

National Board for Professional Teacher Standards (NBPTS) Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Educator/Applicant

If you have questions regarding the **NBPTS Program**, you may find these commonly asked questions and answers designed for the Educator/Applicant helpful. **Use the “Ctrl+F” to search specific words or phrases.** If your question is not answered below, please contact the Program Specialist at tssp@schools.utah.gov.

- 1. How do I qualify for the NBPTS Bonus?** CACTUS must show all of the following: 1. A current National Board Certification, 2. Hold a CLASSROOM assignment, 3. Assignment in a Utah public/charter school. An educator is not required to qualify for the Teacher Salary Supplement Program (TSSP) bonus in order to qualify for the National Board Certification bonus. Some may qualify for both, and your application on the [TSSP Service Site](#) will indicate if you qualify for one or both.
- 2. If I have a current assignment in a Title 1 school, what do I need to do to be eligible for the additional bonus?** The Title 1 bonus is automatically awarded to educators who hold a classroom assignment in a Title 1 school AND who have a current NBPTS certification. There are no additional steps to qualify. The bonus will be awarded automatically at the end of the program year (during the Annual payment cycle) and is based on the percentage of your current classroom assignment in a Title 1 school. Please note a school's Title 1 status can change annually.
- 3. If part of my assignments is in an administrative/support role and the other is in a classroom assignment, do I qualify for all of the NBPTS funds?** No. You would be eligible to receive a percentage of the funding based on the classroom assignment.
- 4. Do I need to notify TSSP or document something specific in my application to be considered for the National Board Certification bonus?** No. The TSSP system will validate your eligibility through CACTUS for this additional bonus area at the time your TSSP application is being processed at the end of the program year (during the Annual payment cycle). New or renewed certifications are entered in CACTUS during the month of December.
- 5. How may I apply for the NBPTS Pre-Payment Program?** If you are wanting to obtain or maintain a NBPTS Certification, you may be eligible for the Pre-pay Program where the USBE will help pay for related fees on your behalf. Please follow the [Pre-payment Program Steps](#) to apply between **July 1st and January 31st of the program year**. All applications will be reviewed to determine the funds to be allocated to National Board at the end of February. Application for the Pre-Payment Program should be done within the same cycle an educator registers to earn or maintain a NBPTS certification.
- 6. Where and when may I apply for the NBPTS Bonus?** The application is submitted electronically on the [TSSP Service Site](#). The application must be submitted between **October 1st and April 30th** each program year. Refer to the [Home](#) page of the TSSP Service Site for the various application deadlines. It is recommended that the educator set an annual reminder in their calendar to review their application and information.
- 7. May I select any payment term?** If an educator also qualifies for the TSSP Standard Bonus, they may elect a *preferred* payment cycle, during the initial application submission. The “term” election should be based on their local education agency's (LEA) schedule. *Any term elected that does not match the LEA schedule will be automatically switched to an Annual payment term by either the LEA or USBE.* The NBPTS bonus is only paid at the end of the program year, regardless of the TSSP payment term chosen. If the educator *only qualifies* for the NBPTS bonus, they only elect an **annual** term.
- 8. I had an account in the last TSSP system before 2016, do I have to reapply?** Yes. You will need to first create an *Educator Profile* in the new system, confirm your email address and contact information, and set up your password. The applications can then be submitted during the application window once the profile has been created.
- 9. I have been trying to access my account, but the system will not allow me to enter.** The TSSP Service Site login screen defaults to your email address but be sure that you are entering your **Username**. Remember that the

Username and password are both case-sensitive. Use the “Forgot your Username” or “Forgot your Password?” options on the Log in page (<https://tssp.schools.utah.gov/Account/Login>).

