

# National Board for Professional Teaching 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](mailto:tssp@schools.utah.gov).

1. **How do I qualify for the NBPTS Bonus?** CACTUS must show all the following:

- Hold a current National Board Certification,
- Hold a CLASSROOM assignment, and
- Work in a Utah public or charter school.

An educator is not required to qualify for the Teacher Salary Supplement Program (TSSP) bonus 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 the NBPTS bonus?** Yes. You would be eligible to receive either the \$1000 or \$2000 if you are teaching in a Title 1 school.

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 1<sup>st</sup> and January 31<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> and April 30<sup>th</sup>** 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?** Log in to your TSSP account to update your email address from the Home page:
  - Click the “Manage” link in the “My Account” section
  - Update email address
  - Save

Watch for a new email from **NoReply-TSSP-USBE** ([noreply.tssp@schools.utah.gov](mailto:noreply.tssp@schools.utah.gov)). This email may go to your Junk/SPAM/Trash folder. Click the link to confirm the new email address. If the link is inactive, copy and paste the larger link at the bottom of the email into your address bar to confirm the account. *The USBE is not responsible for misdirected email or the failure to receive notices and other information from USBE that is sent to the teacher/applicant’s email of record.* Teacher/applicants receive an electronic courtesy notification for each processing action.

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 also qualify for the TSSP bonus and 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 30<sup>th</sup>), 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](mailto: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, and/or FTE.
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. Educators who are eligible for the NBPTS bonus can receive the full amount of \$1000 or \$2000 (for teaching at a Title 1 school). To verify the eligible percentage for the TSSP bonus, only add the assignment percentages highlighted in green and multiply it by \$4100 and the FTE for the estimated value of the TSSP 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?** In accordance with the legislative terms of SB208 (2019 session) that financially parted the NBPTS funds from the TSSP funds, educators who are eligible for the NBPTS bonus can receive the full amount rather than a prorated amount based on assignment percentages and FTE. The legislature increased the award values to \$1,000 for educators who are in classroom assignments and hold a current NBPTS certification, and to \$2,000 for certified educators who are in classroom assignments in a Title 1 school. An additional amount is calculated for taxes that is funded to the LEA. All awards are subject to federal and state 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 31<sup>st</sup> 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 award is for \$1000 or \$2000 for those teaching in a Title 1 school. The **NBPTS Award** amount is what the educator receives in their payroll before applicable taxes or deductions. The Benefit amount is calculated by using this formula: **NBPTS Award x URS Tax Rate (0.3063)**. The **Benefit Amount** is the funds provided **to the LEA** to cover their costs of paying the additional taxable amounts that include Retirement, Workers Compensation, Medicare, and Social Security. This employer-paid Benefit value is also included in the electronic transfer to your LEA. These funds are reported on the 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**. The TSSP (Teacher Salary Supplement Program) Award is another salary bonus available to educators who teach in an approved-TSSP subject area in Utah. 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. All decisions are final.

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 or maintaining 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 1<sup>st</sup> and January 31<sup>st</sup> 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” you 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 you register 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](http://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. **How do I obtain a loan application verification request for this bonus?** Awards to NBPTS applicants are entirely dependent on continued legislative funding and authorization. No applicant has any guarantee of continued participation in the program. Based on the design of the NBPTS program, this type of verification is unavailable. Your NBPTS LEA approver has the responsibility of confirming your eligibility each program year and the USBE is responsible to administer the payments. Even though the system shows you have met the eligibility requirements for this bonus, there is no guarantee of its approval (example: if an educator were to leave their position before the end of the year or receive a sub-standard performance review) and the value changes based on the number of participants each year and could likely be reduced or even eliminated by the State Legislature at any time.
35. **I have paid the \$75 NBPTS registration fee, how do I pay for the components/MOC?** When the USBE allocates the funds to National Board, it will automatically post directly to your candidate account within 10 business days of receipt. **Monitor your National Board account** frequently to determine the funds have posted so you can complete the final purchase of your components/MOC through the NBPTS Payment Portal.