



Mrs. Kathy Lyons

National Board Certified Teacher

How she “Took the LEAP”



Fourth grade teacher Mrs. Kathy Lyons, National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT), has dedicated her 20-year career to ensuring that she is continuously setting the bar for excellence in teaching. Each day she asks herself if the job she is doing is having a positive impact on her students and if there is something she can do to improve. Her unwavering passion to teach and guide others who desire a similar career path sparked her interest in becoming an NBCT.

The more Kathy engaged in the National Board Certification process, the more she realized she was benefiting her students and colleagues alike. Adding thorough preparation before each school day and taking extended time to reflect at the end of each day ends has been a key factor in Kathy's evolution as a teacher. As Kathy began focusing more intentionally on her pedagogy, she also began sharing these practices with peers, spending extensive time coaching and mentoring other NBCT candidates. Kathy led study groups in which colleagues helped one another improve their instructional practice, and found this had the secondary impact of increasing her teaching colleagues' retention in the classroom.

Seeing this impact of National Board Certification on herself and her fellow teachers in both effectiveness with students and motivation to continue teaching, Kathy became involved with the Leading, Empowering, and Advocating for the Profession (LEAP) project, a pilot aimed to kickstart a growing movement of NBCTs leading change to address pressing workforce challenges, such as teacher shortages and teacher diversity.

Through this work, Kathy collaborated with other LEAP NBCTs to create workshops and accompanying materials based on the National Board body of knowledge, formative assessment practices, and differentiation. Kathy later presented an overview of the formative assessment workshop to the Induction and Mentoring Coordinators from across the state and discussed how NBCTs can use the materials to support beginning teachers. She also completed the National Board focused state Mentor Training and can now serve as the official mentor for beginning teachers in her district.

South Carolina data show that the state average for teacher turnover is nearly four times that of the turnover rate for NBCTs in the state. Through Kathy's advocacy around mentorship, she is able to meaningfully contribute to teacher retention and effectiveness, for both new teachers and teacher leaders. By building the leadership and advocacy skills of other Board-certified teachers across the state, Kathy knows she is contributing to a future where teacher shortages are a thing of the past.

—The Leading, Empowering, and Advocating for the Profession (LEAP) project is generously supported by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation



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Are YOU ready to “take the LEAP?” Visit nbpts.org to become Board-Certified or become an NBCT advocate for YOUR students!

“The national board is the best professional development you can give yourself. You can see what you're doing right, and what you can improve. Nobody's perfect. We are constantly trying to better ourselves and reflect for further improvement.”

– Kathy Lyons, NBCT