

Dear Principal:

As we strive to develop a system of schooling that would result in an education that is superior and competitive, one that would make Mississippi schools the envy of the nation; I encourage you to actively promote National Board Certification in your school. Once again our state has the opportunity to support all interested teachers as they pursue National Board Certification—a professional development experience unparalleled to any other. December 31 is the application deadline for teachers interested in pursuing National Board Certification in 2003-04.

My request of you today is to identify teachers in your school who meet the National Board eligibility requirements (outlined in the enclosed overview) and invite them to apply for National Board Certification. Over 1,400 National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) are currently teaching in classrooms across Mississippi—perhaps you have NBCTs already teaching in your school. NBCTs have the power to improve student learning dramatically. No teacher in your school should miss this outstanding professional development opportunity.

The enclosed overview of National Board Certification can be duplicated and distributed in teacher paychecks, in mailboxes, and at faculty meetings. Your personal encouragement may make the difference to a teacher's decision to pursue National Board Certification. Please extend individual invitations to teachers you believe personify high standards for accomplished teaching and expressly encourage them to seek National Board Certification. If you have NBCTs on your staff, consider enlisting them to assist you with promoting National Board Certification in your school and with supporting candidates.

Teachers who pursue National Board Certification, whether they achieve or not, are key to helping our children meet high standards and prepare them to be productive members of our communities. Your commitment to promoting National Board Certification in your school will truly yield positive results for your teachers and students. Together, we can ensure that highly qualified teachers are at the head of every classroom across our state.

Thank you for your commitment. If you need any assistance at all or have any questions, please feel free to contact Karen Garr (kgarr@nbpts.org) or Joyce Loveless (jloveless@nbpts.org) in the Southeast Regional NBPTS Office at 919-571-5960 or Sue Cecily McNair (cmcnair@mde.k12.ms.us) in the Mississippi Teacher Center at 601-359-3631.

Sincerely,