

## Ethics in Reading for Candidates

This podcast begins the series on NBCT Reader Coaches responding to candidates by sharing information and strategies on the ethics of support.

We all believe that the NBPTS portfolio process is a valid assessment of accomplished teaching because of the reliability of the scoring system and the integrity of the candidates and NBCTs in maintaining candidate ownership of what is submitted. To explain the ethics of the process, NBPTS has established the *Guidelines for Ethical Candidate Support*. You can find this document as a handout for this podcast linked to the NBPTS website from the NBRC at Illinois State University site..

[http://www.nbpts.org/userfiles/File/Ethics\\_Policy\\_Final\\_2008\(2\).pdf](http://www.nbpts.org/userfiles/File/Ethics_Policy_Final_2008(2).pdf)

NBPTS says— that as an NBCT Reader Coach, you should demand honest and ethical behavior in candidates, reminding candidates of the agreements they signed upon application to the process. Likewise, NBCTs should continuously reflect on their own ethical responsibilities. The handout titled *Coaching Do's and Don't's* was taken from the NBPTS *Take One! Implementation Handbook* and shows what ethical coaches should do and not do.

In subsequent podcasts, more specific strategies will be explained on how to read for candidates ethically. Let me share some broad strategies that should guide how you respond to candidates in an ethical manner.

- Let's begin by stating strongly that all work submitted must be the candidate's own.
  - Your focus, as an NBCT Reader Coach, is to provide information about the NBPTS process and support that is fair, objective, equitable, and respects confidentiality.
  - Ask probing and/or clarifying questions. Do not make choices for candidates or tell them what to do.
  - Give feedback, never estimated scores. The feedback should not tell the candidate that the work is right or wrong, good or bad, or give any value judgment.
  - Encourage deep analysis and reflection based on evidence collected in the candidate's classroom.
  - Continuously guide the candidate back to the NBPTS documents so the candidate may use these materials to make decisions as they complete the portfolio. You can direct the candidates to these specific NBPTS documents— the standards, rubrics, portfolio instructions, and evaluation of evidence.
- At times, candidates will look to you to find answers to their questions and want you to tell them rather than to coach them. It is important that you remain steadfast as an ethical coach and be careful of overstepping your role so that the candidates always maintain ownership of what they submit.
  - NBPTS makes changes from year to year on logistical details within certificates. You can direct candidates to call NBPTS at 1-800-22-TEACH and to visit the website at [www.nbpts.org](http://www.nbpts.org) as primary resources for their questions. Do not answer logistical questions about the process.
  - Do not hold your own submissions or teaching practice as models of correct practice. You should **never** show to anyone your videotape and you should **never** show to anyone your written commentary that you submitted to NBPTS. You signed an agreement that NBPTS owns the submitted portfolio and you may not share it under any circumstances. Candidates may share their video and drafts until they submit them to NBPTS.
  - Encourage candidates to identify resources. Some examples may be university faculty, other NBCTs, subject matter experts, their colleagues, and whoever may be appropriate.
  - Again, you can ethically help candidates to comply with assessment procedures by continuously questioning them as to how they are showing evidence of the key concepts found in the portfolio instructions, rubrics, and standards.

*Finally, the main point to remember is that the ethical way to support candidates is to help them to understand the process so they may use the NBPTS portfolio development as a lever to improve teaching. The next podcast was developed to help candidates understand the Architecture of Accomplished Teaching. Review this podcast to help you more deeply understand the foundation of the NBPTS process.*