

Your Question:

You asked for resources related to several issues: 1) how states provide professional development to principals, 2) National Board Certification, especially scholarships to help teachers earn National Board Certification, and 3) addressing teacher shortages in rural areas.

Our Response:

Principal Professional Development

Due in part to competing priorities and tight budgets, states have played a relatively small role in principal professional development, which is instead driven largely at the district and school level. However, states can do more to support principals and might benefit from doing so. [Studies have shown](#) (p. 2) that principal leadership and peer collaboration, school culture, and relationships with colleagues are associated with increased student achievement.

In [Developing Excellent School Principals to Advance Teaching and Learning: Considerations for State Policy](#) (The Wallace Foundation, 2015), Paul Manna provides state policy recommendations for improving professional development. Among other things, Manna recommends states:

- Study current state priorities to create a **better allocation of resources** that help teachers and principals gain access to high-quality professional development.
- Muster resources and expertise that can **serve local school districts** as they set their professional development priorities.
- Develop a **systematic statewide initiative** to foster networks and improve the skills of principals across the state. This could include cultivating networks of retired principals and connecting them to current principals.
- Establish **requirements for renewing principal licensing** that help steer principals toward professional development.

National Data on Principal PD

According to data from the School and Staffing Survey, during the 2011/12 school year 99 percent of principals of regular public schools reported participating in some professional development. The most frequently reported type was workshop or conference attendance, and the least frequently reported type was university courses. Only half of principals reported engaging in mentoring, and only a quarter reported participating in a university course. See summary of related findings [here](#).

In [Building Principal Support Systems: Partnerships and Policy Strategies for State Education Agencies](#) (2016), CCSSO provides recommendations to State Education Agencies to develop principal leadership and professional learning and therefore better support College and Career Ready Standards (CCRS). Among other things, CCSSO recommends states:

- Disseminate high-quality tools and resources to assist principals, such as [Aspen Institute’s Implementation of the CCSS: A Transition Guide for School Level Leaders and Aspen Institute’s CoreReady Schools](#) tool
- Leverage existing partnerships or identify opportunities to develop relationships with regional agencies, districts, principal associations, higher education institutions and other stakeholder groups that provide training and support to principals.
- Identify ways, through creation of networks or other mechanisms, to provide principals with peer coaching or coaching from principal supervisors that builds the content knowledge necessary for principals to assist instructional teams and serve as instructional leaders.
- Through the state agency or through support to districts, provide early and sustained coaching and mentorship to new principals in the form of principal coaches.
- Identify principals to serve as master principals or coaches that can provide feedback and mentorship for peer principals.
- Create or join a network for principal learning that provides principals with opportunities to learn from each other and solve problems collectively. Networks can exist within districts or across districts.
- Use the three percent state set-aside for school leaders in Title II of the Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA) to invest in the vision of principal leadership.

State and Program Examples

Colorado

The Colorado Department of Education’s [Educator Effectiveness Liaison Network](#) supports districts in building principal capacity to deliver high-quality teacher evaluations. Through the department’s educator effectiveness liaison model, an appointed district liaison receives training from the department on teacher evaluations, observations and feedback, and then coaches district principals on learned methods. Districts in the network have established a professional learning community and share best practices.

In addition, the [School Turnaround Leaders Development Program](#), established in 2014 by [H.B. 124](#), provides support and development opportunities for leaders serving in low-performing schools. In 2015 and 2016, Colorado school districts and charter schools received over \$1.6 million each year to participate in multiple turnaround leadership programs.

Nevada

[S.B. 474](#) (2015) 1.) required the board of trustees of each school district and the governing body of each charter school to ensure that teachers and administrators have access to high-quality, ongoing professional development related to identified issue areas, 2.) created [The Great Teaching and Leading Fund](#) to, among other things, improve leadership training and development, and 3.) created the [Advisory Task Force on Educator Professional Development](#) to study certain issues relating to professional development of teachers, school administrators and other educational personnel.

North Carolina

[The Distinguished Leaders Program in North Carolina](#), supported through a partnership between the state and the North Carolina Principals and Assistant Principals Association, provides professional development to selected outstanding principals who, after completing a professional growth program, are expected to serve as mentors and trainers for colleagues across the state.

