

March 1, 2007

Dear Senator Kilmer:

I certified for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in Adolescent, Young Adult English/Language Arts in 2000. Since I am now facing re-certification, and since I have a point of view which has now spanned some years, I want to emphasize how states and budgets benefit when they vigorously support the NBPTS process, from beginning to end. In the process, I hope to give you enough compelling data that you may use when arguing for support at the state level during budget discussions of teacher compensation.

First, NBPTS was created in response to the 1987 Carnegie Forum on Education and Economy report, *A Nation Prepared*. This report called for the establishment of a “National Board” which would identify and establish high standards for what teachers should know and be able to do, and to certify teachers according to those standards.

What followed was another report, *A Nation At Risk*, which set off alarms by stating: “If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war.”

Responding to the dire warnings about our educational system in both reports, education, legislative, labor and civic leaders came together to establish what we now have as the NBPTS – The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Since that time, the number of teachers who have courageously stepped forth and taken on the challenge of going through the process has increased by the thousands across the country. In the meantime, too, research has begun to support the fact that National Certified Teachers produce measurable results in their classrooms which translate to higher scores for their students and savings of tax-payer dollars.. The implications of some of the research are:

- 3rd, 4th and 5th graders taught by NBCTs outperformed their schoolmates on the SAT by almost 75% in reading, math and language arts measures.
- Across the country, students of NBCTs improved an average of 7% in reading and math tests more than those teachers who attempted certification, but did not certify.
- Dan Goldhaber from the UW found that for **all** students studied, reading scores rose to 12%, and for those students labeled “**high risk**”, the reading scores were raised by an average of 15%.
- Principals report that NBCTs were among the best teachers they had ever supervised. 91% said they believe that NBPTS contributes to the improvement of teacher quality overall, the morale of a building, and school reform movements.
- Finally, benefits and gains go beyond higher test scores and morale. They are also quantifiable. Student learning improvement has been shown to be so efficient that it is equivalent to more than a month’s worth of additional time in

the classroom. This equates to approximately 25 extra days of instruction produced by NBCTs. In Washington state, this roughly gives a formula of:

- ✓ \$7000 per pupil spending;
- ✓ Equivalent to approximately \$960 per pupil saved;
- ✓ Times an average class size of 25 students;
- ✓ Times the number of NBCTs in your district.

In the 26th Legislative district, this approximately means:

- ✓ **\$960 student savings X 25 students per class = \$24,000 savings per class.**
- ✓ **\$24,000 savings per class X 51 NBCTs in the 26th District = \$1,211,250**

For the State of Washington, this means:

- ✓ **\$24,000 savings per class X 1306 NBCTs in the state = \$31,344,000**

I urge you to use this data when you talk to your colleagues as you all debate the efficacy of both raising the current stipend for NBCTs and for placing that stipend on the salary schedule. Many states award extra stipends for NBCTs, as does Washington State. However, Washington's stipend is a pittance compared to many others. I'm sure you will find the words to show that what we do and the money it saves is worth the expenditure to be competitive nationwide.

Sincerely,

Ann D. O'Connell
AYA/ELA – 2000
Gig Harbor