

Contact:
Richard Klein
703-312-7282
rklein@nbpts.org

Bureau of Indian Education Partners with National Board to Accelerate Effort to Reach 1,000 Board-Certified Teachers in Native American Schools by 2020

ARLINGTON, Va. — December 9, 2015 — In a focused effort to strengthen teaching and improve student outcomes in BIE-funded schools serving Native American students, the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) is working with the National Board to support teachers to pursue and achieve National Board Certification. National Board Certification is a rigorous, performance-based, peer-reviewed assessment similar to Board certification in fields such as medicine and engineering. More than a decade of [research](#) shows that the students of Board-certified teachers learn more than their peers.

"Teaching students effectively is the number one priority for the BIE," said BIE Director Dr. Charles "Monty" Roessel. "This partnership with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is not only an investment in our teachers, but in our students' futures. By helping BIE teachers achieve the highest professional standard and become leaders in the classroom, we are able raise the quality of teaching in BIE schools and enhance student learning and achievement."

BIE-funded schools, of which there are 183 spread across 23 states, play an important role in preserving Native cultures and providing access to students in remote tribal areas. However, student outcomes at BIE schools lag far behind those of their peers in public schools. This initiative aims to support BIE teachers. It will provide Native youth the opportunity to learn from accomplished teachers within their own community and culture and provide them with enhanced educational opportunities.

The partnership provides mentoring and candidate support to help teachers achieve Board certification and integrates ATLAS, an online library of case studies featuring authentic classroom-based examples of Board-certified teachers, into professional development opportunities to support teacher growth and development.

"Demonstrating cultural competency is a major part of becoming a National Board Certified Teacher—it is at the heart of the first of the [Five Core Propositions](#)," said Peggy Brookins, interim president and CEO of the National Board. "Our goal through this partnership is to develop a world-class teaching workforce by supporting the teachers who are already in BIE schools, and who are dedicated to preserving the unique cultural heritage of these communities, even as they prepare their students for the future."

The effort follows the recommendation from the American Indian Education Study Group, comprised of tribal leaders and other BIE stakeholders convened by the U.S. Department of the Interior and the U.S. Department of Education. The group issued the “[Blueprint for Reform](#),” part of the Obama administration’s larger Generation Indigenous (Gen-I) Initiative, that aimed to deliver a world class education to all students attending BIE schools as means to transform the future for Native youth. The partnership between the National Board and the BIE will also support the instructional capacity of teachers who are not yet eligible for Board certification, creating a culture of professional learning and peer support.

###

About the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (www.nbpts.org):

The founding mission of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is to advance the quality of teaching and learning by: (1) maintaining high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do; (2) providing a national voluntary system certifying teachers who meet these standards; and (3) advocating related education reforms to integrate National Board Certification in American education and to capitalize on the expertise of National Board Certified Teachers. Recognized as the “gold standard” in teacher certification, the National Board believes higher standards for teachers means better learning for students.