

TESTIMONY FOR SB 957
Education - Career Ladder -
National Board Certification Associated Salary Increases

Bill Sponsor: Senators Gile and Simonaire

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Organization Submitting: National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

Person Submitting: Sarah Pinsky, Senior Director for Policy

Position: FAVORABLE

The National Board strongly supports SB 957 and urges a favorable report.

In 2021, the Blueprint was established to transform the state's public education into a world-class system. As part of the Blueprint, Maryland incentivizes accomplished teaching. This is done, in part, through salary increases for National Board Certified Teachers.

Your investment in accomplished teaching has led to significant growth in the number of National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) across the state. Maryland now leads the nation in the number of teachers earning National Board Certification each year, with more than 1,400 teachers marking this achievement in 2025, and tens of thousands of students across the state benefiting from them.

As part of the Blueprint, Maryland teachers who achieve National Board Certification receive a \$10,000 salary increase, with those working in a low-performing school receiving an additional \$7,000. Teachers may subsequently earn salary increases by successfully extending their National Board Certification before the end of the 5-year validity period through the Maintenance of Certification process.

The salary increases associated with Maintenance of Certification are locally bargained. However, the law provides that the state will pay a share of these payments for the first three times a teacher extends their National Board certification. This typically occurs 5, 10, and 15 years after a teacher first earned their initial National Board Certification.

This schedule of salary increases aligns with the current 5-year validity period for National Board certificates. However, prior to 2017, the National Board issued 10-year certificates. Through 2021, Maryland NBCTs with a 10-year certificate were eligible to extend it for another 10 years. This has created an unintended consequence for Maryland National Board Certified Teachers who currently hold a 10-year certificate.

Up to 900 Maryland NBCTs still hold these older 10-year certificates. This makes them ineligible to complete Maintenance of Certification and access the associated salary increase at the 5-year mark. Under current law, these Board-certified teachers are not eligible for a salary increase until after 10 years, while their peers are eligible for an increase after 5 years.

This situation is a temporary one that will be phased out by 2031, because all National Board Certified Teachers will complete the Maintenance of Certification upon the expiration of their current 10-year certificate and move to a 5-year certificate.

The National Board remains firmly committed to ensuring equitable treatment for all accomplished educators. At its meeting on November 13, 2025, the National Board's Board of Directors approved policy guidance that educators who renewed their certificates under the prior 10-year system will now have that accomplishment recognized by the National Board as equivalent to completing two consecutive 5-year Maintenance of Certifications.

This guidance affords states, like Maryland, the opportunity to authorize salary incentives for NBCTs on 10-year renewal certificates once they reach the five-year mark during the middle of their valid certificate period.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.