

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
NOVEMBER 4, 2003**

SUBJECT

American Board Certification for Teacher Excellence

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

At its August meeting the Board approved on first reading rules to advance the recommendation from the Idaho's MOST committee to create three alternative routes to teacher certification. One of those routes is designed to assist persons who already have completed a college degree to obtain certification as a teacher and enter the classroom as a teacher.

A remaining challenge for this route is the identification and implementation of an efficient process that will eliminate artificial barriers to this route while complying with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements for Highly Qualified Teachers.

The U.S. Department of Education has funded the development of a certification process called the American Board Certification for Teacher Excellence (ABCTE). This certification process includes a pre-assessment of skills and educational needs for the teacher candidate, prescribed instruction and a test to assure mastery of both content knowledge and pedagogy. The US Department of Education has approved this process as meeting the Highly Qualified Teachers requirements in NCLB.

ABCTE, then, provides an important support for the alternative routes the Board is advancing in its rules. In essence it provides a standard-based certification process for Idaho teachers.

A final step in the implementation of the American Board will be to work with the State Board to implement a process to track the academic performance of students in classrooms of ABCTE certified teachers.

Two actions are required to include ABCTE as an Idaho teaching certification.

- (1) Approve Temporary Rule 08.02.02 – RULES GOVERNING UNIFORMITY.
- (2) Approve the ABCTE test as an approved certification process under the rule.

RECOMMENDATION

To approve the Temporary Rule and then approve the American Board Certification for Teacher Excellence (ABCTE) as an accepted certification vehicle in Idaho public schools.

MOTIONS

A motion that the Board approve Temporary Rule 08.02.02 Rules Governing Uniformity Section 45 (as presented).

A motion that the Board approve American Board Certification for Teacher Excellence (ABCTE) as an accepted certification vehicle in Idaho public schools.

Moved by_____ Seconded by_____ Carried Yes_____ No_____

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**IDAPA 08
TITLE 02
CHAPTER 02**

08.02.02 - RULES GOVERNING UNIFORMITY

045. Alternative Route Preparation Program – On-line Preparation.

- 01.The candidate must meet with an academic advisor and/or complete an assessment to determine the preparation needed to meet the Idaho Standards for Initial Certification of Professional School Personnel.
- 02.The candidate must complete identified on-line and/or in-class preparation materials.
- 03.Prior to entering the classroom the candidate shall meet or exceed the qualifying score on a test of content knowledge and pedagogy as approved by the State Board of Education.

**American Board for Certification
of Teacher Excellence
A Paper for the Idaho Board of Education**

Teacher Certification and NCLB

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, provided for sweeping reform in education. The focus of the Act was to assure that all students in the nation's public schools achieve proficiency in core subjects. States are required to implement accountability plans designed to achieve this 100% proficiency goal.

A key component of the Act is a requirement relating to the quality of instruction in classrooms. To this end the Act includes the following requirements related to the qualification of classroom teachers:

- Schools must assure that a "Highly Qualified Teacher" in core academic areas is in every classroom by 2005-2006 (Title I, section 1119)
- In Title I schools, teachers must be highly qualified NOW.
- Core areas encompass more than some realize: English, reading and language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography.

Highly Qualified Teachers

In signing the Act, President Bush said, "We give our teachers a great responsibility: to shape the minds and hopes of our children". As acknowledgement of the vital role that teachers play in the education of children, Congress defined highly qualified teachers as those who possess full state certification but also have solid content knowledge of the subjects they teach. To this end new teachers must pass rigorous subject matter tests or have the equivalent of an undergraduate major or graduate degree.

To quote the Secretaries report (USDE 2002) "Across the country there are several promising experiments that recruit highly qualified candidates who are interested in teaching but did not attend schools of education and place them quickly in high-needs schools providing training, support and mentoring....these programs should become models for the future, as states make it less burdensome for exceptional candidates to find teaching positions in our nation's schools."

