Fund, teachers who obtain national certification shall receive an initial state-funded award of \$5,000 and a subsequent award of \$2,500 each year for the life of the certificate. Such awards shall continue to be paid upon renewal of the certificate. **The Board shall establish procedures for determining amounts of awards if the moneys in the Fund are not sufficient to award each eligible teacher the appropriate award amount.**

B. The Board may issue guidelines governing the Program as it deems necessary and appropriate.

Budget Language from the 2024 Legislation Session

F.1. It is the intent of the General Assembly that the Department of Education provide bonuses from state funds to classroom teachers in Virginia's public schools who have obtained national certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and grants for candidates working in a Title I school or a school eligible for participation in the Community Eligibility Provision pursuant to § 22.1-207.4:1 who are candidates for initial national

certification or maintenance of national certification (MOC) from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. This appropriation includes an amount estimated at \$4,997,500 the first year and \$4,997,500 the second year from the general fund for the purpose of paying these bonuses and grants. The Board shall establish procedures for determining amounts of awards if the moneys are not sufficient to award each eligible teacher the appropriate award amount.

2. Any public-school staff member who has obtained national certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards shall be eligible to receive an initial grant award of \$5,000 and a subsequent award of \$2,500 each year for the life of the certificate.

3. Any candidate (i) working in a Title 1 school or a school eligible for participation in the Community Eligibility Provision pursuant to § 22.1-207.4:1 and (ii) who is pursuing initial national certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is eligible to apply to the Department for a grant to cover (a) half of the total initial national certification fee, equal to the sum of the cost of the four components and the registration fee for initial national certification, to be disbursed upon initial registration for such certification and (b) the remaining half of such total initial national certification fee to be disbursed upon successful achievement of initial national certification as verified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

4. Any candidate (i) working in a Title 1 school or a school eligible for participation in the Community Eligibility Provision pursuant to § 22.1-207.4:1 and (ii) who is pursuing MOC from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is eligible to apply to the Department for an incentive grant to cover the total MOC fee, equal to the sum of the cost of MOC and the registration fee for MOC, to be disbursed upon successful completion of the MOC process as verified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

5. By October 15 of each year, school divisions shall notify the Department of Education of the number of eligible candidates under contract for that school year that hold or are pursuing such certification.

Past Year Allocations

School Year	Number of Continuing Awards	Number of Initial Awards	Awarded Amount
2018-2019	1672	207	\$5,222,500
2019-2020	1732	131	\$4,985,000
2020-2021	1741	131	\$5,007,500
2021-2022	1735	137	\$5,022,500

2022-2023	1680	83	\$4,615,000
2023-2024	1527	108	\$4,357,500

Action Requested

The FY 2025 budget language from the 2024 General Assembly session takes priority over prior Code of Virginia citations. Based on the Board’s discussion at their December 3 business session, it is recommended that the Board amend the Guidelines for Distributing National Board Certification Incentive Awards. VDOE requests to fully award all submitted awards for a total of \$4,781,680. The remaining \$213,320 will be awarded to late submissions through June 30, 2025, at which time the remaining balance will be returned to the General Assembly.

Superintendent’s Recommendation

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education accepts for first review and final review the request to revise the Guidelines for Distributing National Board Certification Incentive Awards.

Rationale for Action

The adopted FY 2025 budget allows the Board to establish procedures for determining amounts of awards if the moneys are not sufficient to award each eligible teacher the appropriate award amount. Due to the changes in the budget language concerning National Board Certification Incentive awards, new guidelines are needed for the VDOE to prioritize funding in the case of a shortfall of funds.

Previous Review or Action

In December 2024, the Board directed the VDOE to make recommendations for the Guidelines for Distributing National Board Certification Incentive Awards and the disbursement of remaining National Board Certification Incentive award monies.

Background Information and Statutory Authority

The CODE OF VIRGINIA 22.1-299.2 NATIONAL TEACHER CERTIFICATION INCENTIVE REWARD PROGRAM AND FUND grants authority to the Board of Education in determining the amount of funding for National Board Certified Teachers. To the extent funds are available in the Fund, teachers who obtain national certification shall receive an initial state-funded award of \$5,000 and a subsequent award of \$2,500 each year for the life of the certificate. Such awards shall continue to be paid upon renewal of the certificate. The Board shall establish procedures for determining amounts of awards if the moneys in the Fund are not sufficient to award each eligible teacher the appropriate award amount.

Stakeholder Engagement

The Board's action for classroom teachers will align with the historical distribution of grants to eligible classroom teachers. The addition of public-school staff and candidates working in Title 1 or a school eligible for CEP will be detailed in the updated guidelines.

Implementation and Communication

Upon adoption by the Board, a written communication will notify each school division of the approval of the change in guidelines for the National Board Certification Teacher Incentive Award.

Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources

The appropriation in the FY 2025 budget includes \$4,997,500 the first year and \$4,997,500 the second year from the general fund for the purpose of paying National Board Certification bonuses and grants. The budget language allows the Board to establish procedures for determining amounts of awards if the moneys are not sufficient to award each eligible teacher the appropriate award amount.

VDOE has the staffing and resources to fulfill the Board's recommended action.