

# NATIONAL BOARD

for Professional  
Teaching Standards®

## Impact Brief

# The Proven Impact of Board-Certified Teachers on Student Achievement

Through **National Board Certification**, teachers demonstrate that their teaching meets the profession's standards for accomplished practice through a rigorous, peer-reviewed and performance-based process, similar to professional certification in fields such as medicine. In achieving Board certification, teachers prove their ability to **advance student learning and achievement**.

More than a decade of research from across the country confirms:

***Students taught by Board-certified teachers learn more than students taught by other teachers.***

Estimates of the increase in learning are on the order of an **additional one to two months of instruction**. The positive impact of having a Board-certified teacher (NBCT) is even greater for minority and low-income students.<sup>1</sup> This improvement in student outcomes is mirrored by NBCTs achieving stronger results on leading measures of **teacher effectiveness**, including robust classroom observations and value-added scores. The compelling research on the effectiveness of Board-certified teachers is particularly noteworthy when compared to the lack of consistent research on the effectiveness of teachers with master's degrees.<sup>2</sup>

## New Research

- **Washington state:** “[Board-] certified teachers are more **effective** than non-certified teachers with similar experience,” according to researchers Cowan and Goldhaber. Their findings suggest NBCTs produce gains of up to “nearly 1.5 months of additional learning.”<sup>3</sup>
- **Chicago, IL and Kentucky:** “We found evidence that Board certification is an **effective signal of teacher quality** [based on student test scores]...across locales, test types, and subject areas.”<sup>4</sup>

National Board Certification is a voluntary advanced professional certification for PreK-12 educators that identifies teaching expertise through a performance-based, peer-reviewed assessment.

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81% of Americans across the political spectrum believe teachers should achieve Board certification, beyond licensure, as it is in other professions ([2014 PDK/Gallup poll](#)).<sup>5</sup>

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## Leading Research From States and Districts Across the Country

- **Los Angeles, CA (2012)**: “National Board Certified teachers **outperform other teachers** with the same levels of experience by 0.07 and 0.03 standard deviations in elementary math and English/language arts (ELA) respectively, which is roughly equivalent to **two months of additional math instruction and one month of additional ELA instruction.**”<sup>6</sup>
- **Gwinnett County, GA (2012)**: “National Board Certified teachers outperform other teachers with the same levels of experience.”<sup>7</sup>
- **Hillsborough County, FL (2012)**: “The district found that **NBCTs rank higher** than non-NBCTs on written evaluations and value-added measures. Fifty-eight percent of NBCTs received the Merit Award Program (MAP) bonus, indicating they were among the **top 25 percent of teachers** in their subject area.”<sup>8</sup>
- **Florida (2011)**: “Certification by the National Board is **correlated with achievement** in math and reading in both elementary and middle school.”<sup>9</sup>
- **Charlotte, NC (2010)**: “We found that NBCTs were **significantly more effective**...than their non-NBCT counterparts in several EOC tested courses: Algebra II, Biology, Civics and Economics, Chemistry, and Geometry.”<sup>10</sup>
- **Los Angeles, CA (2008)**: “The difference in impacts [on student achievement] between [Board-certified teachers] and unsuccessful applicants was statistically significant.”<sup>11</sup>
- **North Carolina (2007)**: “We find consistent evidence that [Board certification] is **identifying the more effective teacher applicants** and that National Board Certified Teachers are generally **more effective than teachers** who never applied to the program.”<sup>12</sup>
- **North Carolina (2007)**: “The positive and statistically significant coefficients...indicate that the Board does indeed confer certification on the more effective teachers, as would be appropriate to the extent that the policy goal is to **reward effective teachers.**”<sup>13</sup>
- **Arizona (2004)**: “Effect size...informs us that the **gains made by students** of Board-certified teachers were **over one month greater** than the gains made by the students of non-Board certified peer teachers.”<sup>14</sup>
- **Miami-Dade, FL (2004)**: “We find robust evidence that [National Board Certification] is an **effective indicator of teacher quality.**”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Goldhaber, D., & Anthony, E. (2007). Can teacher quality be effectively assessed? The Review of Economics and Statistics 89(1), 134-150; Cavalluzzo, L.C. (2004). Is National Board Certification an effective signal of teacher quality? The CNA Corporation.

<sup>2</sup> Clotfelter, C., Ladd, H., & Vigdor, J. (2007). How and why do teacher credentials matter for student achievement? (NBER Working Paper 12828). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research; Betts, J.R., Zau, A.C., & Rice, L.A. (2003). Determinants of Student Achievement: New evidence from San Diego. San Francisco: Public Policy Institute of California.

<sup>3</sup> Cowan, J., & Goldhaber, D. (2015). National Board Certification and Teacher Effectiveness: Evidence from Washington. The Center for Data & Research, University of Washington Bothell.

<sup>4</sup> Cavalluzzo, L., Barrow, L., Henderson, S. et al. (2014). From Large Urban to Small Rural Schools: An Empirical Study of National Board Certification and Teaching Effectiveness. CNA Analysis and Solutions.

<sup>5</sup> 46th Annual PDK/Gallup Poll, October 2014, p. 50, [http://pdkintl.org/noindex/PDKGallupPoll\\_Oct2014.pdf](http://pdkintl.org/noindex/PDKGallupPoll_Oct2014.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Strategic Data Project (2012). SDP Human Capital Diagnostic: Los Angeles Unified School District. Center for Education Policy Research, Harvard University.

<sup>7</sup> Strategic Data Project (2012a). Learning about Teacher Effectiveness: SDP Human Capital Diagnostic: Gwinnett County Public Schools, Ga. Center for Education Policy Research, Harvard University.

<sup>8</sup> National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. (2012). Hillsborough County Public Schools: New data prove the value of National Board Certification. Retrieved from [http://www.nbpts.org/about\\_us/success\\_stories/hillsborough\\_success\\_sto](http://www.nbpts.org/about_us/success_stories/hillsborough_success_sto).

<sup>9</sup> Chingos, M. M., & Peterson, P. E. (2011). It's Easier to Pick a Good Teacher than to Train One: Familiar and New Results on the Correlates of Teacher Effectiveness. Economics Of Education Review, 30(3), 449-465.

<sup>10</sup> Salvador, Samantha K., & Baxter, Andy (2010). National Board Certification. Impact on Teacher Effectiveness. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Center for Research and Evaluation, Office of Accountability.

<sup>11</sup> Cantrell, S., Fullerton, J., Kane, T., & Staiger, D. (2008). National Board Certification and Teacher Effectiveness: Evidence From a Random Research Assignment Experiment. Working Paper 14608. National Bureau of Economic Research.

<sup>12</sup> Goldhaber, D., & Anthony, E. (2007). Can teacher quality be effectively assessed? The Review of Economics and Statistics 89(1), 134-150.

<sup>13</sup> Clotfelter, C., Ladd, H.F., and Vigdor, J.L. (2007). How and why do teacher credentials matter for student achievement? Working paper 2. National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research.

<sup>14</sup> Vandervoort, L.G., Amrein-Beardsley, A., and Berliner, D.C. (2004). National Board Certified Teachers and their students' achievement. Education Policy Analysis Archives, 12 (46).

<sup>15</sup> Cavalluzzo, L.C. (2004). Is National Board Certification an effective signal of teacher quality? The CNA Corporation.