Oregon

[H.B. 3233](#) (2013) established the [Network of Quality Teaching and Learning](#) as a statewide umbrella of support for teachers and principals by funding key development initiatives including: support for new teachers and

administrators through mentoring, providing professional learning opportunities, and supporting efforts to improve career advancement.

Tennessee

Tennessee’s [Governor’s Academy for School Leadership](#), supported by the Tennessee Governor’s Office, Department of Education, Vanderbilt University and local school districts, consists of a cohort of 20-25 assistant principals from across the state who participate in a one-year leadership development experience anchored in practice-based mentorship, in-depth feedback cycles and training sessions. The department also supports other peer training opportunities for both teachers and principals. (See p.11 of [this report](#).)

For additional state policy examples, see the [ECS State Policy Database](#) page on [Principal/School Leadership-- Professional Development](#).

Selected Research and Resources

- The new [Professional Standards for Educational Leaders](#) (PSEL, 2015) provides updated “model” standards for educational leaders, including principals, assistant principals and district leaders. The standards can be used by states to improve the principal pipeline, including preparation, licensure, mentoring and induction, evaluation and professional development. For additional information about the standards, see [this report](#).
- [Looking Outside Education: What School Leaders Can Learn About Professional Learning from Other Organizations](#) (AIR and CCSSO, 2016) provides insights from other professions on how to improve ongoing professional learning for teachers and school leaders.
- [Practical Guide to Designing Comprehensive Principal Evaluation Systems](#) (AIR, 2014) is intended to assist states and districts in developing systems of principal evaluation and support. Beginning on p. 53, the guide provides key questions for state leaders to consider on how to connect their principal evaluation systems to professional development.

National Board Certification

According to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), as of December 1, 2015, more than 112,000 teachers in all 50 states and the District of Columbia have achieved board certification, and the pool of teachers in the process of earning certification in 2017 numbers more than 10,000. On its website, NBPTS provides a 2015 ranking of states by [total number](#) of board-certified teachers and by [percent](#) of teachers who are board certified. NBPTS also provides state rankings for [growth](#) in the number of board-certified teachers over the past three years.

NBPTS’ website also contains an [interactive state map](#) that provides information on state- and district-level fee assistance, candidate support and resources in every state. It also provides an [at-a-glance look](#) at state compensation, connection to state licensure, support for fees and percent of teachers who are board certified in each state. The **table** below pulls out information on support for fees and compensation for your convenience, as these strategies help support teachers financially before and after certification is attained. The National Education Association provides [information](#) to its members about how to ease the financial burden of National Board Certification.

State Support for National Board Certification

State	Support for Certification Fees ^{1 2}	Compensation for Board Certification ^{3 4}
AK		
AL		\$5,000 annual stipend

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State	Support for Certification Fees ^{1 2}	Compensation for Board Certification ^{3 4}
AR	First-time candidates subsidized initial fee but must repay if certification not achieved. Candidates receive 3 days release.	\$5,000 annual stipend
AZ		
CA		
CO	For 2014: a \$250 scholarship will be available to 54 candidates	\$1,600 annual stipend; additional \$3,200 annually for board-certified teachers in high-needs schools
CT		
DC		
DE		
FL		
GA		
HI	Scholarship funding available statewide	\$5,000 annual stipend; additional \$5000 for NBCTs in high-need schools
IA	First-time candidates subsidized for up to 1/2 the fee. The remainder is reimbursed upon certification.	\$2,500 annual stipend (term of 10 years)
ID		\$2,000 annual stipend (term of 5 years)
IL	Up to 750 first-time candidates in high-need schools and 250 teachers in other schools can be subsidized the application fee. Renewal candidates may receive a \$1,000 subsidy.	\$1,500 annually may be available to NBCTs who agree to provide mentoring or professional development
IN		
KS	First-time candidates subsidized up to \$950. Renewal candidates subsidized \$500.	Districts are responsible for \$1,000 annual stipend
KY		\$2,000 annual stipend
LA		
MA		
MD	First-time candidates subsidized 2/3 of fee and the district pays the remaining 1/3. Candidates must repay if don't complete process.	State will match \$1,000 annual stipend offered by local districts and will match an additional \$1,000 to board-certified teachers in high need schools
ME	First-time candidates subsidized the application fee on a first-come first-served basis.	\$3,000 annual stipend
MI		
MN		
MO		
MS	First time candidates are reimbursed the assessment fee upon completion.	\$6,000 annual stipend
MT		One-time \$3,000 stipend
NC	First time candidates receive a \$1,900 loan to be repaid over three years	Board-certified teachers placed on salary schedule 12 percent higher than base pay
ND	First time candidates subsidized 1/2 the application fee for up to 17 candidates	\$1,000 annual stipend

