

NATIONAL BOARD
for Professional Teaching Standards®

2013
Guide to
National Board
Certification

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INTRODUCTION



Beginning the Journey Toward National Board Certification

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards® (National Board®) is pleased to welcome you to the National Board Certification® process. The *Guide to National Board Certification* introduces you to the assessment process and provides you with useful information as you apply for National Board Certification or certification renewal, or order *Take One!*®.

You are embarking on an exciting, challenging, and rewarding journey. By participating in the National Board Certification process, you are joining tens of thousands of educators in an unprecedented effort to reshape the public's perception of educators, to create more professional and educationally rewarding relationships among educators, to advance the knowledge base of educators, and, ultimately, to improve student learning.

What Is National Board?

National Board is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan, and nongovernmental organization governed by a board of directors, the majority of whom are classroom teachers. It was formed in 1987 by an innovative coalition of teachers, policymakers, and academic and corporate leaders as a vanguard effort to develop professional standards for early childhood, elementary, and secondary school teaching. More information about National Board can be accessed on the National Board website (www.nbpts.org).

National Board Certification is part of the threefold mission of National Board to advance student learning and achievement by

1. establishing the definitive standards and systems for certifying accomplished educators;
2. providing programs and advocating policies that support excellence in teaching and leading;
3. engaging National Board certified teachers and leaders in that process.

This process is unlike the current mandatory systems of state licensing that set entry-level requirements for beginning teachers and school counselors. National Board Certification is a voluntary process developed by teachers, school counselors, and other education stakeholders to recognize experienced educators for the quality of their

practice. National Board Certification signifies that a teacher or school counselor is accomplished, having met challenging professional standards as evidenced by performance-based assessments.

Support for National Board Certification comes from governors, legislators, state and local school boards, teachers' unions, teacher educators, teaching disciplinary and specialty organizations, and business and community leaders. Most important, the National Board is supported by classroom teachers and school counselors. They develop and revise the Standards, score the assessment of performance against those Standards, and make up a majority of the members of the National Board Board of Directors.

Five Core Propositions

The work of National Board is guided by Five Core Propositions. The propositions state what National Board values and believes should be honored in teaching and school counseling. This expression of ideals, "What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do," guides the development of National Board Standards and assessments. Details about each of the Five Core Propositions are available online on the National Board website. Whether or not you become a candidate, you are encouraged to read and reflect on the high level of knowledge, skills, dispositions, and commitments described by these propositions.

“NEA members confirm the positive effects of the National Board Certification process on their classroom practices. And a growing body of research links National Board Certification with improved student learning. There is nothing more important than giving every child a quality education. National Board Certification is an invaluable professional development experience that leads to better teaching and learning.”

Dennis Van Roekel, President
National Education Association (NEA)

A Unique Professional Development Experience

As a teacher or school counselor, you understand that quality teachers and school counselors are key to student learning. And as a professional, you most likely look for ways to acquire greater expertise in your field. National Board Certification has been created to help you meet your goals. The process is regarded as a powerful professional development experience based on high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers and school counselors should know and be able to do.

As a candidate for National Board Certification, you will benefit greatly from your experience. You will

- undergo a process that many candidates describe as the best professional development experience of their lives;
- gain new insights on your practice;
- contribute to the enhancement of teaching and school counseling as professions that are accountable to high standards;
- grow as a professional and develop new ways to help your students learn.

NBCTs become role models and leaders in their schools and districts. Many candidates who achieve National Board Certification tell us that they have earned a greater voice in deciding what happens in the classroom and in their schools. Their school districts and their colleagues often recognize them as leaders of their profession. Most important, however, is the profoundly positive effect that their enhanced professionalism can have on their students. Research now provides evidence that NBCTs are increas-

ing student learning. You can read about this research at the National Board website (www.nbpts.org).

Scholarships and Incentives

Before you apply for National Board Certification or order *Take One!*, be sure to check with your local, district, or state educational officials for incentives available to you. Various states and local school districts have recognized the value of National Board Certification by offering assistance with fees, salary increases, bonuses, or other incentives to teachers and school counselors who achieve National Board Certification. To learn more about how states and school districts support National Board Certification, visit the National Board website. (Note that some states have their own predetermined application dates for funding eligibility.)

You should also learn about the National Board Scholarship Program, which was created through the generosity of corporate and philanthropic communities to support teachers and school counselors who want to seek National Board Certification by offering fee scholarships. Information is available on the National Board website or by calling 1-800-22TEACH (83224). Keep in mind that scholarships are awarded under the guidelines set by the donor, likely on a first-come, first-served basis. Payment of the nonrefundable initial \$500 fee is required for National Board Certification scholarship consideration.

What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do

The Five Core Propositions

1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
2. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.
3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
5. Teachers are members of learning communities.

Take One!

Take One! is a unique offering from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards that provides a standards-based approach for improving teaching practice and links student learning to effective instruction. Participants prepare and submit one video portfolio entry (preselected by National Board) from any of the current certificate areas of National Board Certification. A participant can later transfer the *Take One!* score if he or she pursues National Board candidacy within the allotted time period (see “Transferring *Take One!* Scores” on page 9).

Experience the Benefits of *Take One!*

Take One! improves teaching quality by providing educators with the opportunity to reflect on their own classroom instructional practices within the context of national teaching standards. *Take One!* allows all educators to “sample” National Board Certification—not only to improve their teaching practices within their classrooms and schools, but also to begin the path toward National Board Certification candidacy, if they so choose.

Who Can *Take One!*?

Take One! is available to all **teachers** as well as **induction or preservice teachers, principals, administrators, professors in colleges of education**, and those who provide support for National Board Certification candidates. *Take One!* is classroom-based professional development and requires that educators have access to a pre-K–12 classroom to complete the portfolio entry.

How Does *Take One!* Work?

Take One! aligns practice to professional teaching standards. Participants identify evidence of student learning and make the critical link between teaching practice and student learning gains.

Take One! participants

- study the National Board Standards for their teaching discipline;
- complete a video portfolio entry using a classroom of students to demonstrate accomplished pre-K–12 teaching;

- submit the entry to National Board to be scored, in accordance with the policies of the current National Board assessment program;
- have three opportunities to apply the *Take One!* score to National Board Certification, if eligible to pursue that certification.

Certification Renewal

National Board Certification is awarded for a period of 10 years. NBCTs must complete the certification renewal process before their certification expiration date and may only renew certification in their original certificate area. NBCTs are offered two opportunities to renew their certificate, beginning in their eighth year of certification, but they must apply for certification renewal within the appropriate application periods outlined in Table 4.3—Renewal Calendar on page 22 or in the Certification Renewal Calendar found on the National Board website. NBCTs are encouraged to apply for certification renewal in their eighth year of certification. Therefore, if a candidate applies for but does not achieve certification renewal at their first opportunity, he or she may try again. Once a certificate is renewed, the renewed certification begins upon expiration of the original 10-year National Board Certification, regardless of the date the NBCT® renewed.

NBCTs who are applying to renew their certification must complete a Profile of Professional Growth® (PPG). The PPG differs from the original certification process in many ways. It is a holistic approach in which all components submitted are linked and evaluated. It has been designed so that NBCTs show the connections they make between their continued professional growth and student learning. For more information about the procedure, timeline, and fees for renewal candidates, refer to *Renewal at a Glance* on the National Board website (www.nbpts.org).

WHAT'S NEW?

ePortfolio

National Board has implemented an electronic portfolio submission system known as ePortfolio, which simplifies and enhances the way candidates compile and submit materials for scoring.

Benefits include:

- Extended deadlines for portfolio submission
- A more efficient and secure delivery system
- Elimination of shipping costs for candidates
- The option to use lessons from later in the school year
- Reduced potential for packing and formatting mistakes
- Greater flexibility with regard to the electronic video formats accepted (and no more need to burn DVDs!)
- Specialized technical support available to assist with the upload process

The *Guide to Electronic Submission*, a document providing detailed instructions and policy information, is available on the National Board website (www.nbpts.org).

Take One! Credit

One of the benefits of having completed *Take One!* is the option to transfer a *Take One!* score to full National Board Certification, no matter the score. Candidates who have an eligible *Take One!* score they intend to transfer will receive a credit of \$395 on their account.

If candidates would like to apply their *Take One!* score towards National Board Certification and take advantage of this credit opportunity, first log in to *My Profile* and submit an application for National Board Certification. Next send us a message via Ask NBPTS (accessible in *My Profile*) or by calling 1-800-22TEACH (83224). Upon notification, a credit will be applied to the account, which will reduce the assessment fee.

The Assessment Process

The assessment process for National Board Certification is designed to collect standards-based evidence of accomplished practice. In all certificate areas, candidates for National Board Certification are required to complete two major components: a portfolio of classroom practice and an assessment of content knowledge administered at a computer-based testing center.

The content associated with the portfolio entries is dictated by the context of the candidate's practice; the assessment center exercises are specifically designed to measure fundamental content that is not likely to be demonstrated in portfolio entries. This content, as defined by the National Board Standards, represents the fundamental content understanding that supports quality instruction in the classroom on a daily basis and that should be accessible to the candidate, on demand, to meet and address the needs of students as those needs arise in the classroom. Assessment center exercises are based on content standards for what accomplished teachers (or school counselors) should know.

The Portfolio

Candidates for National Board Certification submit a complete portfolio containing four different entries. Three of these entries are classroom based,* and at least two of these require that you provide video evidence of classroom interactions between you and your students; all three require that you collect student work of particular types. Each portfolio entry requires some direct evidence of teaching (for example, student work samples or video-recorded excerpts from an instructional session) as well as a commentary describing, analyzing, and reflecting on this evidence. In every case, you are required to write a detailed analysis of the instruction reflected in the student work or video.

Take One! participants prepare and submit one video portfolio entry (preselected by National Board) from any of the current certificate areas of National Board Certification. Please access the National Board website (www.nbpts.org) for the complete list of all preselected *Take One!* entries.

*The term "classroom" is used throughout the portfolio materials for all certificate areas as a generic term for a location in which a candidate interacts with students. Not all candidates interact with students in a "typical" classroom setting—it may be a resource room, studio, gymnasium, auditorium, library media center, workshop, outdoors, and so on. The word "classroom" refers to wherever student instruction takes place, regardless of the setting.

In addition to completing the three classroom-based entries, candidates for National Board Certification are required to complete one entry in which work with families and the larger community and with colleagues and the larger profession is documented. This entry requires you to show the impact you have made on student learning through your accomplishments outside of the classroom.

"[National Board Certification] is probably the most important professional development tool that has come along in the last century."