10. **How do I reset my TSSP account password?** If you need to reset your password, please be sure to use a different browser than Chrome. For some reason Chrome does not like the TSSP website or the website does not like Chrome... we do not know why it happens. Firefox, Safari, or Microsoft Edge seems to work. When you open a new browser:
 - Clear your browser history,
 - Go to the [TSSP Service Site](#) login page,
 - Click on the “forgot password” link even before you try to log in.
 - Find the Reset email and follow the instructions. Be sure to check junk mail, spam, or even trash.
11. **My email has changed, how do I update it?** Send an email to the Program Specialist at tssp@schools.utah.gov. Provide your First and Last Names, CACTUS#, and new email address.
12. **I created an account but did not get the confirmation email.** First confirm that the email did not go to your Junk or SPAM folder. If you still cannot find the email, follow the “Returning User” link, and select the “Forgot your Username”. If you still are not receiving the email, contact the Program Specialist for assistance.
13. **I missed the deadline for my application. May I apply after the deadline has closed?** Maybe. This deadline depends upon the payment “term” you selected on your application. If you have missed the Semester or Trimester Application deadline, you would still be eligible to submit an Annual Application. However, once the Annual Application Deadline has passed (after April 30th), no additional applications can be submitted for that program year. Due to legislation and budget constraints, the USBE must determine if proration of bonuses will need to occur, so no late submissions are permitted.
14. **Do I need to submit more than one application if I apply for a Semester or Trimester payment schedule?** No. In the TSSP system, you will only need to submit ONE application and elect the payment term. Each LEA determines the payment cycle that matches the school schedules.
15. **When I review my CACTUS account, it does not show my NBPTS Certification. How do I get it posted?** Forward a copy of your NBPTS certificate to the Program Specialist at tssp@schools.utah.gov. Include in the email your full name and CACTUS #.
16. **How do I correct the CACTUS data in TSSP because my assignments/FTE are incorrect?** Contact your LEA/HR to make corrections to assignments, percentages, FTE, or Intern Status.
17. **Why is an assignment listed twice in my application?** Some assignments may qualify for both the NBPTS and TSSP bonus through more than one subject area. To verify the eligible percentage, only add the assignment percentages highlighted in green and multiply this by \$1000 (or \$2000 if teaching at a Title 1 school) and the FTE for the estimated value of the bonus.
18. **How do I know if my application has been approved?** The TSSP Service Site allows participants to log in anytime and view their current application status (and review historical applications starting fiscal year 2017). The “Audit History” section will show when you, your LEA, or USBE has viewed or made changes to your application. If an item is underlined in the “Type” column, you can hover over the item to see the system notation or processor’s notes. Until the end of the approval window, the application will show as “pending”.
19. **Why was my application denied?** All applications require the approval of both your LEA and the USBE. If either of these agencies denied the application (or did not process the application), the system will show a reason/explanation with the date it was denied. If you feel it was an error, contact your LEA for assistance.
20. **How do I calculate the value of my NBPTS bonus?** The basic formula is:
Total of all Eligible Assignment % x FTE x 1000 (or 2000 for Title 1 school) = “NBPTS Award”.
An additional amount is calculated for taxes that is funded to the LEA. This amount is listed as the “Benefit” amount that will be posted under the Employer Paid Benefits section on your paycheck. All awards are subject to tax and other elected deductions.
21. **When can I submit an Appeal?** A written appeal can be submitted to the Program Specialist after the electronic application has been created for that program year. The appeal letter must include a current copy of the NBPTS

certificate, verification that the educator worked at a Title 1 school during the program year, or an explanation that the initial denial was inconsistent or based on inaccurate information. **Appeal applications must be RECEIVED by USBE before May 31st to be considered.** Incomplete applications or applications missing supporting documentation will not be processed. Due to funding requirements and deadlines, late appeal applications cannot be accepted.

