



# Advanced, Master and Distinguished Certification - FAQs

## General Questions for All Certification Levels

Q: Why should I consider pursuing a higher level of certification beyond the 16 hours of training required by Missouri Law (MSBA's CBM Essential training)?

A: At MSBA, we believe ongoing professional development for school board members is crucial for school boards to maximize their contribution to the school board and superintendent governance team. Also, one of the qualifications for MSBA's annual Governance Team Award is that at least two board members need to have achieved Advanced certification, and at least one needs to have achieved Master certification.

Q: How do I get started?

A: On the MSBA website, [www.msbanet.org](http://www.msbanet.org), you will find the application forms and requirements for higher levels of certification under Training & Events/Certification Forms & Resources/[Board Member Forms & Resources](#). You may use the application for Advanced, Master or Distinguished certification as a checklist.

Q: How do I earn the credits I need?

A: You earn one core meeting credit for attending the following MSBA events:

- Regional Meetings
- Leadership Summit
- Delegate Assembly
- MSBA Federal Relations Network
- Annual Conference
- Legislative Forum
- School Safety Conference

You may also earn core meeting credit for attending the NSBA Annual Conference.

Q: What are "strand" credits, and how do I earn them?

A: Each level of certification requires a portion of the credits to be in a particular focus area or strand. Strand credits are earned by attending MSBA training and events that specifically focus on one of these areas:

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| Board Operations and Governance (BOG)  | Student Achievement (SA)     |
| Contemporary Issues in Education (CIE) | School Law and Finance (SLF) |
| School Safety and Security (SSS)       |                              |

You may earn credits by participation in the following MSBA events:

- Leadership Summit and Annual Conference concurrent sessions (strand varies by topic)
- Participating as your district Delegate in the Delegate Assembly (BOG)
- Whole board workshops (strand varies by topic)
- Webinars such as the Practical Personnel Law Series (SLF)
- CES School Safety Conference concurrent sessions (CIE)
- Observing a board meeting of another school district and completing the Board Meeting Observation Credit Form (BOG)
- Reading an additional book and completing a reflection form

Strand credits are also awarded for participation in NSBA Conference concurrent sessions when you submit your conference transcript.

- Q: Can I earn credits by attending training events sponsored by other organizations?
- A: The only non-MSBA event where you can earn strand credit is attendance at National School Boards Association annual conference sessions. Board members may submit their transcript from the NSBA Conference to earn strand credits. The strand will be assigned according to the program content.
- Q: How do I know how many credits I have earned?
- A: Log in to the MSBA website at [www.msbanet.org](http://www.msbanet.org). Click on “Check CBM Credits” under Popular Links at the bottom of the screen. You will be transferred to our membership database where you may enter your MSBA User ID and password. Select the CEU tab and click on “Printable Report” to view your transcript. If you have not yet registered on our website, return to the MSBA home page and select “Request an Account” in the Popular Links column at the bottom of the screen.
- Q: I attended a concurrent session that had two strands assigned to it: BOG/CIE. I chose CIE as my study strand, but this session is not counted in my total strand credits on my transcript. How do I get credit?
- A: The database counts credits according to the first strand listed, which in this instance would be BOG. If your transcript doesn’t show that you have enough strand credits in your selected study area, we will manually count your credits where the selected strand is listed second in the session title.
- Q: How do I find approved books to read to meet the requirement?
- A: On the MSBA website, under Training & Events/Certification Forms & Resources/[Board Member Forms & Resources](#), you will find a link to the approved booklist for reading requirement. Most of the books are available through Amazon.com, and a link is provided for ordering the title(s) you choose. The booklist indicates if the titles are available on Kindle. A few of the books are free downloads. You may wish to check with your superintendent or other board members to see if they might have a copy of the book you want to read.
- Q: Can I read a book that is not on the approved reading list?
- A: If you want to read a book that is not on the list, email your request in advance to [training@msbanet.org](mailto:training@msbanet.org). Books must pertain to education or to board governance, must be authored in the last ten years, and must be at least 100 pages in length. You will be notified by return email if your request is approved.
- Q: When I have met all the requirements, how do I apply?
- A: You may download the application form from the [Board Member Forms & Resources](#) page under Training & Events/Certification Forms & Resources on the MSBA website. You may submit the completed application form and your written reflection paper by mail, fax or email. The information is on the application form.
- Q: When is the deadline for applying?
- A: You may submit your application at any time. Board members who submit their application no later than May 1<sup>st</sup> will be recognized at the annual MSBA Leadership Summit in June.
- Q: I am a few credits short of the requirement, and there are no more training opportunities between now and May 1<sup>st</sup>. Is there any other way I can earn additional credits?
- A: You may read up to 2 additional books for credit, and submit the CBM Credit Verification Form for Reading Additional Books. You may also earn additional .5 credit in the BOG strand by observing a board meeting in another district and submitting a copy of their agenda along with the Board Meeting Observation form, which is available on our website. You may observe meeting at as many districts as you like, but additional credit is limited to observing meetings at two different districts.

- Q: Can I apply for more than one level of certification at the same time?
- A: Yes. If you earn multiple levels of certification in the same year and submit your applications by May 1<sup>st</sup>, you will receive recognition for each level at the annual MSBA Leadership Summit in June.
- Q: How will I know my application has been received and approved?
- A: When your application is received, the Leadership Development Department will review it and confirm that you have met all the requirements. If there is anything that is missing, you will be contacted by email. You will receive a packet within 15 days with your certificate and a lapel pin. Your packet will also contain a press release that you or your district may use to announce your achievement.

### **Questions Specific to Distinguished Certification**

- Q: The list of requirements for Distinguished certification is quite lengthy. Do I need to wait until I have met all of the requirements before submitting my application?
- A: You may complete the various forms and submit them all at once with your application, or you may submit your Board Meeting Observation Form(s), your Book Reflection Form, and your Documentation of Activities form(s) as you meet each requirement. If you submit your forms as you complete each requirement, the activities will be recorded on your transcript for your convenience in checking your progress. The application form should be submitted when you have completed all the requirements.
- Q: For Distinguished certification, some of the activities must occur in the most recent 3 consecutive years of board service. What is the applicable date for determining the 3 consecutive years?
- A: Three years prior to May 1<sup>st</sup> of the year of the award.
- Q: If board member serves on two different local board committees, can it count as two separate Leadership activities?
- A: Only service on one local committee will count and must serve at least a year and attend at least 75% of the meetings.
- Q: If board member services on two different MSBA committees, can that count as two separate Leadership activities?
- A: Service on up to two committees may count as separate activities; you must attend at least 75% of the meetings.
- Q: I have made several presentations regarding our school programs to local community service groups. Can I count more than one?
- A: You may count up to two local presentations related to a district and/or board practice/program to local civic clubs, educational organizations or another school board. You should provide the presentation file or notes and the agenda or program with your name listed. Radio interview may be counted as presentations. For radio interviews, please provide list of questions, date, station, host, or board meeting minutes designative board members as spokesperson for the interview.

If you have additional questions, contact the Leadership Development Department at (573) 445-9920, ext 329 or [training@msbanet.org](mailto:training@msbanet.org)