Sharon Draper, National Board Certified Teacher, Ohio,
American Teacher

National Board will send first-time National Board Certification portfolio kits no later than three weeks after receipt of the completed application and nonrefundable initial \$500 fee. National Board will send *Take One!* portfolio kits no later than three weeks after receipt of the completed order form and full payment. The kit includes forms for verifying your eligibility for candidacy (National Board Certification candidates only), a CD-ROM for your certificate area containing the National Board Standards, *Portfolio Instructions*, and a hard copy of the Standards for your certificate area (while supplies last).

You do not need to wait until your materials arrive to begin work on your portfolio. You can begin studying the Standards and the *Portfolio Instructions* for your certificate area by visiting the National Board website. Then you can begin planning for lessons and considering the students you wish to feature in your classroom-based portfolio entry or entries. However, all evidence of your work with students must be gathered during the 12 months before the opening of the submission window.

The portfolio component of the assessment is to be completed before the deadline for portfolio submission—May 31, 2014 (see Table 4.1—2013-2014 National Board Certification Assessment Calendar on page 21). You will be asked to use your current class(es) and students to provide evidence of your practice. The directions for the portfolio are lengthy; you will want to allocate adequate time to read and understand them prior to planning and preparing your specific response to each required entry.

Language Accommodations Policies

We recognize that languages other than English are frequently used in the classroom; therefore, for the following circumstances, the accommodations described are allowed.

Student Work Samples and Video Evidence with Brief Expressions or Phrases in a Language Other than English.

Student work samples and video evidence may include brief expressions or phrases in a language other than English. The inclusion of such expressions or phrases must be limited because assessors do not have fluency in languages other than English. If expressions or phrases in a language other than English that are important for an assessor to understand are included, you must include brief explanations of these expressions or phrases in the Written Commentary.

Student Work Samples and Video Evidence in a Language Other than English. If you are submitting student work samples or video evidence in a language other than English, you must provide a written English translation for the samples or evidence in your entry envelope. The translation must include your candidate ID number, the entry title, and any necessary student identifiers (but do *not* include students' names). Note that the pages of your translation do not count toward your page totals.

Exceptions

- English Language Arts. Candidates seeking certification in this area must submit student work samples and video evidence in English.
- World Languages. Assessors for this certificate area are fluent in English and the target language; therefore translations are only required for documentation that is written in a language other than English or the target language.

If the majority of your instruction takes place with students for whom English is a new language, the appropriate National Board certificate may be either the Early and Middle Childhood/English as a New Language certificate or the Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/English as a New Language certificate. To help you make the decision whether to pursue certification in one of the available certificate areas, discuss your teaching situation with professional colleagues, your school faculty, a National Board Certified Teacher®, your faculty support

group, or a state level official who is involved with a fee-subsidy program.

For more information on submissions in languages other than English, see the *Portfolio Instructions* for your certificate area on the National Board website (www.nbpts.org).

The Assessment Center

In the assessment center portion of the National Board Certification process, candidates demonstrate their content knowledge in response to six exercises developed and designed by practicing professionals in their certificate area. Candidates are given up to 30 minutes to respond to each of the six exercises. These exercises are administered at computer-based testing centers across the United States.

Prior to making an appointment at an assessment center, review the *Assessment Center Policy and Guidelines* on the National Board website for important information about how the assessments are administered and how to prepare for a computer-administered assessment. Candidates are required to be familiar with and adhere to all information and policies found in the *Assessment Center Policy and Guidelines* in advance of scheduling and attending their assessment center appointment(s). The Web Tutorial and Sample Exercise as well as an online tour of a Pearson Professional Center provide an overview of the assessment center experience and are available at the Pearson Vue website (www.pearsonvue.com/nbpts/). In addition, all candidates will complete a tutorial at the assessment center before testing to familiarize themselves with the features and functions of the word processor.

Candidates are responsible for content knowledge as identified by the Standards across the full age range of a selected certificate area (and specialty, if applicable). For example, if you are pursuing certification in the Middle Childhood/Generalist field, the prompts you respond to at the assessment center may ask you to demonstrate content knowledge about students at any age from 7 years through 12 years.

Assessment center exercises are designed to assess your content knowledge, not the textbooks or resource materials that you might have or acquire, nor your ability to use the word processor. Due to the nature of the assessment center exercises and in the interest of equity for all, you are allowed to bring only certain materials into the assessment center on the day of testing. (Note that the option to handwrite responses to the computer-

based assessment center exercises was eliminated for most certificates in 2003.)

“Achieving National Board Certification allowed me to learn more about myself as a teacher than any other workshop or seminar ever could.”

Carole Moyer, National Board Certified Teacher, Early Childhood/Generalist, Salem Elementary, Columbus, Ohio

The assessment center component lasts approximately half a day, including short breaks between exercises. You will be able to make an appointment for a particular day from January 2, 2014, to June 15, 2014, once you have paid the full assessment fee and verified your eligibility to be a 2013–2014 candidate, as shown in Table 4.1—2013–2014 National Board Certification Assessment Calendar on page 21. Once the test centers are ready to accept appointments, you will receive an Authorization to Test that allows you to make the assessment center appointment once all requirements have been met. You are responsible for obtaining all necessary information before arriving at the assessment center.

For complete information about assessment center locations, where to register for an appointment, how to prepare for testing, testing accommodations, and other important details regarding the assessment center component, log in to *My Profile*, and visit the Assessment Center section of *My Profile*.

The National Board is, and has always been, attentive to the issues of fairness and equity in its assessments and continually reviews the assessments to ensure that candidates are not disadvantaged by the content of the assessments or by the process of taking the assessments.

Eligibility

Before you apply for National Board Certification, carefully review the information in Table 1.1—Eligibility Prerequisites for National Board Certification on page 4 to ensure that you are eligible for National Board Certification candidacy. **If you are unsure whether you meet the eligibility prerequisites for candidacy, visit the National Board website or call 1-800-22TEACH (83224) to speak to a member of the customer support**

team. There are no eligibility prerequisites for *Take One!* The only requirement is that educators have access to a pre-K–12 classroom to complete the portfolio entry. Candidates for certification renewal are required to possess a valid current teaching license.

You must meet all eligibility prerequisites for National Board Certification before submitting your application, and you will be required to submit written verification that you satisfy these prerequisites. If, after review of your verification forms, National Board determines that you do not meet eligibility prerequisites for certification, you may be eligible to receive a refund of a portion of your assessment fee in accordance with National Board refund policy. **However, the \$65 application processing charge and the initial \$500 fee will not be refunded.** Candidates in this situation may opt to participate in *Take One!* and transfer their National Board Certification nonrefundable fee to their *Take One!* account. Please call 1-800-22TEACH (83224) for details.

Once your application and initial \$500 fee are received, National Board will send you a portfolio kit that includes forms that must be completed to verify employment, licensure, and education eligibility requirements. Your completed forms must be received at National Board by January 31, 2014.

You should submit your completed forms as soon as possible so that you will be able to schedule an appointment for the assessment center on the day of your choice. **Candidates who do not submit completed verification forms will not be allowed to take the assessment center exercises, will not have their portfolios scored, and will not receive a score report.**

You are responsible for confirming receipt of these forms by National Board. After submitting your forms, allow 7–10 days for processing and then check the status of your eligibility online by accessing *My Profile* (www.nbpts.org/myprofile), your personal, password-protected website.

In addition to meeting eligibility prerequisites, candidates must submit the full \$2,500 assessment fee and must meet all published deadlines to be eligible for certification.

Table 1.1—Eligibility Prerequisites for National Board Certification

To be eligible for National Board Certification, you must submit proof that you meet the education, employment, and licensure requirements described below. Candidates for certification renewal must possess a valid, current teaching license. (*Note:* There are no eligibility prerequisites for *Take One!*) You must meet all eligibility requirements prior to submitting your application. Candidates are strongly urged to call 1-800-22TEACH (83224) to clarify these rules prior to applying and making any payment. The rules for meeting eligibility for candidacy have been clarified in this *Guide*, but teaching situations across the country vary widely, and the rules may not address your particular circumstances.

A) Do you possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution?

An accredited institution is defined as one that is authorized or accepted by a state as fulfilling the state's educational requirement for initial teaching licensure or school counseling licensure. A teacher or school counselor with a degree awarded by an institution outside the United States must submit proof that the degree is equivalent to a baccalaureate either by submitting transcripts to an organization that belongs to the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (see www.naces.org/members.htm) or by submitting documentation to National Board confirming that the state in which you teach or serve as a school counselor has accepted the degree for licensure requirements.

B) Have you completed three years of successful teaching in one or more early childhood, elementary, middle, or secondary schools? Applicants for ECYA/School Counseling must have completed three years of successfully serving as a school counselor.

- The three years of employment experience must have been completed prior to submitting your application.
- The employment must have occurred in one or more facilities located within the United States or at an institution accredited by one of 17 agencies recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education. For a list of these agencies, access www.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg6.html. Candidates should check individual agency websites for the most current contact information.

Table 1.1—Eligibility Prerequisites for National Board Certification

The following activities do not count toward the teaching or counseling prerequisite:

- time spent in administrative positions
- student teaching or teaching internships (or student practica or school counseling internships)
- employment as a teacher’s assistant
- employment under an intern or a similar teaching license
- teaching or school counseling done at the postsecondary level (e.g., community college or university/college); teachers or counselors with students who are over the age of 18 years must be teaching at the pre-K–12 level and in pre-K–12 settings (e.g., vocational classes in a high school setting), not in a community college or university/college

Teachers in administrative positions or those teaching in the adult learner community may pursue National Board Certification only if they are able to provide evidence of classroom teaching with pre-K–12 students between the time NBPTS receives the application and the portfolio submission date.

Part-Time or Substitute Teaching

Teachers who have taught part time are eligible, provided that they have teaching employment that is the equivalent of three years of full-time teaching. Substitute teachers may count teaching time spent in long-term assignments toward the three years; substitute teaching that consisted of short-term or on-call assignments does not accrue toward the three years.

Part-Time School Counseling

If you serve as a school counselor part time, you are eligible to be an ECYA/School Counseling candidate, provided your counseling employment is equivalent to three years of full-time counseling.

C) Have you held a valid state teaching license (or met the licensure requirements established by your state for a “school counselor” and held that valid license if you applied for the ECYA/School Counseling certificate) for each of the three years of employment you verify? Employment under an intern or a similar teaching license does not meet the licensure prerequisite.

Your state teaching or school counseling license must have been unencumbered (e.g., not suspended or revoked) while you were employed as a teacher or school counselor. Teachers who are or were employed in a facility that requires a state-issued license must hold a valid license during their candidacy period.

If part or all of the employment you are verifying was served at a facility in which a state teaching or school counseling license was not required (e.g., private school, parochial school, school outside the United States, or early childhood facility), you must submit this information when verifying your eligibility.