State	Support for Certification Fees ^{1 2}	Compensation for Board Certification ^{3 4}
NE	Candidates reimbursed 1/2 the fee. The remainder is reimbursed upon certification.	\$5,000 annual stipend
NH		
NJ		
NM		Annual 1.5 program unit stipend ~\$5,800
NV		5 percent annual salary increase
NY	First-time candidates subsidized for three components. Upon completion, candidates will be reimbursed the cost of the first component.	
OH		
OK	Candidates receive scholarships of \$1,300 and additional \$500 to cover other expenses	Board-certified teachers placed on a higher salary schedule, earning an additional \$1,000/year
OR		
PA		
RI		
SC		\$5,000 stipend (up to 10 years)
SD		
TN		
TX		
UT		
VA		Initial \$5,000 award; subsequent \$2,500 annually
VT		
WA	First-time candidates receive interest free conditional loan for three components	\$5,090 annual stipend; additional \$5,000 annually to board-certified teachers in high need schools
WI	Those who certify may apply for reimbursement of up to \$2,000 expenses	\$2,500 annual stipend after first year; additional \$2,500 annually to board-certified teachers in high-need schools
WV	First-time candidates reimbursed 1/2 the fee at enrollment, and the remainder at completion. Those who achieve reimbursed up to \$600 for additional expenses.	\$3,500 annual stipend; additional \$2,000 to board-certified teachers in low-performing schools
WY	Up to \$950 available statewide through Wyoming National Board Certification Initiative (WNBCI)	\$4,000 annual stipend

Source: National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

Rural Area Teacher Shortages

[Research](#) has found consistent staffing problems in rural schools, including a persistent gap between the qualifications of teachers in rural and urban schools. Rural communities face limitations in recruiting and retaining

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high-quality teachers for reasons such as: funding issues, limited teacher supply, lack of rigorous training and certification options, and geographic and social isolation.

Much of the substantive work around rural teacher recruitment appears to be happening at the district level, the school level, or in partnerships with teacher preparation programs. State-level policies tend to be based on financial incentives – such as stipends or loan forgiveness programs – to encourage teachers to work in hard-to-staff geographic regions and subject areas.

Below are examples of some recent state policies and partnership programs around rural teacher recruitment and retention strategies plus a few selected research studies and reports on the topic.

State and Program Examples

Colorado

In 2016, the legislature passed [SB16-104](#) creating multiple programs to incentive teachers to work in rural districts, such as establishing a **rural education coordinator** position in the Department of Higher Education to oversee rural teacher recruitment issues; providing **financial incentives** for student teachers; providing financial **stipends** for rural teachers to pursue **National Board Certification**; and creating **teacher cadet programs** in rural school districts. (Bill summary available [here](#).)

Minnesota

The legislature approved [HF2749](#) in 2016 with a provision to address rural teacher recruitment. The new grant program provides **student teaching stipends** for low-income students and **grants** for licensed teachers who agree to teach in a high-needs subject area or geographic region. This includes subject areas or specific regions of the state facing a shortage of teachers. (See Article 25, Section 59, page 491-492 of the bill and page 27 of the [bill summary](#)).

In addition, an interesting report from the Minnesota Department of Education, *Teacher Supply and Demand*, found that rural districts in Minnesota had a very difficult time attracting teachers and had some of the highest use of license variances. (Report available on the Department of Education’s [website](#); scroll down to “Teacher Supply and Demand Report.”)

