

My name is Janet Liimatta and I have been a National Board Certified Teacher since 2009. Going through the National Board process and becoming a NBCT completely changed my craft as a teacher. This impact goes beyond teaching roles and grades. Since my original certification which is in Early Adolescence Mathematics, I have held a variety of classroom positions including high school mathematics (9th grade algebra) ,5th grade, Triple E STEM, and now pre-K. Because of NBCT, I have excelled in all of these positions. I believe all the administrations I have worked under would describe me as a highly effective teacher. One former principal even shared this was not an adequate description of my impact in the classroom. I have been nominated as the Teacher of the Year for my county for both High School and Triple E STEM (semifinalist). I am sharing this information just for context not because I want the recognition. I love teaching and my students achieve.

Under the current law, NBCT who recertify after 2021 are eligible for an additional supplement of \$8000 above the \$10000 given to all National Board Certified Teachers. Five years later, they can recertify and receive an additional \$7000. As you can imagine, this would be a strong incentive to try and obtain one's NBCT. As the law stands now, someone like myself who certified as a NBCT much earlier in our careers, does not get to reap these same benefits. Although I have been a NBCT for 16 years, which under the new system would mean I would be earning \$25,000 more, I am not eligible to renew my certification until 2029 and it would only be considered my first renewal. This technicality is extremely frustrating considering I have more experience and years than other colleagues but do not get to receive the same benefits due to an arbitrary start date for the law.

When the law was written, lawmakers were under the impression that NBCT that it would be a ten year cycle and crafted the law accordingly. Moving forward, those of us who were part of the ten year renewal cycle should not be financially punished for seeing the benefit of this program early on in our career before there was a significant financial incentive. To this day, earning my NBCT, was the hardest thing I ever did. The program was much more rigorous when I initially certified then what it is now. I will never regret my decision to become certified. My hope is that I will be recognized for my hard work instead of being punished for earning my NBCT before it became so popular among my colleagues.

I am not sure how many teachers are in the same situation as myself and I know that funds are very tight. However, in education, experience makes a huge difference. Also, since this is an anomaly, once these teachers retire, the extra expense would go away forever.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Janet Liimatta

Park Elementary Pre-K teacher

NBCT