Scoring

How National Board Assessments Are Evaluated and Scored

Standards-Based Criteria

National Board Certification, certification renewal, and *Take One!* assessments are scored against National Board Standards. National Board Standards emphasize that accomplished teachers in every field and at every level are aware of what they are doing as they teach and why they are doing it. This shows itself in the teacher's ability to set high and appropriate goals for student learning, to connect worthwhile learning experiences to those goals, and to articulate the connections between the goals and the experiences. They are conscious of where they want student learning to go and how they want to help students get there. Accomplished teachers and school counselors also show the ability to analyze classroom interactions, student work products, and their own actions and plans to reflect on their practice and continually renew and reconstruct their goals and strategies.

All scoring is based on the evidence candidates submit—video evidence, student work samples, analyses, and responses to assessment center prompts (National Board Certification only). Each source offers an opportunity to see the candidates at work and to evaluate their practice in light of conscious, deliberate, analytical, and reflective criteria. No single approach to teaching or school counseling is mandated by the National Board Standards or rewarded by the scoring process. Indeed, several different pedagogical approaches characterize the teachers and school counselors who have achieved National Board Certification. However, in every case, NBCTs demonstrate the analytical and reflective abilities defined in the Standards.

The *Scoring Guide for Candidates* articulates the criteria by which each portfolio entry and assessment center exercise will be scored. Candidates are urged to read these criteria (which include the scoring rubrics) carefully and think about them as they prepare. *Take One!* participants should review only the *Scoring Guide* specific to their *Take One!* entry. The scoring criteria are directly tied to the National Board Standards and serve as the basis for the scoring process used by assessors.

National Board Assessors

All responses are evaluated by teachers or school counselors who have completed an intensive training workshop and have qualified as assessors by demonstrating an understanding of the National Board Standards, the directions to candidates, and the scoring guides or rubrics. Teachers and school counselors, especially those who have achieved National Board Certification, are invited to apply to serve as assessors. The recruitment process includes access to such sources as professional organizations, teacher and school counselor colleagues, NBCTs, and teacher-recognition programs. See “Scored by Your Peers” below for qualifications. Certification renewal submissions are scored only by NBCTs.

Scored by Your Peers

The National Board Certification and *Take One!* assessments are scored by classroom teachers or school counselors. Seventeen assessors will evaluate most National Board Certification submissions. Assessors who score candidate responses must meet the following qualifications:

- possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution
- have a minimum of three years of successful teaching experience (or school counseling experience in the case of the ECYA/School Counseling assessment)
- be current in the certificate area domains for which they score responses
- successfully complete assessor training provided by National Board and qualify as an assessor prior to scoring
- hold a valid teaching license as required by the state in which they are actively teaching (or a valid school counseling license to score the ECYA/School Counseling assessment)
- must be an NBCT in the certificate area domain being evaluated (for certification renewal)

Policies and Procedures for Scoring

Reliability, Accuracy, and Fairness

National Board has conducted analyses each year to determine the level of assessor reliability (i.e., the level of agreement between independent assessors). The results of these reliability analyses have consistently indicated that National Board assessors are making reliable, accurate, and fair evaluations of candidates' responses. National Board

- remains dedicated to consistently evaluating its assessments and the assessment process, with a goal of continuous improvement;
- is committed to making sure that its assessments are valid and meaningful and that the scoring of candidates' responses is reliable, accurate, and fair;
- is confident that its scoring practices will continue to yield reliable, accurate, and fair scores.

Scoring Criteria

Each response (to a portfolio entry or assessment center exercise) in certificate areas that are offered for the first time will be scored by two independent assessors, as will responses from all retake candidates. One or more assessors will score each of the 10 National Board Certification responses for certificate areas that have been offered for more than one year, with at least one portfolio entry and all assessment center exercises being scored by two assessors. Therefore, most National Board Certification candidate submissions are scored by 17 classroom teachers (or school counselors for the ECYA/School Counseling certificate). One or more assessors will score each *Take One!* submission. One or more NBCTs will evaluate each renewal submission.

Candidates are required to demonstrate practices in one of the current certificate-area fields. Performances that demonstrate work with students who are not in the certificate areas (i.e., students who do not fit the content-area or age parameters) will not be scored.

Candidates who work as members of a team of teachers or school counselors have an excellent opportunity to collaborate with their peers. However, please note that each candidate must submit original work that includes his or her individual responses. If a candidate submits materials identical in any way to those of another candidate, both candidates' score reports will be withheld until a determination of disqualification is made (see the "Denial or Revocation of Certification" policy on page 10). In accordance with the policy, the organization or entity funding the candidate's certification assessment fee, if any, will be notified of disqualification decision(s) and the reason(s).

Scoring Results and Feedback

Official scores are released only to National Board Certification candidates, certification renewal candidates, and *Take One!* participants via *My Profile* on the National Board website. Candidates and participants are able to print their official score report online. All 2013-2014 candidates and participants will receive their score results on or before December 31, 2014. All certification renewal candidates will be notified by November 2014.

National Board Certification is a standards-based assessment. A candidate's score reflects the degree to which assessors were able to locate clear, consistent, and convincing evidence that the candidate has met the Standards specific to his or her certificate field. The number of ways to certify is infinite, and all are based on meeting the Standards.

National Board provides standardized feedback to candidates who receive a score less than 3.75 on a portfolio entry. These statements may provide insight to candidates about the quality of their entries. Refer to the *Scoring Guide for Candidates* at the National Board website (www.nbpts.org).

The reliability of the scores assigned to the performance of candidates (both National Board Certification and certification renewal candidates) and *Take One!* participants is contingent upon maintaining the standardized scoring protocols that National Board has developed and refined since the certification program was first offered. For this reason, all scoring events occur under the direction of experienced trainers and content specialists who are tasked with ensuring that the integrity of the process is maintained. Before candidates submit their entries for scoring, assessors who have served at a scoring site for National Board, especially NBCTs, may be willing to provide supportive, constructive feedback to candidates regarding their performance. It would be inappropriate, however, for any person who has served as a member of the National Board scoring staff to make a judgment about the score that a performance should be given if reviewed outside of a formal scoring session. Candidates are cautioned against relying too heavily on the opinions of support providers, professional associates, or others who may have served as a member of the scoring staff for National Board. National Board assessors sign a statement agreeing that they will not give their opinions about the potential score that might be assigned to a performance when reviewing candidate performances outside of the scoring session.

Complete Score Profile Required for National Board Certification

A final Total Weighted Scaled Score will be computed only for candidates who have submitted scorable responses to **all** of the portfolio entries and assessment center exercises. While it is possible for a candidate to meet the performance standard of 275 points or more without completing all entries and exercises, candidates who do not submit responses to all of the portfolio entries and assessment center exercises for a certificate area will have an incomplete score profile. National Board Certification cannot be earned by candidates with incomplete score profiles. (Note that portfolio entries and/or assessment center exercises not submitted by first-time candidates will be subject to retake fees and policies in the 24-month period following the initial attempt.)

A final Total Weighted Scaled Score is not calculated for *Take One!* participants, nor is there a way to “achieve” *Take One!*. Only the entry score is reported to *Take One!* participants.

Score Banking and Entry/Exercise Retakes

National Board offers automatic banking of the individual portfolio entry and assessment center exercise scores for National Board Certification candidates. Candidates may continue to attempt certification for a period not to exceed 24 months from the date on a candidate’s initial score report. During this 24-month period, any candidate who did not achieve certification during his or her initial attempt may retake any combination of portfolio entries and/or assessment center exercises on which he or she did not meet the individual entry or exercise performance standard. *Take One!* participants may apply their score to their National Board Certification record (in the same certificate area), provided they apply for National Board Certification within the three allotted application opportunities following receipt of their *Take One!* score.

Portfolio entry and assessment center exercise responses that are submitted in accordance with the National Board’s score-banking and retake policy and procedures will be scored. If a retake candidate does not submit the selected entries or exercises, the original score stands. The highest numeric score—whether it is the original score or the retake score—is used to compute the Total Weighted Scaled Score. A candidate’s Total Weighted Scaled Score will be recalculated and, if the candidate’s Total Weighted Scaled Score then meets or exceeds the performance standard established by the National Board, the candidate will achieve National Board Certification. However, if a retake

candidate receives a Not Scorable (NS) due to disqualification or due to a portfolio entry overlap with a previous submission, a previous score does not carry forward. This policy is effective for all candidates scored in 2010 and beyond. A candidate will be charged a fee of \$350 for each portfolio entry or assessment center exercise that he or she chooses to retake. A nonrefundable \$15 processing charge is also required at the time a candidate submits an application to retake. (Note that candidates in certificate areas that require a declared specialty area must retest within the same specialty area when retaking portfolio entries and/or assessment center exercises.)

Candidates who elect to retake portfolio entries and/or assessment center exercises are expected to submit responses by the deadlines established for the National Board Certification year in which they choose to apply. However, if a retake candidate is unable to meet this deadline, he or she may choose to defer submitting a new response until the next assessment cycle, provided he or she is still eligible to retake. *Take One!* participants may also opt to defer their entry submission until the next assessment cycle, provided their accounts are fully paid and that any third-party payer (if applicable) permits use of the deferment option. Certification renewal candidates can also opt to defer submission of their PPG until the next assessment cycle, provided their accounts are fully paid and they are still eligible for renewal. Those choosing a deferment option will be assessed a \$125 reactivation fee. (Retake candidates will be charged \$125 for each portfolio entry or assessment center exercise deferred.) Requests for deferment can be made in *My Profile* before the portfolio entry (or PPG for renewal) deadline for submission and/or at least 10 business days prior to the end of the assessment center testing window (or 10 business days prior to a scheduled assessment center appointment). **Retake candidates in their last year of eligibility do not have the option to defer. Submissions can only be deferred once.** There are no refunds of retake fees, regardless of circumstances. Also, once a renewal candidate has deferred, there are no refunds of renewal fees; and once a *Take One!* participant defers, they cannot request a change from *Take One!* to certification.

Note: If a first-time candidate does not submit at least one scorable portfolio entry by May 31, 2014, or take an assessment center exercise prior to June 15, 2014, that candidate’s eligibility will expire. The candidate would then have to start the process over by reapplying for candidacy and paying the full assessment fee.

More specific information about score banking and retakes can be found in the *Scoring Guide for Candidates* at the National Board website.

Transferring *Take One!* Scores

Take One! participants have three opportunities immediately following receipt of their scores to use their *Take One!* scores to National Board Certification. For example, if you receive your *Take One!* score in 2013, you may apply your score to full certification in any of the following certification cycles:

- 2013–2014
(application deadline December 31, 2013)
- 2014–2015
(application deadline December 31, 2014)
- 2015–2016
(application deadline December 31, 2015)

Take One! scores are automatically considered for a National Board Certification score profile if certification is sought in the three opportunities immediately following the receipt of the *Take One!* score and if that score is in the same certificate area sought for certification.

