Teachers Waiting for Score Release: Reflections on the National Board Certification Process

NATIONAL BOARD RESOURCE CENTER

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I used the pursuit of my NB certification to focus on how I was teaching my students at all levels. I created plans and monitored the progress of my students at a level that deepened my understanding of what they needed and strengthened my embedded practices for teaching all my students. I would not have done this without the push from NB certification.

Pablo, Literacy Candidate, Oakland, CA
Does becoming board certified really impact student achievement?

"As I utilize the NB Standards in my own practice, students benefit from a growth mindset, improvement-focused Educator. I am doing what I ask them to - continue growing to meet higher standards, and pushing myself the way I know they can push themselves, in order to achieve more as critical readers, writers, and thinkers."

ELA CANDIDATE, SAN FRANCISCO, CA
Would this process help keep teachers in the profession?

“Absolutely! As teachers use new or refined tools, they become more aware of the cyclical process of learning. After completing my first component I realized how little time I had for reflection, but how powerful it is to teach to students, and if I’m not doing it, how can I ask them? As Alexander Den Heijer said, "When a flower doesn’t bloom, you fix the environment in which it grows, not the flower."
How does pursuing certification act as professional development?

“Pursuing certification was the best professional development I've ever had. I learned a lot from the our classes/sessions, from other teachers in my cohort, and especially from the reflective process. I do things differently as a teacher because I've worked methodically through this process.”

Social studies candidate, San Jose, CA
What do NBCTs do with their knowledge that help students, colleagues, etc.?

“Several become school leaders; others create and manage PD for at least one (me)… I think all emerge as different educators and all are better at serving their students and figuring out systems that will set them up for continuous reflection and improvement.”

Social studies candidate, Redwood City, CA
How does pursuing certification act as professional development?

“It focused me on examining my teaching practice in a way no other PD experience has. It forced me to compare it to an external set of standards rather than my own. This was difficult. It is easy to live up to my own standards - and to be blind to gaps. The experience was a lot of asking myself- do I do this? What evidence do I have?”

Science candidate, Bay Area, CA
Would this process help keep teachers in the profession?

“Taking ownership of the fact that we are members of learning communities is empowering and inspiring.”

ELA CANDIDATE, SAN FRANCISCO, CA
So many parts of my teaching practice were just habit, until this process forced me to ask, "Based on what I know about students, why is this important?" I am now so much more clear about the purpose behind my instructional decisions and how to best serve my students.
Would this process help keep teachers in the profession?

“...I was in a teaching rut—loving what I do, but feeling a little stuck. *National Board brought me back to life* because it forced me to examine my practice under a microscope and *gave me the motivation and tools to reflect*. Though I was not considering leaving the profession, it made me feel more confident and excited about my future as an educator."

ELA candidate Bay Area, CA
How does pursuing certification act as professional development?

“I have dug deep into the components to find the best practice of what I am doing. I am reviewing books old and new. I have reached out to peers. I am learning and developing my practice more than ever..... and the best part is... It is self led. I am reaching to fill the gaps in my teaching that I am recognizing via the process. Good stuff.

Literacy candidate, Fresno, CA
Does becoming board certified really impact student achievement?

“When NBCTs continue to make decisions for teaching in alignment with the National Board Body of Knowledge, students benefit significantly. This indicates that ongoing leadership and support for and from NBCTs would impact student achievement more substantially.”

LITERACY CANDIDATE, SAN FRANCISCO, CA
What do NBCTs do with their knowledge that help students, colleagues, etc.?

“A middle school went from 10 minute teacher conferences to a more student-centered model that increased knowledge of students, which is one of the Five Core Propositions.

Students now create a comprehensive conference portfolio sharing their strengths and challenges..."
Would this process help keep teachers in the profession??

“"Yes, it does help teachers like me because I get more inspired in making a difference. It is also one personal/professional goal that can be done so that learning will not be stagnant.

EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS CANDIDATE, SANTA CLARA, CA
How does pursuing certification act as professional development?

"This process helps teachers in 2 ways. First, it is transformative, as it submits a teacher's practice to a scrutiny informed by teachers... Second, learning the process of inquiry, evidence gathering and reflection experienced by teachers informs how they analyze not just the performance of peers, but the systems and cultures of schools that influence and shape that performance."

History/Social Studies candidate, Half Moon Bay, CA
How does pursuing National Board certification impact student achievement?

“I believe the process will impact my students' achievement. I believe it pushed me to become more organized and explicit about goals. It led me to try out some new lessons and refine old ones. I never wanted to film my classes, but it was very informative when analyzing the tapes.”

LITERACY CANDIDATE, SAN FRANCISCO, CA
In my seventh year of teaching, I hit a wall. Same curriculum, same activities, same projects, same assessments. I was bored and felt I needed to do something to reenergize me...something to give more meaning to my job.

My answer: National Boards! The National Board process reenergized me!
Does becoming board certified really impact student achievement?

“Students were directly impacted ... standards of practice required for a component (5 core propositions; the spiral of instruction model, etc.) became front-of-mind for every class. I achieved immediate improvement in all my classes as I took more time to review what I knew about each student, and then used it to guide my planning, instruction, assessment and further planning. As I made more connections to the larger community surrounding each student, I directly impacted students' participation and achievement.”

NBCT, Bay Area, CA
Does becoming board certified really impact student achievement?

“Going through the National Board certification process gave me clarity about my practice. I knew at a deep level what I was doing well and where I needed to grow. Because of this clarity, I pursued my Masters in Literacy, which enabled me to better support my struggling readers. As a result, I saw a significant jump in my students’ reading and writing skills.”
How does pursuing National Board certification motivate teachers to stay in the profession?

“... it activates educational leadership for those who engage in it and growth opportunities for all who come into contact with those who engage.”
How does pursuing certification grow teacher leaders?

“Through the NB process, I began to use my critical thinking skills to reflect on what I do, how I do, and why I do. I became emotionally and cognitively energized. That motivated me to broaden my reach to support others in their growth as teaching professionals.”

Health NBCT, Bay Area, CA
How does pursuing and becoming board certified help teachers stay in the profession?

“I am fortunate that my school values and gives a financial bonus for NBCT completion. This definitely helps me stay committed to a profession often not valued by our larger society. My confidence and enjoyment as a teacher was boosted by the improvement I saw both in my own skills and my students’ learning and enjoyment. Connections made with other teachers pursuing excellence was also a powerful motivator for me to stay in the profession.”

Music NBCT, Bay Area, CA
How does pursuing certification impact students?

“... When I completed Component 4 I ... used a color-coded system with a spreadsheet of data to steer my teaching. By midyear I took a difficult first year in kindergarten by the horns and brought some students closer to district expectations and many over them.”

EARLY CHILDHOOD GENERALIST CANDIDATE, SUNNYVALE, CA
Does pursuing National Board certification motivate teachers?

“"Yes. It makes teaching more enjoyable and rewarding for its own sake...because it helps me to be more responsible to my students' learning and achievement. It makes me always think how to move them to their fullest potential.""
Stanford Emeritus Professor, Lee Shulman discusses his research on teaching, medical school training, and the need for a National Board Certification for teachers:

“Comparing teaching to other professions:

Teaching was one of the most complex professions that human beings engaged in and it ought to be recognized as such.”