Secretary Paige has called for Certification Reform

In his reports related to teacher quality, Secretary Paige has called for states to take actions that will increase access to classroom for qualified teachers who can impact student learning:

- Reduce unnecessary barriers to certification
- Increase teacher standards
- Develop Alternative Route Programs

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Research regarding Teacher Preparation

The Education Commission of the States recently published findings from its review of over 500 studies on teacher preparation. The study was conducted to determine what the research suggests about the best ways to train effective classroom teachers. Some of the major conclusions of the research were:

- Teacher who can demonstrate a content knowledge that is directly related to their teaching responsibilities are more likely to be effective in the classroom.
- Pedagogy skills acquired in the first years of teaching can be more effective than those acquired in coursework. Hence, the alternative route to certification can be viewed as a valid teacher preparation process.
- Student teaching experience has not been shown conclusively to contribute to teacher success. Alternative routes can be an effective process for teacher preparation.
- Research shows that cohorts of alternative route teachers are ultimately as effective as traditionally trained teachers.
- There are no programs that are effective in training teachers for specific teaching environments (i.e., urban, rural or high need).
- Setting more stringent entrance requirements for teacher preparation programs is not a good policy consideration.
- Accreditation of a teacher preparation program does not predict teacher effectiveness or retention.

- The study concludes that the following elements must be present for an alternative route program to be effective:
 - Strong partnership with a local school district
 - Good participant screening and selection process
 - Strong supervision and mentoring for participants during their teaching
 - Solid curriculum that includes instruction in classroom basics and teaching methods

Reference – Allen –(ECS) 2003

Data regarding Alternative Routes

Additionally, studies provide the following information regarding teachers who are trained in alternative route programs:

- People coming into teaching through alternative routes tend to be older, people of color, more men, have academic degrees other than education, and have experiences in other occupations.
- Early data from several states indicate that individuals entering teaching through alternative routes have higher retention rates than those entering from traditional college based programs.

References - C. Emily Feistritzer (2000); L. Klagholz (1999)

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Overview of the American Board Process

American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence meets the federal definition of “Highly Qualified” and is recognized in NCLB as an approved provider (Title II, Part A, National Activities Section) Pennsylvania recently took action to accept training provided by the American Board as sufficient for a teacher to be deemed as “highly qualified”.

Current Certification Areas

Currently the American Board offers certification in the following areas:

- Elementary (K-6)
- English (6-12)
- Mathematics (6-12)
 - Master Teacher Certification in Elementary, English and Math will be available in 2004.

Establishing Content Validity of the American Board Test

American Board tests are based on rigorous standards developed and reviewed by a group of nationally recognized experts, researchers, teacher educators, teachers, administrators, and school practitioners. The following elements were all part of the development process:

- Subject Area Standards
- Review of Current State and National Standards for teachers;
- Review of State Standards for Students;
- Select Panels who crafted standards;
- Scholars, teachers, teacher educators, administrators, researchers, and policymakers reviewed standards.
- Select Panel of Researchers, teachers, administrators, and teacher educators reviewed current standards for pedagogy at the state and national level;
- Literature review was conducted to select empirically validated strategies that:
 - Are linked to student achievement
 - May be replicated
 - Are supported by leaders in the field

All standards were reviewed by teachers (new and experienced), teacher educators, administrators, school psychologists, special educators, researchers, and policymakers. Standards include the following critical elements:

- Instructional Design
- Instructional Strategies
- Classroom Management
- Assessment Terms and Techniques
- Working with Parents
- Working with Diverse Students

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American Board Certification Process

The American Board certification process includes the following steps:

- Self-assessment—will identify areas to help the individual focus their areas of study.
- Advisor—will provide candidate a list of resources, support and advice to complete certification and participate in job search.
- Online Preparation Materials—will provide interested candidates with study and practice materials to help prepare for meeting the standards.
- Resource links—will provide interested candidates with a list of resources and courses to help prepare for meeting the standards.
- Test Preparation—will provide interested candidates with a list of approved vendors for test preparation.
- Descriptive Score Reports — will provide scores that indicate specific domain results and the level of passing for each candidate
- Ongoing Research—American Board certified teachers will be part of an ongoing longitudinal study that will assess teacher retention rates and measure American Board Certified teachers' impact on student learning.

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Sample Reading and English Language Arts Standards

Domain 1: Alphabetics

- 1.1 Alphabetic Basics & Phonemic Awareness
- 1.2 Phonics Instruction

Domain 2: Fluency

Domain 3: Comprehension of Texts

- 3.1 Vocabulary Development
- 3.2 Interpretation and Evaluation of Informational Texts.
- 3.3 Interpretation and Evaluation of Literary Texts.

Domain 4: Oral and Written Language Development

- 4.1 Standard English Language Conventions
- 4.2 Language Acquisition and Development
- 4.3 Comprehension and Delivery of Spoken Messages
- 4.4 Writing Strategies & Applications
- 4.5 Research Strategies.