Scoring Appeals

It is National Board policy to afford certification and renewal candidates the opportunity to file an appeal of their certificate scoring decision. Please note, however, that to appeal a decision, National Board must receive a letter of request that includes all pertinent details and materials relevant to the appeal, along with the appropriate appeal filing fee, within 60 calendar days of the date on the score report. There is currently no avenue of appeal for *Take One!* score results.

Certification and renewal candidates should carefully consider a concurrent timeline for retake and appeal.

Investigation and resolution of an appeal by National Board takes a minimum of three months after the deadline to file an appeal. There are no circumstances under which mere disagreement with the score of a portfolio entry or assessment center exercise or a certification or renewal decision will result in the immediate award of additional “points.” Only qualified assessors assign scores.

In addition, candidates will not know the outcome of an appeal before the renewal or retake application deadline. Therefore, candidates are encouraged to consider whether it is to their advantage to pursue an appeal rather than applying to submit a renewal or retake submission. Candidates who choose to file an appeal are encouraged to simultaneously submit a renewal or retake application

so as not to lose a year of eligibility. Any candidate considering filing an appeal should read “Reconsideration of Certification or Scoring Decisions” on page 12.

Certificates with Low Candidate Demand

National Board reserves the right not to offer an assessment, not to score an assessment after it has been offered, and/or not to render scoring or certification decisions if, in its discretion, National Board determines that low candidate volume may result in psychometric or financial problems. In the event that a problem arises due to insufficient candidate volume or with respect to an aspect of an assessment or scoring system that is not adequately resolved, in the judgment of National Board, such that a valid certificate decision cannot be made within an appropriate time period, National Board will offer full fee refunds to affected candidates.

The Board of Directors of the National Board affirmed that the decision to not offer a certificate, or to not score a certificate, is not a value judgment on any subject area and is based strictly on market demand. The National Board made these decisions after examining a variety of solutions to address those certificate areas in which there is low candidate demand.

Additional information about certificates with low candidate demand will be provided on the National Board website as it becomes available.

National Board Policies

National Board makes every effort to ensure that the National Board Certification, *Take One!*, and certification renewal processes are fair for all applicants. National Board is committed to examining and refining its policies continuously in ways that benefit all candidates and enhance its delivery of efficient and high-quality services. The following policies (in italics, below) have been adopted by the Board of Directors and are applicable to National Board Certification and certification renewal candidates.

Candidates with Disabilities

It is the policy of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) regulations governing both facilities and administration.

If you have a disability that necessitates an accommodation under the ADA for the portfolio and/or assessment center portion of the National Board Certification process, please follow the instructions provided in the *Request for Testing Accommodations Form and Instructions*, accessible at the National Board website (www.nbpts.org). National Board will review and respond to all such requests on an individual basis.

Please note that information submitted concerning the need for accommodations is considered “material information” under the National Board “Denial or Revocation of Certification” policy.

All published application deadlines apply to candidates who need testing accommodations because of a disability.

Confidentiality Guidelines

1. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards will take precautions to assure that all information about a candidate’s candidacy and performance is strictly confidential. The names, school districts, certificate areas, and certification expiration dates of National Board Certified Teachers will be published and NBCT mailing addresses will be shared with public officials representing NBCT’s jurisdictions. Candidate scores will not be published or released by National Board without prior written consent. National Board will release certification decision information only to the candidate seeking National Board Certification unless National Board receives written authorization from the candidate. Any candidate who accepts full or partial payment of the assessment fee by a third-party agency is deemed to have

given permission to National Board for release of the certification decision to that third-party agency.

- 2. During the application process, National Board will collect information necessary to communicate with candidates, to assure that candidates have met eligibility requirements, and to conduct research projects.*
- 3. On the application, National Board offers potential candidates the option of having limited candidate information released to third-party agencies that may provide incentives, supports, and rewards for teachers/school counselors seeking National Board Certification. Such agencies may include national, state, and local professional and disciplinary associations whether or not the candidate is a member of such associations, state education agencies, county education agencies, local school districts, and community foundations. Candidates who do not wish to have their names released for this purpose can indicate this preference on the application form; however, doing so may result in missed opportunities for candidacy funding support. Candidates who accept full or partial funding from a third-party agency are deemed to have authorized permission for release of information to that third-party agency, regardless of the preference indicated on their application.*
- 4. Upon full or partial payment of a candidate’s assessment fee by a third-party agency, National Board will provide the candidate’s completion and certification status to the third-party agency. Neither total scores nor individual exercise scores will be released to third parties.*
- 5. National Board will establish procedures requiring that all employees, contractors, assessors, or administrators who have access to information about the identity or performance of candidates understand the strictly confidential nature of this information.*
- 6. National Board will take precautions to assure that written and electronic confidential information is reasonably protected.*
- 7. National Board will assure that when research data are shared, any information about the identity or performance of individual candidates will be concealed.*

Denial or Revocation of Certification

- I. Certification may be denied or revoked for any applicant or certificate holder who, in the sole judgment of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards,*
 - A) has knowingly misrepresented or falsified material information in connection with an application, credentials, assessment documentation, or other*

materials or information submitted to National Board or

- B)** *has knowingly engaged in inappropriate conduct in connection with the certification process or renewal of the certification process, including but not limited to:*
- *noncompliance with assessment procedures, regulations, or instructions;*
 - *violation of confidentiality agreements signed in accordance with the candidate application and/or assessment administration;*
 - *obtaining improper access to secure assessment materials or information prior to the administration of the assessment;*
 - *sharing, publishing, electronically posting, or otherwise reproducing secure assessment materials or information;*
 - *violation of the National Board guidelines that describe collaboration with others; or*
 - *any other form of cheating or misconduct that compromises the integrity of the certification process; or*
- C)** *has been convicted of a felony; has had a teaching license denied, suspended, or revoked; or, in the case of an unlicensed teacher, has been fired or suspended; and where the conduct leading to such felony conviction, licensure action, or, in the case of an unlicensed teacher, firing or suspension has involved*
- *child abuse,*
 - *job-related crimes,*
 - *violent crimes against persons, or*
 - *other conduct of similar severity National Board determines is inconsistent with the standards required of a National Board Certified Teacher.*

II. *National Board shall establish a fair procedure for such denials or revocations that is based on a finding by the President that certification should be denied or revoked based on the criteria in the preceding section and imposition of appropriate sanctions, including but not limited to:*

- *denial of certification and withholding of score report, with leave to retake one or more assessment exercise(s),*
- *denial of certification and exclusion from future*

participation in the assessment program,

- *revocation of certification,*
- *assessment of monetary sanctions to cover costs and/or damages (including the costs of investigation) associated with the misconduct found.*

III. *In the interest of public protection and protecting the integrity of the teaching profession, for all teachers who have been denied certification and excluded from future participation in the assessment program or had a National Board Certificate revoked, National Board will*

- A)** *provide the following information to the agency responsible for state licensure, employers, as well as to any third-party payer who financially supported or supports the teacher involved: (1) teacher name; (2) teacher home address, city, and state; (3) teacher school; and (4) date of action taken by National Board;*
- B)** *remove the name of the teacher from any National Board official listing of National Board Certified Teachers; and*
- C)** *make the following information available through online and print publications and press releases: (1) teacher name; (2) teacher city and state; and (3) date of action taken by National Board.*

Certification Renewal

Certification is valid from the date of certification printed on the score report for a period of 10 years. National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) must complete the renewal process prior to their original certification expiration date and may only renew certification in their original certificate area. All policies referenced in this Guide are applicable to certification renewal candidates.

National Board Certified Teachers are offered two opportunities to apply for renewal, beginning in their eighth year of certification. Certification renewal requires the submission of the Profile of Professional Growth® (PPG). For more information about the procedure, timeline, and fees for renewal candidates, refer to *Renewal at a Glance* on the National Board website (www.nbpts.org).

Reconsideration of Certification or Scoring Decisions

Revised October 2004

I. Background

Recognizing that the cost to file an appeal is significant, National Board feels it is important to disclose that history has shown that most candidates who file an appeal do not establish good cause as defined by policy, expending time and personal funds unnecessarily.

II. Grounds for Reconsideration

A) *Once a candidate has received a certification decision and/or a report of exercise scores relating to his or her performance on an assessment, it is the policy of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards to reconsider those certification or scoring decisions only where the candidate has submitted to National Board a written request for reconsideration that demonstrates good cause as to why such reconsideration is necessary. To establish good cause to support a request of reconsideration of a certification or scoring decision, a candidate must identify some particular circumstance or condition that makes it fundamentally unfair for National Board to maintain the certification and/or scoring decisions previously released to the candidate.*

B) *Before National Board makes final and releases any certification or scoring decision, it carefully reviews the assessment materials, the scoring process, and the performance standard to be used in connection with those decisions and assures itself that they are valid and reasonably reliable means of arriving at those decisions. Accordingly, for purposes of this policy, a candidate will not establish good cause to support a request for reconsideration of a certification or scoring decision by stating, for example, that:*

- 1)** *the candidate or others believe that the certification decision or one or more of the exercise scores received by the candidate do not accurately reflect the quality of the candidate's performance or teaching abilities; or*
- 2)** *the candidate or others disagree with or seek an exception from or challenge the performance standard or some component of the performance standard that has been adopted by the board, the standards, the portfolio instructions, or scoring processes; or*

- 3)** *the candidate failed to understand or follow National Board policy and procedures (as outlined in the Guide to National Board Certification and the online Assessment Center Policy and Guidelines), failed to understand or follow an instruction in the assessment materials, failed to submit documents, or failed to perform in a manner that best presented the candidate's qualifications for certification. Please note this includes, but is not limited to, the failure to report test center problems within seven days after a testing appointment.*

This holds true regardless of how close a candidate comes to achieving certification. This also holds true regardless of personal circumstances endured while seeking certification. Furthermore, there are no circumstances under which mere disagreement with the score of a portfolio entry or assessment center exercise will result in the immediate award of additional "points."

