

Partnering with School Libraries to Promote Effective Teaching & Learning
*National Board Offers Critical Support to School Libraries for new
Federal Innovative Approaches to Literacy Program*

The U.S. Department of Education’s new \$28.6 million Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) program calls for the development and implementation of innovative programs that promote childhood literacy. Specifically, the IAL program encourages the funding of projects that “foster collaboration and joint professional development opportunities for teachers, school leaders, and school library personnel with a focus on using literacy resources effectively to support reading and writing and academic achievement.” (Federal Register, Volume 77, Number 133, Page 40867, 07/11/2012).

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) provides a rigorous certification process that defines, develops and assesses accomplished teaching and library media practice. In 2005, AASL announced its support of National Board Certification, stating that that “National Board assessment measures what an accomplished school library media specialist should know and be able to do in the context of their daily work.” (<http://www.ala.org/aasl/aaslissues/positionstatements/teachingstandards>). More than 2,700 library media specialists have achieved National Board Certification since 2002. National Board’s *Library Media Standards* are available at http://www.nbpts.org/the_standards.

The National Board has developed an innovative program to facilitate the development of cohesive school cultures focused on student literacy skills. This effort engages schools or clusters of schools around a standards-based approach for improving teaching practice called *Take One!*.

This breakthrough model of professional learning has proven highly effective. *Take One!* allows teachers to set learning goals, plan instruction, analyze and reflect on their teaching practices, and engage in collegial collaboration within the framework of the National Board Standards. Through *Take One!*, teachers across diverse content areas and grade levels are able to determine the practices and tools that foster literacy skills for students. This open dialogue fosters a collective responsibility for students in participating schools and positions the library media specialist as a key expert and resource to support literacy across all content areas.

The result of this initiative is improved and more reflective teaching practice throughout classrooms and schools, demonstrated evidence of student achievement gains, increased collaboration with colleagues, strengthened parent and community connections, and the opportunity for participants to begin the path toward becoming a National Board Certified Teacher.

NBPTS has conducted research in schools and districts using National Board programs to improve teaching effectiveness, especially in core content areas of reading and mathematics. Significant advancements have been observed in student achievement and school culture:

- *Improvement in student achievement.* Research shows that students assigned to teachers participating in National Board programs experience significantly more growth over time in reading and mathematics scores relative to students assigned to non-participating teachers in the same school.
- *Changes in school culture.* A collaborative approach to National Board programs influences change in teacher perceptions of teaching quality, collaboration, school environment, and leadership support within their feeder pattern. Participants report a more cohesive faculty, increase in student-centered instruction, more productive classroom discourse, improved instructional leadership, and increase in teacher collaboration and student engagement.

For more information about how to embed National Board programs into your school district’s IAL application, please contact Emma Parkerson at eparkerson@nbpts.org.