22. **What is my option if I do not agree with the Appeal Board decision?** All appeal applications are reviewed by a panel to verify the assignments and documentation are following the current Legislative rules. All decisions are final.
23. **How long does it take to receive my approved NBPTS Bonus?** We anticipate 4-6 weeks from the deadline until the payment authorization is funded to the LEA. Traditionally, the USBE approval date in your application allocates the funding to your LEA at the end of that month electronically through the Monthly Allotment Memo. The distribution through your payroll will depend on your LEA's payroll cycle at the time the electronic deposit is received. Due to this difference, some teachers may receive their payment earlier than others.
24. **What is the difference between a TSSP Award (if eligible), NBPTS Award, Other, Benefit and the Total amount showing in my application?** The NBPTS bonus formula is: **Total of all Eligible Assignment % x FTE x 1000 (or 2000).** The **NBPTS Award** amount is what the educator receives in their payroll before applicable taxes or deductions. The employer paid **Benefit** amount is the NBPTS Award x Utah's Benefit Rate (0.3063) and includes percentages for Retirement, Workers Compensation, Medicare, and Social Security. This employer-paid Benefit value is also included in the electronic transfer to your LEA. This Benefit money is designated to cover the employer-paid benefit portion so that the LEA does not have to find or be charged additional money when an educator participates in the program. These funds are listed as earnings for the employee and are reported in payroll under the "Employer-Paid Benefits" section on your paycheck. The payment **Total** is the value of all bonuses including the NBPTS Award, TSSP Award (if eligible), and employer-paid **Benefit** Total. Currently, there is no use of the "Other" category.
25. **How do I know my course assignment qualifies for NBPTS?** Course codes are based on the current Qualified Classroom Assignments for NBPTS as defined by the Utah legislature. Once an application is submitted, you will be able to review your CACTUS data in the TSSP Service Site for the current program year. When viewing your account, the Qualifications box will indicate that you have a qualifying teaching assignment and an active NBPTS certification with check marks. The TSSP Service Site will highlight in **green** that your NBPTS certification has been verified by the USBE. If it is highlighted in **yellow**, it has not yet been verified by the USBE.
26. **If I submitted an appeal last year, will I be required to submit another appeal?** No. Once your appeal has been reviewed by the Appeal Panel and the decision made, it is documented in the system.
27. **If I have a certification for another nationally recognized organization (Example: ASHA) am I eligible for the NBPTS bonus?** No. The legislature has only identified the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification as eligible for the program.
28. **May I submit for partial reimbursement for the NBPTS fees?** No. The Reimbursement Application Program ended in the 2020 program year. If you are in the process of earning the NBPTS certification and paid out-of-pocket for the fees, any new application for the initial or maintenance of the certification must be part of the pre-pay program.
29. **If I missed an application, can I be considered for the bonus for a previous year?** No. Once the application window for that program year has closed, no bonus can be considered.
30. **Do I need to qualify for the TSSP Bonus to receive the NBPTS Bonus?** No. Each bonus eligibility is qualified independently but utilizes the same program system to track and process the salary-based bonuses. One bonus is not contingent upon the other.
31. **If my assignment does not qualify for the NBPTS bonus, can I still be reimbursed for the NBPTS program fees?** Maybe. The current assignment determines eligibility for the bonus. The Reimbursement Application Program ended in the 2020 program year, but you may apply to the [NBPTS Pre-payment Program](#) between **July 1st and January 31st of the program year.** Once your application is approved and the funds are allocated to National

Board at the end of February, an overpayment may show on your National Board account, which will allow the National Board to “refund” the educator the money paid. Please note that there is no guarantee that National Board would reimburse you the money. Application for the Pre-Payment Program should be done within the same cycle an educator registers to earn or maintain a NBPTS certification.

32. **The Approval Deadline has passed, but I still have not received my bonus?** First, review your NBPTS Application under the “History” section to confirm that your bonus was processed and approved by both the LEA and USBE. The system will show values in the “Payments” section. Allow at least 4-5 weeks for funding to be allocated after the last day of the month in which your bonus was approved. If you still have not received funding by mid-month, contact your LEA Payroll department for distribution information.
33. **How do I earn or maintain a NBPTS Certification?** For information about earning or maintaining a National Board Certification, go to www.nbpts.org. The “renewal” program was replaced by the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) beginning September 2020. It is the Board-certified teacher’s pathway for keeping their certification active. The MOC is a process that will allow a National Board-Certified Teacher (NBCT) to extend their certificate for five years. The process is designed to recognize that a Board-certified teacher is growing professionally and maintaining a positive impact on student learning. MOC is consistent with the National Board’s goal to make the Board certification process more affordable, flexible, and more accessible to teachers. The [Utah National Board Coalition](#) may also be another great help and support as you start the process to earn or maintain this certification.
34. **I have paid the \$75 NBPTS registration fee, how do I pay for the components/MOC?** Follow the [Pre-payment Program \(PPP\) Steps](#) to apply between **July 1st and January 31st of each program year** to qualify for assistance from the USBE to “pre-pay” the component/MOC fees associated with earning or maintaining the NBPTS Certification. When your PPP application is approved, the USBE will allocate the funds to National Board at the beginning of March in the program year. The National Board will then post the funds to your candidate account in the form of a coupon. You will use the coupon to complete your purchase. Coupons should be available in your account within 10 business days of receipt of our payment to the National Board. **Monitor your National Board account** daily; your coupon(s) will be posted to the “My Coupons” section in the left-hand navigation menu. To complete your component purchase at the NBPTS website:
- Log in to your National Board [account](#), and have the coupon information at hand
 - Click Browse under Certifications in the left-hand navigation menu to access available certification areas and components. Be sure to use the **coupon only** for the component(s)/MOC indicated in your PPP application to the USBE that you would be completing.
 - Use the search bar to select your certificate area and view components available for purchase.
 - To purchase a component, click the component name link and follow the onscreen prompts.
 - When prompted to submit payment, enter the appropriate coupon code.
 - If you have coupons for more than one component, you must purchase each component in a separate transaction. The system will not allow you to use more than one coupon per transaction.