III. Procedure and Timeline for Filing an Appeal

Candidates who wish to submit a letter of appeal must follow these instructions:

- *Submit your letter of appeal to:*

National Board
1525 Wilson Blvd, Suite 500
Arlington, VA 22209
- *Include in the letter all pertinent details supporting the appeal. Be specific. Enclose only materials that are directly relevant to a show of "good cause."*
- *The letter of appeal must be received within 60 calendar days of the date that is printed on the score report.*
- *Appeals are only received for a period of 60 days after the date that scores are released. During that period, a candidate can only appeal a certification or scoring decision that was rendered during that specific score release. Appeals filed for certification or scoring decisions rendered in former score releases will not be considered. Once the appeal deadline has passed and a candidate has not submitted an appeal, scores will be final and not subject to appeal.*

IV. Fair Procedure

National Board shall establish a fair procedure for determining whether to reconsider certification and scoring decisions and what actions, if any, should be taken

in light of such reconsideration, which will be based on

- A) A finding by the President of National Board whether the request for reconsideration is or is not supported by good cause and, if the request is so supported, a recommendation by the President whether the candidate making the request should receive**
- 1) a rescoring by National Board of the candidate's performance on one or more exercises/entries;**
 - 2) an opportunity to submit additional materials or to retake one or more exercises/entries, subject to such reasonable conditions and time limits as may be recommended by the President; and/or**
 - 3) such other relief as may be necessary to avoid fundamental unfairness to the candidate.**

If the candidate does not request further review of his or her request for reconsideration, pursuant to paragraph (B) immediately below, the findings and recommendations of the President will constitute the final judgment of National Board.

- B) Upon the submission by the candidate of a request for further review of his or her request for reconsideration, a review of the President's findings and recommendations, in light of all of the evidence, and the issuance of a final decision, in its sole judgment, by the Certification Review Panel ("CRP").**

- 1) The CRP shall consist of five persons, who shall be appointed by the Chair of National Board with the approval of the Board of Directors, to serve three-year terms. The Panel members shall be appointed from former members of the Board of Directors of National Board, and all members of the Panel shall be persons who at the time they serve on the Panel are defined as regularly engaged in teaching elementary and secondary school students as defined by National Board. Any vacancies on the Panel may be filled by appointments by the Chair of National Board Board of Directors to serve the remaining term. No Panel member may serve more than two consecutive three-year terms. The Chair may appoint one or more persons who serve on the National Board Disqualification Review Panel to serve simultaneously on the CRP.**

- a) Voluntary Resignation: Any member of the Certification Review Panel may resign at any**

time by notifying the Chair or the Secretary in writing. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified by the resigning member, or, if no time is specified, on receipt by the Chair or the Secretary of the notice of resignation.

- b) Mandatory Tender of Notice and Resignation: To assure that all members of the Certification Review Panel shall be persons who are regularly engaged in teaching elementary and secondary school children, any person elected to the Panel in this class who ceases such teaching for any reason shall so notify the Chair or the Secretary in writing. Unless the change from the teaching status is limited by its terms to one year or less, the member shall also tender her or his resignation, effective immediately to the Chair or the Secretary. The Chair and/or Secretary shall report to the Board of Directors all such mandatorily tendered notices and resignations.**

- c) Of those five members of the Certification Review Panel approved by the Board at the June 1995 meeting, one shall be assigned by lot to a one-year term, two shall be assigned by lot to two-year terms, and the other two shall be assigned to three-year terms.**

- 2) Action by the CRP requires the participation of three members and shall be by majority vote. A member of the CRP may elect not to participate in one or more decisions of the Panel for any reason, and shall elect not to participate in any decision where the member determines, in his or her sole discretion, whether he or she for any reason is not able to act fairly and impartially. If one or more members of the CRP cannot participate, the Chair shall appoint a person qualified to serve on the CRP. The CRP may meet in person or by telephone. A decision of the CRP shall constitute the final judgment of National Board.**

V. Filing Fee

National Board shall establish a filing fee or charge that will be assessed to and must be paid by candidates who seek reconsideration of certification or scoring decision under this policy. The amount of that filing fee or charge will be announced by the President of National Board who may alter or revise the amount of that fee or charge from time to time, subject to the approval of the

Board.

If, pursuant to a final judgment issued under Section II, a candidate substantially prevails in obtaining the reconsideration that he or she has requested, the filing fee paid under this section will be reimbursed to the candidate.

VI. Annual Report

On June 1, 1995, and annually thereafter, the President shall submit a report to the Board of Directors on the implementation of this policy.

Ethics

National Board does not tolerate cheating or confidentiality breaches of any type. Help protect the integrity of National Board Certification. Immediately report breaches of security, misconduct, and/or unethical practice by calling National Board at **1-800-22TEACH (83224)**.

For important information regarding adherence to ethical behavior that is expected of all National Board Certification and certification renewal candidates, *Take One!* participants, and National Board Certified Teachers, see the *Guide for Ethical Candidate Support* on the “Candidate Support” page of the National Board website (**www.nbpts.org**).

Rewarding Excellence in Every Field

The National Board offers Standards in 25 certificate areas based on its Five Core Propositions. A Standards committee composed of a majority of classroom teachers is appointed for each certificate area. Other members of the committee may include experts in child development, teacher education, and the relevant discipline(s). Standards committees recommend to the National Board the specific Standards for each certificate area and advise those involved in developing the corresponding assessment.

The Standards and the certificates are, for the most part, structured along two dimensions—the developmental level of students and the subject area(s). Candidates may choose either a generalist or a subject-specific certificate. Table 2.1—Fields of National Board Certification on page 16 summarizes the certificate areas currently available to candidates. Descriptions of the certificate areas may be found in *Assessment at a Glance* on the National Board website.

Which Certificate Is Right for Me?

The context of teaching and school counseling practices varies across the nation, and candidates will need to decide which certificate is appropriate for them and whether their particular situation will meet the requirements for certification. Choosing the certificate area that best reflects the age range of students and the subject you teach is important because you must be able to demonstrate content and pedagogical knowledge across the full age range of the chosen certificate area (and specialty area, if applicable).

Our recommendation to all potential candidates is to carefully study the Standards in the certificate field, as well as the demands of the entries and exercises, to determine whether you will be able to demonstrate your level of accomplished practice. To help you make these decisions, National Board provides potential candidates with an *Assessment at a Glance* for each certificate area, available on the National Board website (www.nbpts.org). This document provides a list of abbreviated Standards, a

description of the portfolio entries and assessment center exercises, an overview of the scoring process, and a timeline of the commitment required to pursue certification.

Included in each *Assessment at a Glance* is a set of questions for you to ask yourself about your teaching or school counseling practice. If you answer “no” to one or more of the questions for the certificate area, you may need to discuss your teaching situation with professional colleagues, your school faculty, an NBCT, your faculty support group, or a local-level administrator who is directing a National Board program. The list of basic portfolio requirements provided for each certificate area will assist you in determining whether or not your particular teaching or school counseling situation is appropriate for pursuing certification.

“Earning National Board Certification was a turning point in my teaching career, not only for me as a professional but for my students. I tell other teachers that going through the process is the best professional development they’ll ever do.”

Betsy Rogers, National Board Certified Teacher, Alabama

If you are applying in one of the certificate areas that requires the selection of a specialty area and are unsure which to choose, the descriptions provided may help you determine which specialty best fits your teaching situation. (Refer to the appropriate Standards for in-depth descriptions of specialty areas practice.)

Candidates are encouraged to carefully select a certificate and specialty area when applying. Your assessment center exercises will reflect your selection. Once you have chosen your certificate and specialty area, there is a fee associated with making a change to your selection. If you do change your certificate and/or specialty area, you must cancel any assessment center appointments that you have scheduled prior to making your change. You cannot change your certificate or specialty area after you have taken the assessment center exercises or after January 31, 2014, whichever comes first.

Studying the Standards

The requirements for National Board Certification are based on the Standards for each certificate area. You should review the Standards along with the *Portfolio Instructions*. Both are available at the National Board website (www.nbpts.org) for the certificate area you believe best fits your practice; they will provide you with more information to use when making your decision. The shaded box at right contains some sample questions that will help you become familiar with the Standards for your certificate area. The Standards have been sequenced to facilitate understanding, not to assign priorities. Each is an important facet of the art and science of your profession, and they are densely interwoven and often occur simultaneously, because exemplary teaching and school counseling are seamless activities with many purposes served at any given moment.

For each individual Standard in the Standards for your field, ask yourself the following questions:

- What do I know and what am I able to do with respect to this Standard? Be very specific.
- How might I demonstrate accomplished practice with respect to this Standard? How could I demonstrate to colleagues that I am meeting this Standard?
- How might I demonstrate interaction of two or more Standards in aspects of my teaching or school counseling (e.g., planning, managing, or assessing instruction)?

Table 2.1—Fields of National Board Certification*

CERTIFICATE		For Candidates with Students in This Age Range**				APPLICABLE STANDARDS
Developmental Level	Discipline	3–8	7–12	11–15	14–18+	
Early and Middle Childhood	Art					Early Childhood and Middle Childhood/Art
Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood	Art					Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/Art
Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood	Career and Technical Education					Career and Technical Education
Early and Middle Childhood	English as a New Language					English as a New Language (ages 3–18+), 2nd Edition ‡
Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood	English as a New Language					English as a New Language (ages 3–18+), 2nd Edition ‡
Early Adolescence	English Language Arts					Early Adolescence/English Language Arts
Adolescence and Young Adulthood	English Language Arts					Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts
Early Childhood through Young Adulthood	Exceptional Needs Specialist					Exceptional Needs (ages birth–21+), 2nd Edition ‡
Early Childhood	Generalist					Early Childhood/Generalist, 2nd Edition ¶ Early Childhood Generalist, 3rd Edition (for teachers of students ages 3–8) §
Middle Childhood	Generalist					Middle Childhood/Generalist, 2nd Edition ¶ Middle Childhood Generalist, 3rd Edition (for teachers of students ages 7–12) §
Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood	Health Education					Health Education
Early Childhood through Young Adulthood	Library Media					Library Media ¶ Library Media Standards, 2nd Edition (for teachers of students ages 3–18+) §

Table 2.1—Fields of National Board Certification*

Developmental Level	Discipline	For Candidates with Students in This Age Range**				APPLICABLE STANDARDS
		CERTIFICATE				
		3–8	7–12	11–15	14–18+	
Early and Middle Childhood	Literacy: Reading–Language Arts					Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts ¶ Literacy: Reading–Language Arts, 2nd Edition (for teachers of students ages 3–12) §
Early Adolescence	Mathematics					Mathematics (ages 11–18+)‡
Adolescence and Young Adulthood	Mathematics					Mathematics (ages 11–18+)‡
Early and Middle Childhood	Music					Music (ages 3–18+)
Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood	Music					Music (ages 3–18+)
Early and Middle Childhood	Physical Education					Physical Education (ages 3–18+)
Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood	Physical Education					Physical Education (ages 3–18+)
Early Childhood through Young Adulthood	School Counseling					School Counseling
Early Adolescence	Science					Early Adolescence/Science
Adolescence and Young Adulthood	Science					Adolescence and Young Adulthood/Science
Early Adolescence	Social Studies–History					Social Studies–History (ages 7–18+), 2nd Edition‡
Adolescence and Young Adulthood	Social Studies–History					Social Studies–History (ages 7–18+), 2nd Edition‡
Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood	World Language					World Languages (ages 3–18+), 2nd Edition‡

* Please note that some of the certificates listed here may only be available on a limited basis depending on candidate demand. Future administration schedules will depend in part on candidate demand as indicated by the number of first-time applications received with payment by National Board as of the end of the application period each year. Visit the National Board website for updated information.