Mississippi

Mississippi offers a [loan repayment program](#) for teachers with an alternate route license who teach in a shortage subject area or geographic area, receiving \$3,000 annually for up to four years. In addition, the [Teacher Fellowship Program](#) is for teachers in geographical shortage areas. Participants receive **housing and moving assistance**; the program covers **tuition and book costs** for those accepted into an approved graduate program.

Additional ECS Resources

- ✓ State Policy Database pages on [Teaching Quality, Certification and Licensure, Alternative Certification, Recruitment and Retention, Recruitment and Retention for At-Risk Schools](#), and [Recruitment and Retention for High Needs Subjects](#)
- ✓ Research Studies Database page on [recruiting and retaining good teachers](#)

Teacher Preparation Program Partnerships: Teacher Quality Partnership Grants

The U.S. Department of Education's [Teacher Quality Partnership \(TQP\) Grant Program](#) provides grants to promote partnerships between teacher preparation programs and high-needs districts and schools, including those in rural areas. In addition, TQP [recently announced](#) an additional grant program specific to tribal and rural communities. Below are two examples of rural-focused grantee programs.

- **Kansas:** [Preparing Educators in Rural Kansas](#). This program is a partnership with MidAmerica Nazarene University (MNU), Southwest Plains Regional Service Center, and several schools. One of the program's goals is to place student teachers from MNU in rural western Kansas and to provide high-quality and meaningful professional development to teachers.
- **Iowa:** [Iowa Teacher Quality Partnership](#). This program is a partnership between, among others, the University of Northern Iowa, the Iowa Department of Education, and a number of schools. Prior to beginning their student teaching, pre-service teachers in this program spend three to five days in a partner school classroom. The schools are in rural areas and students live with a family from the school district.

"STEM Goes Rural" at Purdue University

The ["STEM Goes Rural"](#) fellowship program through Purdue University helps individuals transition to a career teaching in the STEM fields in rural secondary schools. Fellows receive stipends and support as they transition to classroom teaching from their professional fields.

Selected Research and Resources

Research around the issue of rural teacher recruitment is wide and varied. Below we highlight a just a few of the available reports and studies on this topic, including a few key takeaways.

- [Preparing Teachers to Teach in Rural Schools](#), **REL Central, 2008**: This report describes how nine teacher preparation programs prepare their graduates for teaching positions in rural communities. The authors identified five beneficial programs components and identified nine institutions that use them. Three of the identified universities plus one tribal college offered special education programs designed to prepare teachers for rural positions.
- [Rural Teacher Recruitment and Retention: Review of the Research Literature, National Survey of Rural Superintendents, and Case Studies of Programs in Virginia](#), **Patricia Cahape Hammer et al. (2004)**: This report is a literature review of research and practice literature on rural teacher recruitment and retention. The authors include an overview of rural-specific challenges and national, state, and district teacher recruitment and retention strategies (pg. 3-5). The "Promising Practices" section is of particular interest, as it includes a number of examples, including interesting and innovative recruitment strategies and partnership programs (pg. 5-11). Although this report was published over a decade ago, many of the challenges and practices presented are still relevant.
- [Recruiting and Retaining High-Quality Teachers in Rural Areas](#), **David H. Monk (2007)**: In this report, the author discusses different attributes of rural communities and rural education sector and if simply raising rural educators' salaries is enough to recruit and retain an adequate rural teaching force.
- The **Rural Opportunities Strategies Consortium of Idaho** provides strategies to attract high-quality teachers to rural areas in the two reports [The Supply and Demand for Rural Teachers \(2015\)](#) and [Boosting Idaho Rural Students' College Prospects by Expanding Access to Great Teaching \(2015\)](#). Some of the suggested strategies include: public relations campaigns, alternative certification, financial incentives, job-sharing and distance education programs, and grow your own programs.
- [Recruiting and Retaining Rural Educators: Challenges and Strategies](#), **Rhonda Barton (2012)**: This piece is a nice high-level overview of the issue of recruiting and retaining teachers for rural areas.

¹ The structure of fee support may change as states transition to the new format of the National Board assessment

² State funds for fee support are typically subject to annual appropriation and there may be a cap on recipients or subsidies may be prorated

³ State funds for stipends are typically subject to annual appropriation and may be prorated

⁴ Stipend is for the life of the certificate unless otherwise indicated