

Cobalt Success Story

Reaching Teachers: Cobalt Helps the NBPTS Increase Awareness of Board Certification

*In 2016, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) was awarded a Gates Foundation grant to build awareness of the value of Board Certification among certification-eligible teachers in six identified regions. Cobalt's campaign — **Whole > Sum, All. Together. Greater.** — increased traffic to www.nbpts.org and led to more account registrations.*

THE NEED

While teacher licensure systems set basic requirements to teach in each state, completion of Board certification, as established by NBPTS, means a teacher has voluntarily gone much further. Unfortunately, only 112,000 teachers out of 3.2 million have obtained certification. The goal of this campaign was to build awareness of the value of National Board Certification so eligible teachers in six identified regions would become motivated to pursue it.

THE CHALLENGES

The National Board faces a number of challenges when it comes to recruiting teachers. First, the process of becoming board certified is enormously challenging. As one teacher states, “[Pursuing National Board Certification] was one of the hardest things I’ve ever done. In many ways, it was like a long, slow gladiator fight, battling beast after beast until I was the last one standing, bloody and dirty, but victorious.”

But it’s not just hard — it’s expensive. And some districts offer no reimbursements or stipends to help teachers defray the costs. Finally, many teachers are simply unaware that Board certification exists. They are busy with the day-to-day demands of classroom instruction and with additional activities that include parent conferences, faculty meetings and in-service training. It’s easy for Board certification to get lost in the shuffle.

THE SOLUTION

Cobalt developed the campaign theme: *Whole>Sum, with tagline “All. Together. Greater.”* to convey the impact of National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) on students, schools and communities, as well as the camaraderie developed between teachers who go through the certification process together. This theme was carried through a suite of materials, which were housed in a library of static and customizable materials that the designated geographies could customize for their very diverse networks and communication channels to generate awareness and promote interaction/involvement. These materials were posted to the NBPTS social network site, where registered teachers could access and download the materials.

THE RESULTS

The *All. Together. Greater.* tagline has transcended the boundaries of the campaign and is being used as themes for national meetings and is currently under consideration as the new organizational tagline. The library of materials received such strong and positive feedback that the NBPTS national office decided to open up access to the resource library for all registered users on the NBPTS site, rather than limiting access to the six designated regions. As of early 2017, 533 teachers had become Board-certified; 3,384 had renewed; and more than 20,000 were in the process of becoming certified. These numbers are only expected to grow.

CLIENT

NBPTS is a not-for-profit organization that works with teachers unions, state and district leaders, nonprofits, foundations and policy makers to elevate the profession and advance student learning in all 50 states.

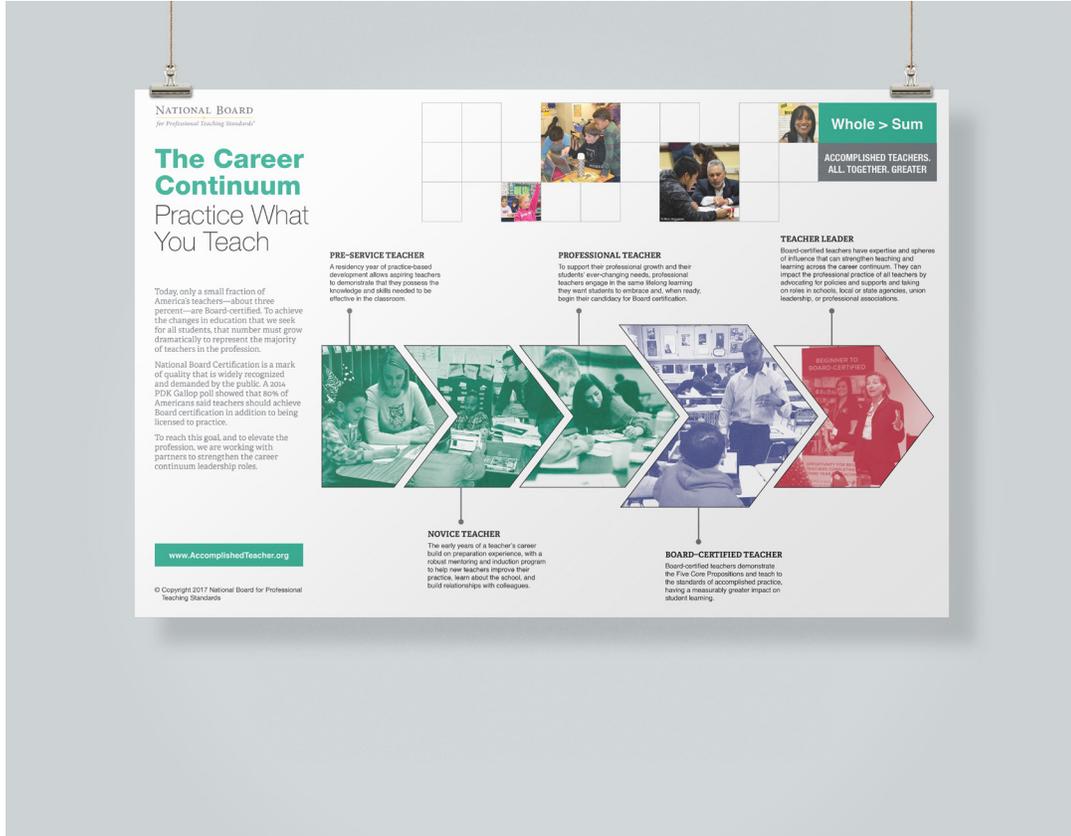
DELIVERABLES

The campaign theme was carried through a variety of online-deliverable materials, including a web/landing page, core posters, impact posters, customizable posters and signs, recognition/shoulder-tap cards, a PPT library, and social media “how-to” guides.

IMPACT

“I’ve been part of the organization for more than 30 years, and this is the best material I’ve ever seen come from the National office.”

THE WORK



Cobalt created a number of posters for the campaign, including static posters, like this one highlighting the Five Core Propositions, and impact posters to convey the impact of Board Certification on teachers, students, schools and communities.

Customizable posters and signs allowed current board-certified teachers or those going through the certification process to share their status and invite others to start a conversation.



These preprinted and customizable cards could be given to eligible candidates so they could be recognized and encouraged to pursue certification.