** The Standards that apply to some certificate areas may cover a wider student age range than a specific certificate area targets. Where this occurs, the age range of students addressed by the Standards is indicated in parentheses in the column titled “Applicable Standards.” For some disciplines, more than one developmental level certificate is available and the same set of standards may apply to both levels (i.e., Music Standards are applicable to both Early and Middle Childhood/Music and Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/Music certificate areas). For some disciplines, a developmental level certificate is not available for all age-level students addressed by the Standards.

‡ For candidates seeking initial certification, certification renewal, or *Take One!* participation starting in January 2011

¶ For retake candidates who made initial certification attempt prior to January 2012

§ For candidates seeking initial certification, certification renewal, or *Take One!* participation starting in January 2012

Scholarships

Through the generosity of various corporations and philanthropic organizations, National Board is able to offer scholarships to help support National Board Certification candidates. Scholarships are allocated under the guidelines set by the respective donors and only to teachers or school counselors who have applied and have paid the nonrefundable initial fee. To learn more about scholarship opportunities or to apply for scholarship support, access the National Board Scholarship Program through the National Board website (www.nbpts.org) or call 1-800-22TEACH (83223).

Incentives and Fee Support

Various states and local school districts have recognized the value of National Board Certification by offering salary increases, bonuses, or other incentives to educators who become NBCTs. There may also be some state, and/or local funds available to support *Take One!* and National Board Certification fees.

Before you apply, contact your state or local program administrator for information about fees and incentives available in your state, as well as for any special application requirements that may apply. Many states set candidate application deadlines that differ from those set by National Board, but the state application deadlines must be met for a candidate to be eligible for state fee support.

Learn more about how states and school districts support National Board Certification through the National Board website (www.nbpts.org).

The Department of Veterans Affairs offers a reimbursement incentive to eligible veterans of up to \$2,000 for National Board Certification fees for each first-time or retake assessment. For more information, visit the National Board website or, to apply, call (888) GI-BILL-1.

Loans

Special loans to be used for National Board Certification are available for National Education Association (NEA) members. If you are an NEA member and want more information about this loan, or to apply, call (866) 266-0211 or visit the “Loans” page of the NEA member benefits website (www.neamb.com/).

“Teachers who meet the rigorous standards of National Board Certification have demonstrated they know their craft and can teach at the most accomplished levels. In this era of quick fixes, NBPTS certification stands out as a tried-and-true approach to improving our profession and student achievement.”

Randi Weingarten, President
American Federation of Teachers (AFT)

Graduate Credit Recommendation

Based on an independent review of the certification process, the American Council on Education (ACE) recommended that candidates who participate in the National Board Certification process and complete and receive scores for all 10 components of the assessment be eligible to receive a recommendation of three semester hours of graduate credit in education. Furthermore, they recommended that candidates who achieve certification be eligible for nine semester hours of graduate credit in education and that NBCTs who renew their certification be eligible for three semester hours of graduate credit in education.

Candidates and NBCTs interested in receiving this credit can make their request online through the National Board website. National Board verifies eligibility for graduate credit and transmits this information to ACE,

which issues a transcript reflecting the number of graduate credit hours they are recommending be awarded.

This transcript then can be provided to a college or university for consideration. While ACE recommends graduate-level credit, it is up to individual colleges, universities, state departments of education, and local school districts to make the final decision to actually award the graduate-level credit. Therefore, National Board strongly recommends that candidates and NBCTs verify that the institution to which a transcript will be sent will accept this credit. ACE has approximately 1,200 cooperating institutions of higher education that will accept this credit.

A fee is charged to process the transcript request. This fee covers the transmittal of graduate credit eligibility information from National Board to ACE and the generation or mailing of one transcript. Upon ACE's receipt of the eligibility information from National Board, ACE establishes a profile of the requestor in their system.

National Board Certification candidates and NBCTs who completed or achieved certification in November 1997 or after are eligible to receive this credit. Check the National Board website (www.nbpts.org) for more information about graduate credit availability.

Graduate Credit

George Mason University (GMU) in Fairfax, Virginia, offers three (3) semester hours of graduate credit from the College of Education and Human Development for candidates who have submitted a complete (scorable) *Take One!* portfolio entry for their certificate area. Depending on the certificate area, the *Take One!* entry is specified as either Entry 2 or 3. A complete list of *Take One!* entries is available at the National Board website (www.nbpts.org).

Candidates from any state may apply for these graduate credits, whether they have certified or not. Candidates do not have to achieve a specific score on the *Take One!* entry; they simply must have submitted a complete (scorable) entry. Credit is limited to scores received in November 2006 or later, and candidates for multiple certificate areas may apply for graduate credits with GMU only once.

There is an additional charge for receiving these graduate credits.

If candidates intend to use GMU graduate credits for re-certification or salary-scale advancement, they should confirm that their district or state will accept these credits. Further, if candidates intend to transfer these credits to their own graduate school, they should confirm that their graduate school will accept GMU graduate credits.

If you have received your scores and are interested in receiving these credits, visit the National Board website (www.nbpts.org) and complete the application for graduate credit. The last screen on the online application contains a link to the GMU website. Once on the GMU website, you need to complete a GMU Contract Course Enrollment Form. If you are a Virginia resident, you also need to complete an Application for Virginia In-State Tuition Rates.

Note: Your residency status will not affect the cost of your graduate credits. GMU is required to obtain this information from all Virginia residents.

Beginning the National Board Certification Process

1. Read **all** of the information provided in this *Guide*. **You are required to read and understand this information prior to applying.**
2. Review the information in Table 1.1—Eligibility Prerequisites for National Board Certification on page 4 before you apply to be sure you meet all of the eligibility prerequisites for candidacy, if applying for National Board Certification.
3. Review Table 4.1—2013–2014 National Board Certification Assessment Calendar on page 21 to review the deadlines and decide if this is the optimal time for you to apply for certification, or review Table 4.2—2013–2014 *Take One!* Calendar on page 22 to decide if this is the optimal time to pursue *Take One!*, or review Table 4.3—Renewal Calendar on page 22 to become familiar with the deadlines for certification renewal.
4. Determine if your state or district offers fee subsidies (see “Incentives and Fee Subsidies” on page 18). Because some states and districts have special requirements and established deadlines, you should begin this process as early as possible.
5. Apply online (see the shaded box at right) and, if applying for National Board Certification, pay the \$65 nonrefundable application processing charge.
6. Read the terms and conditions you are attesting to by submitting your application.
7. Follow the instructions for submitting application materials and fee payments.
8. Review “What Happens Next” on page 28.

Portfolio materials will not be sent to a candidate until National Board receives the online application and processing charge as well as a payment of at least the nonrefundable initial \$500 fee if applying as a first-time candidate or until fully paid if applying as a retake candidate. Portfolio materials will not be sent to *Take One!* participants until National Board receives the online order and full payment for this product. PPG materials will not be sent to certification renewal candidates until National Board receives the online application and a payment of at least the nonrefundable \$300 initial fee.

Apply online at the National Board website (www.nbpts.org)

- Searchable databases for information required on the application
- Expedited processing of your application information to get you started faster
- A personal identification number that allows you immediate access to your records and personal information in *My Profile*
- Convenient and secure credit card and e-check processing of your fees

Accommodations for Candidates with Disabilities

It is the policy of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) regulations governing both facilities and administration. The National Board program is committed to serving candidates with disabilities by providing services and reasonable accommodations that are appropriate given the purpose of the assessments.

All requests for accommodations must be approved in accordance with National Board policies and procedures. National Board will review and respond to all such requests on an individual basis.

If you have a disability that necessitates an accommodation under the ADA for either the portfolio or the assessment center component of the National Board Certification process, your request must be made using the form and instructions found in the *Request for Testing Accommodations Form and Instructions* available on the National Board website (www.nbpts.org) or by calling 1-800-22TEACH (83224).

All published application and portfolio deadlines apply to candidates who need testing accommodations because of a disability. You are urged to submit your request form as early as possible to allow 6–8 weeks for National Board to review your request for accommodation(s) and make all appropriate arrangements and for you to be able to attend the assessment center on your preferred testing date.

Submitting the Application and Fees

Processing Charge

National Board requires a \$65 nonrefundable processing charge to submit an application for National Board Certification. This charge has been instituted to help offset the rising cost of processing applications each year from candidates who subsequently do not pursue full certification. Your application will not be accepted by National Board without payment of this charge. You can make payments online via credit or debit card (Visa or MasterCard only) or electronic check (e-check) during the application process. Payment of this processing charge cannot be made by telephone or mail and cannot be made by a third-party payer.

“National Board Certification is one of the keys to a positive culture and climate in any school. It recognizes the master teachers and keeps them in the profession—which is critical to sustaining a solid teaching force.”

Dave Coley, Former Cary High School Principal,
Cary, North Carolina

E-check Extended-Payment Option

First-time certification candidates in 2013–2014 who pay the assessment fee by e-check are eligible for an extended-final payment deadline of March 15, 2014. If you select the extended-payment option, you must agree to make all payments, for which you are personally responsible, by e-check. With this flexible plan, you can decide the amount of your payment installments. (Note that the extended-payment option is not available for *Take One!*). The extended-payment option extends only the final payment deadline, not the December 31 deadline for the nonrefundable \$500 initial fee.

Assessment Fee

The assessment fee for National Board Certification is \$2,500. To begin candidacy in 2013–2014, National Board requires payment of at least the nonrefundable initial \$500 fee, with the balance of the total assessment fee due prior to making an assessment center appointment and no later than January 31, 2014. To retain eligibility for National Board Certification candidacy, you must submit the full fee and all eligibility forms no later than this date.

Payments can be made online via credit or debit card (Visa or MasterCard only) or e-check during your application process or from your online account on *My Profile*. (Credit card and e-check payments can only be accepted online, not by telephone or mail.) You can also make payments by personal check, certified check, or money order payable to “National Board.” Checks are automatically deposited immediately upon receipt. We cannot accept postdated checks or honor individual requests to delay processing of payment. Returned checks will be assessed a \$35 service fee.

