



Input on SBEC's National Board Review

Sept. 18, 2026

The **Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)** offers the following input on SBEC's review of National Board standards:

ATPE supports maintaining National Board Certification as a pathway within the Teacher Incentive Allotment.

We understand the issue in question is neither the quality of National Board Certification nor the results achieved by those who have attained it. The clear high quality of the educators who have obtained this certification is not in dispute. The issue is whether certain components of the National Board process and materials comply with Texas law, specifically House Bill 2, Section 21.3523. The text of the section in question is below:

(b) review under Subsection (a) must evaluate whether the components and assessments required for a National Board Certification align and comply with state law, including whether:

(1) earning a National Board Certification would interfere with the certificate holder's ability to provide:

(A) instruction in the essential knowledge and skills without using common core state standards, as defined by Section 28.002;

(B) phonics instruction in accordance with Section 28.0062 and without using three-cueing, as prohibited by Subsection (a-1) of that section; or

(C) instruction in accordance with:

(i) the instructional requirements and prohibitions under Section 28.0022; or

(ii) any other applicable state law; and

(2) the components and assessments align with the criteria adopted by the State Board of Education under Section 31.022 for the approval of instructional materials.

(c) Not later than December 31, 2026, the State Board for Educator Certification shall conduct an initial review under Subsection (a) of National Board Certifications issued by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and reauthorize or revoke the nationally board certified teacher designation under Section 21.3521(c). If the board fails to reauthorize the designation by that date, the authorization for the designation is revoked.

The statute identifies specific areas for SBEC's review, including Common Core, three-cueing, the instructional requirements and prohibitions under Section 28.0022 and other applicable state law, and alignment with the State Board of Education's instructional materials criteria.

ATPE is concerned the scope of the review has potentially gone beyond the statute and that statements concerning the ramifications of the review have been made that do not align with statute language. We feel it is important to recenter and refocus on what the statute

The Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE) has been a strong voice for Texas educators since 1980. It is the leading educators' association in Texas with approximately 75,000 members statewide. With its strong collaborative philosophy, ATPE speaks for classroom teachers, administrators, future, retired and para-educators and works to create better opportunities for 5 million public schoolchildren. ATPE is the ally and the voice of Texas public school educators.

specifically asks the Board to do. Other concerns may warrant consideration, but they should be evaluated in the context of what the Legislature has directed SBEC to do.

The eventual decision will have significant consequences for Texas educators and their students. Revocation would affect teachers who have invested significant time and personal resources in earning National Board Certification, as well as those currently pursuing it. It would remove an established pathway for professional advancement and recognition through TIA, which for many teachers is the only available pathway because TIA is not equitably available to all teachers. It will reduce opportunities for experienced educators to engage in professional growth and continue strengthening their classroom practice. Research by Texas Tech University's Jacob Kirksey is clear and unequivocal in its findings of the positive impacts associated with National Board Certified Teachers on their students, further demonstrating the potential value of retaining this pathway.

ATPE has reviewed comments submitted by Dr. Audrey Young to the SBOE Committee on School Initiatives, as well as the update sent by the National Board to Dr. Young outlining the steps the National Board is taking to comply with Texas law. We support the National Board's three-pronged approach to ensuring compliance and believe it meets the provision in HB 2.

It is also our understanding the Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff disagrees with this judgment and feels nothing short of full rewrite of National Board Certificate-area standards flagged in the July report will demonstrate compliance. Respectfully, ATPE wishes to emphasize that HB 2 places that decision with SBEC, not with TEA staff. Section 21.3523 requires the Board to conduct the initial review and, by Dec. 31, 2026, to "reauthorize or revoke" the National Board Certified Teacher designation. The statute does not require SBEC to adopt TEA's recommendation. It requires SBEC to conduct the review and make the determination. You are not mandated to revoke if National Board does not do a full rewrite, and nothing in the statute says that is the case.

As SBEC considers the results of the review and prepares for its December decision, the Board should carefully consider whether the flagged concerns warrant revocation of the designation. This should be weighed carefully against the actions taken by National Board to comply with the law as well as the potential impact this will have on excellent teachers and their students. Texas can enforce its laws and instructional requirements without unnecessarily eliminating a pathway that benefits educators and, ultimately, their students.

For additional information, contact ATPE Governmental Relations at (800) 777-2873 or government@atpe.org.