



National Board for
**PROFESSIONAL
TEACHING
STANDARDS®**

FALL 2006

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN QUALITY TEACHING AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

A MARK OF DISTINCTION FOR TEACHERS

- **NBPTS helps improve education nationwide by recognizing outstanding teachers.** Nearly 50,000 teachers are currently certified as highly accomplished in 24 fields.
- **To become certified, teachers spend 1-3 years demonstrating what they know** and can do through rigorous assessment.
- **All 50 states and hundreds of school districts recognize National Board Certification** as a mark of distinction, similar to the way the medical, engineering and accounting professions recognize expertise.

PUTTING NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION TO THE TEST

- **NBPTS has put itself and its certification process to the test.** From its inception, NBPTS has sought to understand the impact of its certification process on teachers and the impact of NBCTs on students and schools.
- **More than 150 studies have examined National Board Certification.** The vast majority (**more than 75 percent**) found NBCTs make a **significantly measurable impact** on teacher performance, student learning, engagement and achievement. While some of the results are mixed, most are positive about National Board Certification accomplishments and its potential for improving education nationwide.

IMPACT ON TEACHER PRACTICE AND SCHOOLS

- **Research is consistently positive** about the impact of National Board Certification on improvements to teacher practice, professional development and areas of school improvement that are critical to raising student achievement. For example:
 - NBCTs consistently outperform their peers in knowledge of subject matter, ability to adapt instruction and ability to create challenging and engaging lessons. (L. Bond, University of North Carolina, Greensboro)
 - National Board Certification is more effective and cost-effective than other professional development methods. (C. Cohen, The Finance Project)
 - Teachers who pursue National Board Certification show significant improvements in their teaching practices, regardless of whether they achieved certification. (D. Lustick, Michigan State University)
 - NBPTS demonstrates greater influence on teacher mentoring, leadership, team-building, professional development and evaluation, curriculum development, efficacy and overall school leadership. (G. Sykes, Michigan State University; M. Freund, George Washington University; T. Petty, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)

THE BOTTOM LINE: IMPACT ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

■ **Independent studies show students of NBCTs do better on standardized tests than students of non-NBCTs.**

For example:

- Students of NBCTs score 7 to 15 percentage points higher on year-end tests than students of non-NBCTs. NBCTs were particularly effective with minority students. (D. Goldhaber, University of Washington)
- In 48 comparisons (4 grades, 4 years of data, 3 measures of academic performance), students of NBCTs surpassed students of non-NBCTs in almost three-quarters of the comparisons. The learning gains were equivalent (on average) to spending about an extra month in school. (L. Vandevort, Arizona State University)
- More math NBCTs helped their students achieve larger testing gains in 9th and 10th grades than their non-certified colleagues—demonstrating particular benefits among special needs students and African-American and Hispanic students. (L. Cavalluzzo, The CNA Corporation)
- Students of NBCTs exhibit deeper learning outcomes more frequently than students of non-NBCTs. (T. Smith, Appalachian State University)

■ **Other studies reveal mixed effects regarding National Board Certification.**

For example, several research studies indicated that students of NBCTs did not demonstrate significantly better rates of academic progress as compared to students of non-NBCTs (W. Sanders, SAS Institute; W. McColskey and J. Stronge, University of North Carolina, Greensboro and The College of William and Mary). Another study notes that NBCTs appeared to lose ground during and immediately after the certification process (D. Harris and T. Sass, Florida State University). Yet the data from these studies also reveal:

- NBCTs accounted for significant differences for students by race, gender and certain grades and subject areas. (Sanders)
- NBCTs showed strong performance in practice-related areas such as graduate coursework, student assignments and quality of planning practices. (McColskey and Stronge)
- NBCT mentors had positive effects on other teachers and their student achievement gains. (Harris and Sass)

■ **All of the research contributes to understanding and improving the National Board Certification process.**

Yet, it is misleading to draw major conclusions about the overall value and impact of National Board Certification based solely on individual studies. No single study or small group of studies can effectively describe the range of impact of the National Board Certification process.

■ **NBPTS will soon release a summary of all the major research to further the dialogue**

about National Board Certification and how to quantify and improve its impact on educators, the students they teach and education reform nationwide.

The NBPTS Web site (www.nbpts.org) provides information about NBPTS-sponsored research and a bibliography of related studies.