Payments made by check or money order should be mailed to:

National Board
c/o Bank of America, Illinois
PO Box 99406
Chicago, IL 60693

or, if sending by courier service that does not deliver to post office boxes, to:

National Board
c/o Bank of America, Illinois
99406 Collections Center Drive
Lockbox 99406
Chicago, IL 60693

All fees must be paid in accordance with the deadlines on the appropriate calendar.

Note: Failure to pay all applicable fees could result in the termination of your candidacy or the withholding of your score results.

Consult Table 4.4—National Board Fees and Charges on page 25 for a list of fees and charges with deadlines.

Application Submission

All applications must be submitted online, except in special circumstances. Using the online application form is fast and secure, offering convenient drop-down menus that minimize errors. Follow the guidelines below to submit both your application and your fee payments.

- Review the National Board Standards available on the National Board website (www.nbpts.org) to determine if you will be able to demonstrate your level of accomplished practice.
- Create an online National Board account, if you don't already have one.
- Submit your order/application via the Make a Purchase tab in *My Profile*.
- If applying for National Board Certification, pay the \$65 nonrefundable application processing charge.
- Confirm that all required information is complete and accurate. The application includes a question asking if you wish to have your name released to third parties who may offer incentives, support, and rewards. Many local, state, district, and federal agencies offer candidates fee reimbursements and/or salary incentives. But for you to be eligible for this support, you must agree to have your name released to these third parties. With your permission, we will be able to release your basic demographic information to third-party payers and donors. Please be assured that no scores—individual or total—will be released under any circumstances. In addition, personal information is used only for National Board purposes and never for telemarketing.
- Attest to the terms of the application by carefully reading and responding to the Agreements toward the end of the order/application.
- Record the ID number assigned to you. You will need to include this number on any correspondence with National Board throughout the assessment process, particularly if a third party is paying your fee, so that payments and information can be properly applied to your account. If you do not receive an ID number, call 1-800-22TEACH (83224) immediately.
- Pay the nonrefundable initial fee (if you are seeking National Board Certification or certification renewal and are paying the fee yourself). You can make this payment immediately via e-check or credit or debit card (Visa or MasterCard only) after your application is submitted. You can also pay by check or money order. Be sure to include your ID number on your check or money order and mail it to the address shown on page 33.

If a third-party payer is paying your fee, be sure to contact the third-party payer to identify any special requirements or deadlines and to ensure that payment is submitted by the deadline for your application period.

As soon as you have submitted your application and the initial fee, your candidacy will be activated, all deadlines will apply, and an eligibility verification packet (first-time National Board Certification candidates only) and portfolio kit will be mailed to you.

As soon as your assessment fees are fully paid and your eligibility has been verified (and once the test centers are ready to accept appointments), you will receive an Authorization to Test directing you to make an assessment center appointment (National Board Certification candidates only). Refer to "What Happens Next" on page 28 for important information about the next steps in your candidacy process.

Fees and Charges

Table 4.4 lists the various fees and charges applicable to the National Board certification, certification renewal, and *Take One!*, and retake processes. Candidates are responsible for confirming receipt by National Board of

any fees, charges, forms, and notices. After applications have been processed, candidates can check the status of fees and charges posted to their individual accounts by accessing *My Profile* on the National Board website (www.nbpts.org). (Note that your score results will not be released to you until all fees and charges are paid to National Board.)

Table 4.4—National Board Fees and Charges

TYPE OF FEE/CHARGE	WHAT TO SUBMIT	AMOUNT OF FEE/CHARGE	DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT
<p>Application Processing Charge for First-Time Candidates</p> <p>This processing charge is required for all new applications for National Board Certification and has been established to offset the rising cost of processing applications from candidates who subsequently do not pursue full certification. Your application will not be accepted by National Board without payment of this processing charge.</p>	<p>Payable online via credit or debit card (Visa or MasterCard only) or by e-check.</p> <p>National Board cannot accept paper checks, money orders, or payments from third parties for this charge.</p>	\$65	At the time of application submission, and no later than December 31, 2013
<p>Certification Assessment Fee</p> <p>This fee is required for all first-time candidates for National Board Certification.</p>	<p>Complete the online candidate application. After your candidate application has been submitted, National Board can apply personal or third-party payments (for example, money from your state) to your account. If your payment will be made by a third-party payer, you are responsible for taking appropriate steps to ensure that payment is made on your behalf by the published fee submission deadlines.</p>	<p>\$2,500</p> <p>Personal payments can be made using credit or debit card (Visa or MasterCard only), e-check, personal check, or money order. Visa, MasterCard, and e-check payments must be made online by accessing <i>My Profile</i> via the National Board website.</p>	<p>January 31, 2014</p> <p>The \$500 nonrefundable initial fee must be paid by December 31, 2013, and the balance of the full fee must be paid by January 31, 2014 (March 15, 2014, if you select the Extended-Payment Option).</p>
<p><i>Take One!</i> Order Fee</p>	<p>Submit the fee.</p>	\$395	<p>January 31, 2014</p> <p>Submit the completed online order form by December 31, 2013.</p>
<p>Certification Renewal Fee</p> <p>This fee is required to renew your certification.</p>	<p>Complete and submit the online application with the fee.</p>	\$1,250	January 31, 2014
<p>Returned Check Fee</p> <p>This fee is assessed if your personal check is returned. This fee applies to both paper and e-checks.</p>	<p>Submit information regarding the returned check and the fee.</p>	\$35	30 days after notification

Table 4.4—National Board Fees and Charges

TYPE OF FEE/CHARGE	WHAT TO SUBMIT	AMOUNT OF FEE/CHARGE	DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT
<p>Change of Certificate Area</p> <p>To change your certificate area after you have submitted your application, you must pay a fee to cover the cost of changing information in the candidate database and sending another portfolio kit (available for first-time candidates and <i>Take One!</i> participants only).</p>	<p>Request for change (include ID number) and the fee. If your new certificate area requires selection of a specialty area, you must provide this information at the time of your request. Change of certificate area requests must be submitted via <i>My Profile</i> or made in writing.</p>	\$75	<p>January 31, 2014, and prior to scheduling an assessment center appointment and submitting any portfolio entries for scoring</p>
<p>Change of Specialty Area</p> <p>To change your specialty area after you have submitted your application but prior to attending your assessment center appointment, you must pay a fee to cover the cost of changing information in your candidate record and sending assessment center materials (available for first-time candidates only).</p>	<p>Request for change (include ID number) and the fee. Change of specialty area requests must be submitted via <i>My Profile</i> or made in writing.</p>	\$75	<p>January 31, 2014, and prior to scheduling or attending an assessment center appointment</p> <p>Your responses will be scored under the specialty area indicated on your Authorization to Test, so it is important that you verify that the correct specialty area is shown on your Authorization to Test.</p>
<p>Reinstatement of Eligibility Fee</p> <p>If you miss your assessment center appointment or do not cancel 24 hours in advance, then you must reinstate your eligibility before you can schedule a new appointment.</p>	<p>Call National Board at 1-800-22TEACH (83224) to reinstate your eligibility and to make payment arrangements.</p>	\$175	<p>August 31, 2014</p> <p>You must reinstate your eligibility before you schedule a new assessment center appointment. You must schedule new appointments prior to the end of the testing window for your candidacy year.</p>
<p>Certification Appeal Filing Fee</p> <p>This fee is required to appeal your scoring or certification results (not available for <i>Take One!</i> participants).</p>	<p>Written request for the appeal and the fee</p>	\$500	<p>60 days after the date printed on the score report</p>
<p>Printed Score Report</p> <p>Score results for the three most recent reporting years are available online. This fee is charged for a printed copy of a score report.</p>	<p>Request for the copy (include ID number) and the fee</p>	\$25	<p>Three years from the date the scores were originally released</p>

Table 4.4—National Board Fees and Charges

TYPE OF FEE/CHARGE	WHAT TO SUBMIT	AMOUNT OF FEE/CHARGE	DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT
<p>Retake Application Processing Charge</p> <p>This processing charge is required for all retake applications and has been established to offset the rising cost of processing applications from National Board Certification candidates who subsequently do not continue pursuit of certification.</p> <p>Your retake application will not be accepted by National Board without payment of this processing charge.</p>	<p>Payable online, via credit or debit card (Visa or MasterCard only) or by e-check. National Board cannot accept paper checks or money orders for this charge.</p>	<p>\$15</p>	<p>Upon submission of the retake application and no later than January 31, 2014</p>
<p>Retake Fee (per entry or exercise)</p> <p>This fee is required for each portfolio entry or assessment center exercise that you choose to retake. The retake fee also applies to candidates who did not submit a portfolio entry or exercise as a first-time candidate. You must apply to retake entries and/or exercises in the same certificate area (and same specialty area, if applicable) that you were assessed in as a first-time candidate. Retake fees are nonrefundable regardless of the circumstances.</p>	<p>Retake application and fee.</p> <p>The retake application will be available online following score release. After your application has been submitted, National Board can apply personal or third-party payments (for example, money from your state) to your account. If a third-party payer will make payment, you are responsible for taking appropriate steps to ensure that payment is made on your behalf.</p>	<p>\$350 per entry or exercise</p> <p>Personal payments can be made using credit or debit card (VISA or MasterCard only), e-check, personal check, or money order. Visa, MasterCard, and e-check payments must be made online by accessing <i>My Profile</i> via the National Board website.</p>	<p>January 31, 2014</p>
<p>Change of Retake Selection</p> <p>This fee is required to change retake entries or exercises after your retake application has been submitted. This change fee does not apply to entries and/or exercises that you add or deselect prior to paying the \$350 retake fee. Retake fees are nonrefundable regardless of the circumstances. You may not deselect an entry or exercise after you have paid the retake fee, but you may defer that entry or exercise (if you are still eligible to retake).</p>	<p>Request for the change (include ID number) and the fee. Change of retake selection requests must be made via <i>My Profile</i> or in writing.</p>	<p>\$75 per requested change</p>	<p>April 15, 2014</p>

Table 4.4—National Board Fees and Charges

TYPE OF FEE/CHARGE	WHAT TO SUBMIT	AMOUNT OF FEE/CHARGE	DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT
<p>Deferment Fee</p> <p>This fee is required for any retake or renewal candidate or <i>Take One!</i> participant who chooses to defer a portfolio entry or assessment center exercise after you paying the assessment fee (not available for candidates in their last year of eligibility).</p>	<p>Request for the deferment prior to your portfolio deadline or assessment center appointment and the fee. Deferments can also be submitted via <i>My Profile</i> at www.nbpts.org/myprofile.</p>	<p>\$125 for <i>Take One!</i> and certification renewal;</p> <p>\$125 per entry/exercise reactivated for retake candidates</p>	<p>Prior to the deadline for assessment fees applicable for the year in which you reactivate</p>

What Happens Next

Verifying Your Application or *Take One!* Order

After your application or *Take One!* order is received and processed, you will be mailed an Application Verification Letter that requires you to go to your online record in *My Profile* (www.nbpts.org) to verify that your information is accurate. This is an important step because throughout the year you will receive materials, announcements, and updates from National Board. For complete information, see Table 4.5—Postapplication Materials on page 29.

