

Yesterday, the State Board of Education approved the following proposed rule for public comment: Department of Education Rules Governing Eligibility and Financial Incentives for National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Candidacy and Certification. The public comment period allows for both written and public feedback on proposed rules.

Changes to the rules were made in collaboration with the National Board Advisory Committee, a group comprised of former and current National Board Certified Teachers. The purpose in making the changes to these rules is primarily to clarify the process by which applicants may become qualified for the appropriated funding, to ensure that legislative intent is followed, and to ensure that decisions for payments from the appropriated funding are prioritized.

Because the National Board is changing the way it issues future certificates, for example in 2017 it will begin issuing 5-year certificates and will discontinue the renewal of 10-year certificates after 2020 (all will be renewed for five years), it is necessary to change the rules to provide for phasing out payments for renewals of 10-year certificates and add provisions for including the 5-year certificates and one renewal of a 5-year certificate, which will allow the payment of bonuses for a 10-year period.

The Department recognizes the value of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification and is proud that Arkansas values the certification with a yearly bonus. Changes to these rules will help to ensure ongoing funding is available for current and future National Board Certified teachers in a clear and responsible manner.

Having been approved for public comment by the State Board of Education, the NBPTS Program rules have been posted on the ADE website ([www.arkansased.gov](http://www.arkansased.gov)) on the Pending Rules webpage. The 30-day period for public comment runs from the day a legal notice of rulemaking is published in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*. For this rule, public comment will end on February 16, 2016. A public hearing will be held at the ADE Auditorium on February 2, 2016, at 1:30 p.m.

Additional public notice with a copy of the rules is given through the distribution of a Commissioner's Memo (also found on the ADE website), and a copy is also filed with the Secretary of State, the Bureau of Legislative Research, and the Governor's Office.