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University of South Dakota Graduate School Alumni Helps Set National Standards for Accomplished Teaching

Vermillion, SD. — September, 2017 — National Board Certification is the teaching profession's mark of accomplished practice. The more than 112,000 teachers who have achieved Board certification demonstrate their ability to teach to profession's highest standards. Heather Bleecker, an alumnus of the University of South Dakota, recently joined 271 of the most accomplished teachers across the United States in Chicago, IL to help set the National Board performance standards across 25 certificate areas.

National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) collaborated in groups according to their National Board certificate area/specialty. Each group of NBCTs dedicated one to two intensive days to assist the National Board in setting the performance standard indicating accomplished teaching for part of the content knowledge component for their particular certificate area.

About the experience, Bleecker said, "Obtaining my National Board Certification in 2012 was a rewarding experience that greatly impacted the way I teach students and mentor teachers. Being a participant in the standard setting has allowed me to meet other National Board Certified Teachers and to give back to the organization."

Standard setting is a research-based process for establishing a performance standard that indicates accomplished teaching.

"A critical part of the National Board's mission is to provide a national voluntary system certifying teachers who meet the National Board Standards. We could not accomplish that part of our mission without these teachers' subject matter expertise, dedication, work and vision for the profession of teaching," said Peggy Brookins, NBCT, President and CEO of the National Board.

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About the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (www.nbpts.org):
The founding mission of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is to advance the quality of teaching and learning by: (1) maintaining high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do; (2) providing a national voluntary system certifying teachers who meet these standards; and (3) advocating related education reforms to integrate National Board Certification in American education and to capitalize on the expertise of National Board Certified Teachers. Recognized as the "gold standard" in teacher certification, the National Board believes higher standards for teachers means better learning for students.