If you do not receive an Application Verification Letter, please call 1-800-22TEACH (83224).

Verifying Your Eligibility for National Board Certification

To verify that you meet the first-time candidate eligibility prerequisite requirements stated in this *Guide*, you will need to complete and submit education, employment, and licensure verification forms. These forms will be sent to you in the Eligibility Verification Packet that accompanies your portfolio kit. They must be returned to National Board by January 31, 2014, for you to be eligible to attend the assessment center appointment or to have any portfolio entries scored. You are responsible for confirming that these materials are received by National Board by monitoring your online record in *My Profile* (www.nbpts.org) or by contacting National Board at 1-800-22TEACH (83224) to verify receipt. Please allow at least 10 days for processing.

Coordinating Third-Party Payments

If your National Board Certification or certification renewal candidacy or *Take One!* participation is being subsidized by a third-party payer, you are responsible for contacting the payer to arrange for fee payments. Some third-party payers have specific requirements for candidate funding, including requirements for completing the certification process. Be sure you understand all the criteria of your third-party payer, and work closely with the payer to ensure you meet all of the third-party payer's funding requirements.

Managing My Profile

Throughout your candidacy (or *Take One!* participation), you can monitor your status in *My Profile*, your personal, secure online National Board account at the National Board website (www.nbpts.org). From there, you may do the following:

- **Review and modify your application or order information**, such as your certificate area, mailing address, phone number(s), password, and so on.
- **Review the status of your fee payments**, eligibility forms, and portfolio materials and submit online payments.

- **Change your agreements/considerations**, such as whether you require testing accommodations, releasing your name to third-party agencies and donors that provide fee support and scholarships.
- **Withdraw or defer your application.**
- **View your scores** to review and print a copy of your official score report (after scores have been reported/released).
- **Submit questions to National Board Customer Support.**

Change of Address

If your address changes during the year, please update your record online in *My Profile*. If you choose to have National Board make changes on your behalf, send your changes in writing to:

National Board Processing Center
11827 Tech Com, Suite 200
San Antonio, TX 78233

Update your mailing address as soon as possible to be sure that you receive important notices and materials in a timely manner. National Board is not responsible for lost or undeliverable correspondence that should have been sent to an address other than the address recorded on *My Profile*, unless notified by you that a change has occurred.

Table 4.5—Postapplication Materials

APPLICATION VERIFICATION LETTER	
When you will receive	Within three weeks of receipt by National Board of your application
Purpose	To verify essential information from your application or <i>Take One!</i> order To confirm your portfolio deadline
Due at National Board	Make changes to your personal information online by accessing <i>My Profile</i> via the National Board website. Changes to personal information must be made before you can schedule an assessment center appointment or before any portfolio entries to be scored are returned.
ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION PACKET (First-Time Certification Candidates Only)	
When you will receive	Once National Board receives your application and nonrefundable initial \$500 fee. This packet of forms will accompany your portfolio materials. <i>Note that you will be able to check the status of your eligibility for National Board Certification online by accessing My Profile on the National Board website (www.nbpts.org/myprofile). Please allow at least 10 days for processing.</i>
Purpose	To verify that you meet the eligibility prerequisites for National Board Certification candidacy

Table 4.5—Postapplication Materials

Due at NATIONAL BOARD	<p>No later than January 31, 2014</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined Candidate Eligibility Verification Form OR • Education Verification Form • Employment Verification Form • License Verification Form
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PORTFOLIO MATERIALS

When you will receive	<p>For certification and renewal candidates, within three weeks of receipt by National Board of your application and nonrefundable initial fee</p> <p>For <i>Take One!</i> participants, within three weeks of receipt by National Board of your order and full payment</p> <p>For retake candidates, within three weeks of receipt by National Board of your application and full payment</p> <p><i>You can access the portfolio instructions from the National Board website (www.nbpts.org) to preview requirements for the portfolio.</i></p> <p><i>If a third-party agency is paying your fee, your portfolio materials may take longer to arrive.</i></p>
Purpose	To provide you with the instructions and materials to start your journey toward National Board Certification, <i>Take One!</i> , or certification renewal
Due at NATIONAL BOARD	<p>All first-time and retake candidates, <i>Take One!</i> participants and renewal candidates will need to submit their materials electronically via the ePortfolio system</p> <p>Submission Window: April 1, 2014-May 31, 2014</p>

ASSESSMENT CENTER APPOINTMENT INFORMATION (Certification Candidates Only)

When you will receive	Once test centers are ready to accept appointments, you will receive an Authorization to Test within 10 business days of receipt by National Board of your full assessment fee payment and of receipt and approval of all required eligibility forms (first-time candidates only).
Purpose	To notify you that you are eligible to schedule your assessment center appointment, confirm your testing window, and direct you to information you need to schedule an appointment and prepare to take your assessment center exercises
Due at NATIONAL BOARD	Any change to incorrect information shown on your Authorization to Test must be submitted via <i>My Profile</i> or in writing to National Board before attending an assessment center appointment.

Email Updates

National Board strongly encourages you to provide an email address when applying and keep this address up to date to ensure you receive important updates and announcements about the assessment program more quickly than paper mailings permit. Be sure to add the @**nbpts.org** domain to your safe senders list, or ask your web administrator to do so.

Withdrawing

Before withdrawing from National Board Certification, candidates should consider switching to *Take One!*. *Note:* You should first ask third-party payers (if applicable) for permission to convert funds. Also, once you switch you will not be able to transfer back; rather, you will have to apply anew and pay all related fees.

If you choose to withdraw from the assessment process, you are responsible for notifying National Board either online through *My Profile* or in writing by submitting the withdrawal form to the National Board Processing Center. If you withdraw, you are responsible for contacting National Board to confirm receipt of the withdrawal form prior to March 31, 2014 and any scheduled assessment center appointments. You may monitor the status of your withdrawal online through *My Profile*. Participants who choose to withdraw from *Take One!* may do so online via *My Profile* or by submitting the withdrawal form to the National Board Processing Center.

Refunds

Certification and renewal candidates who withdraw may be eligible for a fee refund, less the nonrefundable initial fee, any retake fees, and any service charges.

Your withdrawal request must be received prior to March 31, 2014 and your scheduled assessment center appointment (certification candidates only), whichever comes first, and you must cancel all outstanding assessment center appointments before submitting your withdrawal request. No refunds will be processed until all outstanding appointments have been canceled. Please allow a minimum of 4–6 weeks for processing of your refund.

Candidates who pay the full certification fee and submit a portfolio or attend an assessment center appointment but discover that they will be unable to complete the assessment process will have to pay the retake fee for any portfolio entries or assessment center exercises they retake that were not completed during the initial attempt.

Take One! participants can withdraw within 60 days from submission of their full payment to receive a partial refund of payments over the \$100 nonrefundable fee. Alternatively, participants can choose to defer the submission of their entry for one application year. Refunds for *Take One!* participants whose money was converted from National Board Certification cannot be granted nor can it be transferred to another applicant.

Requests for a full refund of the National Board assessment fee will not be honored, **regardless of the circumstances** surrounding the request.

In the event that your account becomes overpaid, a request for refund of overpaid fees must be submitted no later than March 31 of the year following your last year of eligibility for the overpaid application. It is your responsibility to review charges assessed and payments made against those charges by accessing *My Profile* on the National Board website (**www.nbpts.org**) and, to the extent that payments from any payer cause the account to be overpaid, you must inform National Board which payee should be refunded the amount of the overpayment.

Overpayment refund requests must be made via *My Profile* or in writing to:

National Board Processing Center
11827 Tech Com, Suite 200
San Antonio, TX 78233
Fax: (888) 811-3514

National Board Certification and Certification Renewal Refund Information

You may be eligible for a refund of your assessment fee less the nonrefundable initial fee, any retake fees, and any service charges if any of the following apply:

- You withdraw before March 31, 2014 and prior to attending a scheduled assessment center appointment. (You must cancel any previously scheduled assessment center appointments.)
- You are found ineligible for National Board Certification after review of your eligibility verification forms.
- You are called to active duty military service and are unable to complete the assessment process.
- You do not submit the necessary eligibility forms or payment in full by the deadline indicated for your candidacy year in Table 4.1 — 2013–2014 National Board Certification Assessment Calendar on page 21.
- You are found ineligible for National Board Certification after review of documentation relative to a felony conviction.

You are NOT eligible for a refund if any of the following apply:

- You attended an assessment center appointment (or scheduled an assessment center appointment that was not canceled prior to the appointment, even if you did not attend).
- The March 31, 2014 deadline for withdrawing has passed, even if you have not yet scheduled or attended an assessment center appointment.
- You inadvertently select the wrong certificate area or specialty area when applying and do not request a change prior to submitting portfolio entries or attending an assessment center appointment.
- You paid your retake fee and later elect not to continue with the assessment process or decide not to retake some or all of the retake entries and/or exercises you selected on your retake application.
- You deferred your *Take One!* or certification renewal submission.

Be sure to include your ID number in all correspondence with National Board.



Online Services at www.nbpts.org

Complete your online application. Use the online candidate resources to access information regarding

- National Board Standards;
- eligibility requirements;
- *Portfolio Instructions*;
- *Assessment Center Policy and Guidelines*;
- *Scoring Guide for Candidates*.

Access *My Profile* at www.nbpts.org to

- view and update your candidate record;
- check on the status of fee payments and forms;
- update personal information;
- pay by credit or debit card or e-check;
- withdraw your application;
- view your score report when scores are released;
- submit a question about the National Board assessment process;
- seek clarification of the *Portfolio Instructions*.



Customer Support at
1-800-22TEACH (83224)

**Contact National Board Monday–Friday
8:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m., CST.**

- Get assistance completing an application.
- Inquire about deadlines, forms, policies, or the status of your portfolio materials.



Pay by Mail

Send payments by mail to:

National Board
c/o Bank of America, Illinois
PO Box 99406
Chicago, IL 60693

Send payments by courier service to:

National Board
c/o Bank of America, Illinois
99406 Collections Center Drive
Lockbox 99406
Chicago, IL 60693



Submit Written Correspondence
and Forms (No payments, please)

For first-class mail or courier service:

National Board Processing Center
11827 Tech Com, Suite 200
San Antonio, TX 78233

Fax: (888) 811-3514

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