



April 15, 2019

Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
Co-Chair House State Affairs Committee
State Capitol Room 411
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Kreiss-Tomkins,

Thank you for introducing House Bill 128 (HB 128) to highlight Alaska's National Board Certified Teachers in their schools and to establish the goal of having more Nationally Board Certified Teachers (NBCT) in Alaska. We are pleased to offer our support for HB 128 and contribute to the policy discussion around educator excellence.

As you know, National Board Certification (NBC) is an advanced certification that goes beyond Alaska licensure and is considered by educators to be a true mark of excellence. It is recognized as the teaching profession's highest credential. A growing body of research links NBC with improved student success and outcomes.

The certification process is self-reflective, exhaustive, methodical, and challenging. Educators meticulously analyze their own work and find the process to be instrumental in improving their classroom practices. Earning National Board Certification requires a significant investment of time and financial resources by educators. Generally, it costs educators at least \$2000 to earn their NBC and the certification lasts 5 years.

NBC is a widely accepted form of performance based pay. In Washington State, NBC teachers earn an additional \$5397 annually and can earn an additional \$5000 for working in a high needs school. At least 25 other states offer financial remuneration for NBC teachers who have invested the time, money, and dedication required to earn this distinction.

In addition, NBC could help Alaska address our recruitment and retention crisis. According to the Institute of Social and Economic Research, teacher turnover can be 20-30% in many rural districts. In other states, Florida, Ohio and South Carolina, NBC has proven to be a tool in keeping excellent educators in the profession. NBCT's are also teacher leaders who help to mentor the early career teachers who are most likely to leave the profession.

NEA-Alaska is proud to support initiatives to elevate the teaching profession and to encourage more educators to earn their NBC. Every year we offer an intensive one-week institute open to all of our members to support their efforts to earn NBC. We also provide specific member trainings around the state based on member interest.

We are grateful for the opportunity to talk more about NBC and how excellent educators are a critical component to student success.

Sincerely,

Tim Parker
President, NEA-Alaska



April 12, 2019

The Honorable Representative Kreiss-Tomkins
Alaska State Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Kreiss-Tomkins,

The Association of Alaska School Boards is pleased to offer our support for HB 128 – Teachers: National Board Certification. Our Association has a believe statement and a resolution supporting legislation along these lines:

B.18(a) QUALITY STAFF IMPROVES STUDENT LEARNING. High-quality, highly motivated, culturally responsive and innovative teachers, administrators and other staff are essential for successful student learning.

4.5 ADDRESSING THE TEACHER, SPECIALIST AND ADMINISTRATOR SHORTAGE. The Association of Alaska School Boards urges the Alaska State Legislature, Alaska State Board of Education, and Teacher Education Programs in Alaska’s universities to address the severe shortage of teachers, specialists, and administrators in the State of Alaska.

We believe the highest standards of professionalism by school staff lead to more engagement by students as well as increased student achievement. The more effective an educator becomes, the greater impact they are able to have on their students. Additionally, Board Certified teachers typically become educational leaders within their building, and share those classroom skills with their peers.

Alaska, along with every other state, is experiencing a severe teacher recruitment and retention crisis. The teaching profession has lost some of the prestige and respect of the public for a variety of reasons. Obtaining National Board Certification and honoring those teachers who obtain that certification will help to recreate the pride and recognition in the nobility of serving as a teacher.

The Association of Alaska School Boards encourages the passage of HB 128. It will benefit Alaska’s public school students.

Tiffany Jackson
President

Norm Wooten
Executive Director