

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based only on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Date: April 7, 1998 Revised: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: Excellent Teaching Program

	<u>Analyst</u>	<u>Staff Director</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Action</u>
1.	<u>Harkey</u>	<u>O'Farrell</u>	<u>ED</u>	<u>Favorable/CS</u>
2.	<u>Hickam</u>	<u>Smith</u>	<u>WM</u>	<u>Favorable/CS</u>
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____

**I. Summary:**

The bill creates the Excellent Teaching Program as a categorical program within the Florida Education Finance Program. Features of the new program would include: monetary rewards for teachers who achieve National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification, additional salary if the national board certified teachers agree to mentor other teachers, and money to school districts to pay for substitute teachers and professional development programs for teachers working in low performing schools. Additional provisions would: exempt teachers with NBPTS certification from the college coursework and in-service requirements for Florida certificate renewal for as long as their national certification was valid, and grant a Florida teaching certificate to teachers coming from out-of-state who hold national board certification and a valid license in another state.

This bill substantially amends sections 236.081 and 231.173, and creates section 236.08106, Florida Statutes.

**II. Present Situation:**

Chapter 231, F.S., and rules of the State Board of Education govern the certification of teachers and other educators. The chapter does not provide incentives or waive certification requirements for accomplished educators who have met the certification standards of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

The NBPTS, a nonprofit organization, has established high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. The NBPTS has developed and operates a voluntary, national system to assess and certify teachers that meet those standards. Before applying for NBPTS certification, a teacher must have three years or more of teaching experience,

must graduate from an accredited college or university, and must hold a valid teaching license. To qualify for NBPTS certification, teachers must pay \$2,000 application fee, develop a portfolio of their work that demonstrates their knowledge and skills, and complete a lengthy written assessment exercise that measures their performance against established standards.

Nationwide, 913 teachers have earned NBPTS certification; 17 of those are Florida teachers. During the 1997-98 school year, NBPTS is offering national certification in seven areas:

- Early childhood/Generalist (students ages 3-8 years);
- Middle Childhood/Generalist (students ages 7-12 years);
- Early Adolescence/Generalist (students ages 11-15 years);
- Early Adolescence/English Language Arts (students ages 11-15 years);
- Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/Art (students ages 11-18 years);
- Adolescence and Young Adulthood/Mathematics (students ages 14-18); and
- Adolescence and Young Adulthood/Science (students ages 14-18).

NBPTS certification complements, but does not replace state licensure or certification. Some states and local school districts provide monetary rewards and/or licensure incentives for teachers who seek and obtain NBPTS certification. Fifty-four states and localities provide fee supports to offset certification costs. Forty-two jurisdictions provide salary supplements. Thirteen states extend state licensure or certification to out-of-state teachers who hold NBPTS certification. Eleven states; Washington, D.C.; and three local jurisdictions (including the Broward County and Dade County School Districts) allow NBPTS certification to satisfy license renewal and/or continuing education requirements.

In 1993-94, the Broward County School District participated in the field test of two NBPTS certification areas: Early Adolescence/English Language Arts and Early Adolescence/Generalist. NBPTS waived the certification fee for teachers who participated in the field test. Five of the participating teachers were awarded NBPTS certification.

### III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

This bill creates a new categorical program within the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP), the Excellent Teaching Program, to provide monetary incentives and rewards to teachers and districts that demonstrate their commitment to teaching excellence. Each district's allocation from the Excellent Teaching Program will be the total of the sums received for each of the following categories, unless otherwise specified in the General Appropriations Act:

- **Fee subsidies** to allow qualified teachers to seek certification from the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards. The fee subsidy will be 90 percent of the NBPTS fee, but not more than \$1800 per eligible participant. The district will submit the fee subsidy to NBPTS for each eligible participant. The fee subsidy is a one-time award and cannot be duplicated for any individual.

To be eligible for the fee subsidy, individuals must:

- Be employed by the district school board or a public school within the district;
- Satisfy prerequisites for the NBPTS certification process; and,
- Agree, in writing, to pay 10 percent of the NBPTS fee and to participate in the NBPTS certification process during the school year for which the fee subsidy is paid.

A teacher for whom the state pays the NBPTS application fee and who does not complete the program, or who doesn't teach in a Florida public school for at least 1 year after completing the program would be required to reimburse the state for the NBPTS application fee. A teacher who completes the program, but fails to gain NBPTS certification would not have to repay the state as long as the 1-year teaching obligation was met. A teacher who does not complete the NBPTS program or the 1-year teaching obligation due to extenuating circumstances would not be required to repay the certification fee.

- **Funding for Substitute Teachers**

- Funding for substitute teacher's salaries to provide 3 days of release time for participating teachers to prepare portfolios and activities for NBPTS certification.

- **Annual monetary rewards equal to 10 percent of prior year's statewide average classroom teacher salary for each NBPTS-certified teacher.**

To qualify for this monetary reward, a teacher must:

- Hold NBPTS certification; and
- Be employed to teach by the school district or a public school within the district.

Districts may pay this annual reward as a single payment or divided into not more than three payments.

- **Annual monetary rewards equal to 10% of the prior year's statewide average salary for each NBPTS-certified teachers who mentors other teachers.**

To receive this award, a teacher must

- Holds NBPTS certification;
- Be employed to teach within the area of NBPTS certification by the school district or a public school within the district; and,
- Agree, in writing, to provide 12 work-days of mentoring and related services to other public school teachers within the district who are not NBPTS-certified. The 12 work-days must be after the regular school day or after the 196-days school year.

Districts may pay this annual reward as a single payment or divided into not more than three payments.

- **A professional development incentive award for the district equal to 50 percent of the amount the district received for the annual monetary rewards for NBPTS-certified teachers**

and for NBPTS-certified teachers who mentor other teachers. This incentive must be used for the professional development of teachers. If the district has critically low performing schools, the entire incentive must be spent for professional development of teachers at the critically low performing schools.

The bill also makes it easier for excellent, out-of-state teachers to receive professional certification to teach in Florida public schools. The professional certificate will be awarded to NBPTS-certified applicants who hold valid certification in another state and pass Florida's background and fingerprint check requirements. In addition, NBPTS certified teachers would be exempt from the renewal requirements for state certification for as long as their national certification was valid.

In keeping with changes made by the 1997 Legislature, the bill eliminates provisions that currently require a request from the employing district school superintendent to seek certification as an experienced out-of-state educator. Legislation enacted in 1997 allows qualified individuals to obtain professional certification without being employed by a school district.

#### **IV. Constitutional Issues:**

##### **A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

##### **B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**

None.

##### **C. Trust Funds Restrictions:**

None.

#### **V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:**

##### **A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

##### **B. Private Sector Impact:**

Teachers in Florida public schools who choose to participate in the NBPTS certification program will only have to pay 10 percent of the \$2,000 application fee.

**C. Government Sector Impact:**

The actual annual cost of the program will depend on how many teachers choose to participate in the NBPTS certification program, and how many are successful in attaining the certification.

The 1998 Senate Appropriations Bill provides \$12 million for the Excellent Teaching Program created by Senator Horne's bill.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Amendments:**

None.