

Office of the Superintendent of Schools
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

October 24, 2018

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education
From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools
Subject: Effectiveness of National Board Certified Teachers (09-24-18-03-C)

During the Kirwan Commission discussion, Board members requested the following information:

Question C

Mrs. Smondrowski requested additional information regarding whether teachers who are nationally-board certified are more effective than those who have advanced degrees, i.e., a Master's degree or Doctorate.

Response

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) program launched in 1987. Since that time, a number of research studies have been conducted concerning National Board-certified Teachers (NBCTs), with varying conclusions. In one study conducted by Harvard University's Strategic Data Project, researchers found that the students of NBCTs in the Los Angeles Unified School District gained roughly the equivalent of two months of additional instruction in math and one month in English language arts than students not in NBCT classrooms.¹ In contrast, in a study conducted by East Tennessee State University, "The Value-Added Achievement Gains of NBPTS-Certified Teachers in Tennessee, researchers found that none of the 16 board-certified teachers in Tennessee who taught grades 3-8 (the only grades for which value-added scores were available) met a standard for exceptional teaching set by an incentive program in the state."² These types of mixed results can be found in NBPTS literature.

¹ Center for Education Policy Research. (2012). Cambridge, MA: Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University. SDP Human Capital Diagnostic for Los Angeles Unified School District. Strategic Data Project.

² Stone, J.E. (2002) The Value-Added Achievement Gains of NBPTS-Certified Teachers in Tennessee: A Brief Report. <http://www.education-consumers.com/briefs/stoneNBPT>

While questions about the impact on student achievement remain, what is clear is that the NBPTS program is a rigorous professional learning process whereby teachers progress through self-assessment, learning, and peer review en route to achieving certification. Since the program's inception, more than 118,000 educators nationwide and more than 3,000 educators in Maryland have achieved NBCT status.

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) currently has 700 NBCT pre-K–12 teachers; the large majority of the NBCTs met standard on their last MCPS performance evaluation (less than 1 percent of the current MCPS NBCTs did not meet standard). Currently, neither the state nor the district have data that reflect the direct impact of NBCTs on student achievement. However, we have supported the NBPTS program for its rigorous preparation process and robust professional learning that comes with applying for NBCT status. In addition, we have an extensive history partnering with the Montgomery County Education Association in service to develop additional NBCTs.

If you have additional questions, please contact Dr. Andrew Zuckerman, chief operating officer, at 240-740-3050.

JRS:AMZ:LD:jnc

Copy to:

- Dr. Navarro
- Dr. Statham
- Dr. Zuckerman
- Mr. Civin
- Dr. Johnson
- Mrs. Dempsey
- Ms. Diamond
- Mr. Turner