

1,675 Florida Teachers Achieve National Board Certification®

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(Arlington, VA, 12/04/2007)—Teaching quality in Florida classrooms made a substantial gain in 2007 with 1,675 state teachers achieving National Board Certification, according to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

Florida ranked first nationwide in the number of new National Board Certified Teachers® (NBCTs) and ranks second in the total number of teachers who achieved certification over time (10,875). North Carolina is first in the nation with 12,770 NBCTs and South Carolina is third with 5,729 NBCTs.

Specifically, the 2006 – 2007 Florida class exhibits these statistical facts:

- Florida shows an 11 percent increase in the number of teachers who achieved National Board Certification in 2007 over last year.
- NBCTs make up nearly 7 percent of the state's teaching force.
- Thirty-two percent of the state's NBCTs teach in Title I schools.*
- Broward County is the largest school district in the nation in the cumulative total of NBCTs (1,283).
- Eleven Florida school districts ranked among the nation's top 20 in terms of the number of teachers who achieved National Board Certification in 2007 – Broward County-1st (302); Miami-Dade County-3rd (192); Hillsborough County-6th (131); Orange County-7th (95); Brevard County-8th (91); Duval County-9th (88); Palm Beach County-12th (72); Pinellas County-13th (65); Polk County-17th (45); Volusia County-17th (tie) (45); Seminole County-19th (43).
- The state's top five school districts in terms of the cumulative total of NBCTs are: Broward County (1,283), Miami-Dade County (1,134), Hillsborough County (637), Orange County (620) and Palm Beach County (569). NOTE: All NBPTS data are derived from information reported to NBPTS by National Board Certified Teachers and candidates as part of the certification process. *This percentage is based on teachers whose schools could be identified as Title I using NCES criteria.

"I am proud of the nearly 1,700 teachers throughout our state who recently achieved National Board Certification," said Florida Gov. Charlie Crist. "The basis of a quality education begins with the teacher in the classroom. As we grow the number of National Board Certified Teachers, more students will have access to quality teaching and learning."

Florida NBCTs joined the ranks of the nearly 8,500 teachers nationwide who achieved National Board Certification in 2007 – the largest one-year increase in the history of the National Board. Today's announcement represents an 8.6 percent increase over the number of teachers nationwide who earned certification in 2006. The cumulative total of NBCTs stands at 63,821.

Among evidence that the National Board Certified Teacher movement is growing nationally:

- The number of NBCTs has nearly tripled in the past five years (from 23,930 in 2002 to nearly 64,000 in 2007).
- States with the highest number of teachers achieving National Board Certification in 2007 were: Florida (1,675), North Carolina (1,442), South Carolina (651), Illinois (511) and Washington (484).
- Twenty-five states, including the District of Columbia, had at least a 20 percent increase in the number of 2007 NBCTs over the number of teachers who achieved certification in 2006.
- NBCTs make up at least five percent of the total teaching force in five states. They are: North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida and Delaware.
- From 2004 to 2007, the number of NBCTs who earned their certificates in Literacy: Reading – Language Arts has nearly tripled (324 in 2004 to 970 in 2007).
- One out of every 10 teachers who hold National Board Certification teaches math or science.

"National Board Certification is the most prestigious credential a teacher can earn. Like board-certified doctors and accountants, teachers who achieve National Board Certification have met rigorous standards through intensive study, expert evaluation, self-assessment and peer review," said NBPTS President and CEO Joseph A. Aguerrebere. "Research is consistently positive about the impact of National Board Certification on improvements in teacher practice and areas of school improvement critical to raising student achievement."

"We all want to create better schools and improve student learning, and we know that the key is better teaching," said former Georgia Governor Roy E. Barnes, chair of the NBPTS Board of Directors. "National Board Certified Teachers are leading the way in preparing America's diverse student population with the skills needed to compete in the 21st century."

"Talented teachers are transforming the learning environments in our schools," said Janet Knupp, founding president of The Chicago Public Education Fund, a venture philanthropy focused on improving the quality of principals and teachers in Chicago public schools. "Human capital is the biggest lever we can pull to positively impact students, and National Board Certified Teachers are proving their value in classrooms every day."

"A school board's role is to ask, 'What is the best use of teacher talent in a school system?' If we are going to employ teachers, we need to use them as resources to bring about the standardization of teaching excellence," said Anne L. Bryant, executive director, National School Boards Association. "What we have found is that teachers who go through the National Board Certification process become a school district's best change agents to raise the level of classroom instruction which results in greater student achievement."

National Board Certification is a voluntary assessment program designed to recognize and reward great teachers—and make them better. While state licensing systems set basic requirements to teach in each state, NBCTs have successfully demonstrated advanced teaching knowledge, skills and practices. Certification is achieved through a rigorous, performance-based assessment that typically takes one to three years to complete.

As part of the process, teachers build a portfolio that includes student work samples, assignments, videotapes and a thorough analysis of their classroom teaching. Additionally, teachers are assessed on their knowledge of the subjects they teach.

All 50 states, the District of Columbia and more than 700 local school districts recognize National Board Certification as a mark of distinction. For more information about NBPTS and National Board Certification, visit the NBPTS Web site at www.nbpts.org.