



NBCC and NBPTS: Comparison of Costs and Benefits

	NBCC	NBPTS
Activities of organization	The National Board for Certified Counselors and Affiliates Inc. provides counselor certification as well as association and board management services, examination services, and credential review and management services for career development facilitators, clinical supervisors, distance credentialed counselors, art therapists, state counseling boards and residential interior designers.	The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards offers certification for 25 professions and specialties in K-12 education.
Board make up	Nine members, two of whom are school counselors	63 educators and political appointees, including one school counselor
Philosophy of certification	NCC and NCSC assess knowledge, skills and abilities viewed as important to provide effective counseling services.	To recognize accomplished school counselors.
Process for certification	NCC applicants must meet all educational and experience requirements for the NCC credential and must pass the National Counselor Examination for Licensure and Certification (NCE). NCSC applicants must hold the NCC credential, must meet all educational and experience requirements for the NCSC credential and pass the National Certified School Counselor Examination (NCSCCE). The NCSCCE format includes seven simulated cases and 40 multiple-choice questions. The simulations assess specific school counselor knowledge and the ability to make critical decisions on the spot. Applicants using the combination NCC/NCSC application are only required to pass the NCSCCE.	Applicants complete an extensive two- to three-year process of performance-based assessments, including portfolios, and demonstrate (in writing) content knowledge in human growth/development, diverse populations, school counseling programs, theories, data and change and collaboration.
Who developed certification	Originally NCSC was developed by practicing or retired counselors/counselor educators, including five ASCA board members or former board members. Current NCSC was developed by a Standards Review Committee and Test Development Committee, both consisting of counselors and counselor educators, with one former ASCA board member on the Standards Review Committee.	Standards Development Committee: Consisted solely of practicing or recently retired school counselors/counselor educators, including one ASCA board member and two former board members. Assessment Committee: All practicing school counselors, including one ASCA board member.
Who reviews portfolios/assessments	Computer scored	Active, practicing school counselors who have at least three years school counseling experience, successfully complete assessor training and qualify to evaluate early childhood/young adult school counselor candidates.
Educational/experience requirements	Master's degree (or higher) in counseling; two years of supervised counseling experience for the NCC; three years of school counseling experience for the NCSC. Counseling supervisors are required to hold a minimum of a master's degree in a mental health field.	Degree required for state certification (41 of 50 states require master's degree in school counseling); three years as practicing school counselor.
Waivers/exceptions	Experience requirements waived for graduates of CACREP-accredited programs (for the NCC credential only). All NCSC applicants must have three years of school counseling experience, except counselor educators.*	None
Year certification began	NCC started in 1982-83; NCSC first awarded in 1991.	Teacher certification began in 1993; first credential for school counselors awarded in November 2004.
Number who have received certification	38,000 counselors currently hold NCC certification; 1,900 are certified as NCSC.	40,200 educators certified since 1993; 350 certified in school counseling/childhood through young adult.
Length of initial certification	Five years for both NCC and NCSC	10 years
Cost for certification	\$277 to \$317 each to apply for NCC or NCSC separately; \$361 to \$426 for NCC and NCSC at the same time.	\$2,300; will be \$2,500 in 2006.
Cost/requirements to renew	No fee; NCCs must document 100 contact hours from approved content areas (10 percent are selected for audit) or retake NCE before certification expires.	\$1,150; must complete profile of professional growth.
Financial support for application process and fee	At least one state (Mississippi) reimburses for application fee for both NCC and NCSC.	29 states and the District of Columbia pay all or part of certification fee; five states and the District of Columbia provide release time for applicants to complete application.
Other outside support for application process and fee	Eligible veterans reimbursed for testing cost. Veterans taking NBCC test to obtain NCC reimbursed for exam portion of application fees.	Eligible veterans reimbursed up to \$2,000 of certification cost; special loans are available to NEA and AFT members.
Annual fee once certified	\$48 maintenance fee annually for NCC; \$30 annually for NCSC	None
State benefits once certified	At least four states provide financial incentives to NCSC-certified counselors; at least one state offers additional step on state salary schedule.	30 states provide financial incentives through additional salary or stipend (in some cases up to 12 percent of salary).

Web sites: www.nbcc.org, www.nbpts.org

*Waivers/Exceptions: For the NCSC - Counselor educators must pass the NCSC exam but don't have to document the required counseling supervision and school counseling work experience. They still must submit a colleague's endorsement form, a transcript and meet educational requirements. For just the NCC, for counselor educators, "In lieu of the work experience and counselor supervisor forms, counselor educators may submit a letter from their department chair on university letterhead verifying that they have spent three years or longer in full-time employment as a counselor educator. The letter, a sealed official transcript, a colleague's endorsement and the application fee are the only materials required for counselor educators to apply."

Note: Information last updated 2/1/05; Sources: NBPTS, NBCC