

**NBCT-LED  
ADVOCACY  
AND  
AWARENESS**

# MISSISSIPPI

**ILLUMINATING  
ACCOMPLISHED AND  
DIVERSIFIED TEACHING**

*National Board of Professional Teaching Standards*

*This work was generously funded by William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.*



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Beyond Mississippi borders, teacher leadership via National Board Certification casts a bright light. Fourteen percent of the state's teaching workforce dawns this gold stamp of teaching. Ranked 4th nationally by the percentage of NBCTs, Mississippi has not been spared the teacher shortage, a sobering reality felt across the nation. Teachers of Color represent a third of the workforce in Mississippi, which presents inequitable learning situations for students of color, who account for half of the student population. National Board has a crystal clear goal of increasing the number of early career NBCTs and Teachers of Color (TOC) to promote equity in high needs areas while also improving teaching and learning.*

*Over the past ten year, National Board has made investments in Mississippi education system to balance the disparity between teacher quality and student performance. This reports highlights the National Board efforts which align with the state education agency's plan to reverse the teacher shortage through teacher recruitment, diversification, compensation, and advancement. Key findings are as follows:*

*The Hewlett Awareness funding made it possible for The National Board to partner with local and state agencies and Mississippi NBCTs to bolster policy conditions through a two-pronged awareness and advocacy approach:*

- 1). Teacher advocacy to achieve local and state legislative support of NB Certification*
- 2). Statewide, teacher-led campaigning to raise awareness and increase candidacy among early career teachers and high needs communities.*

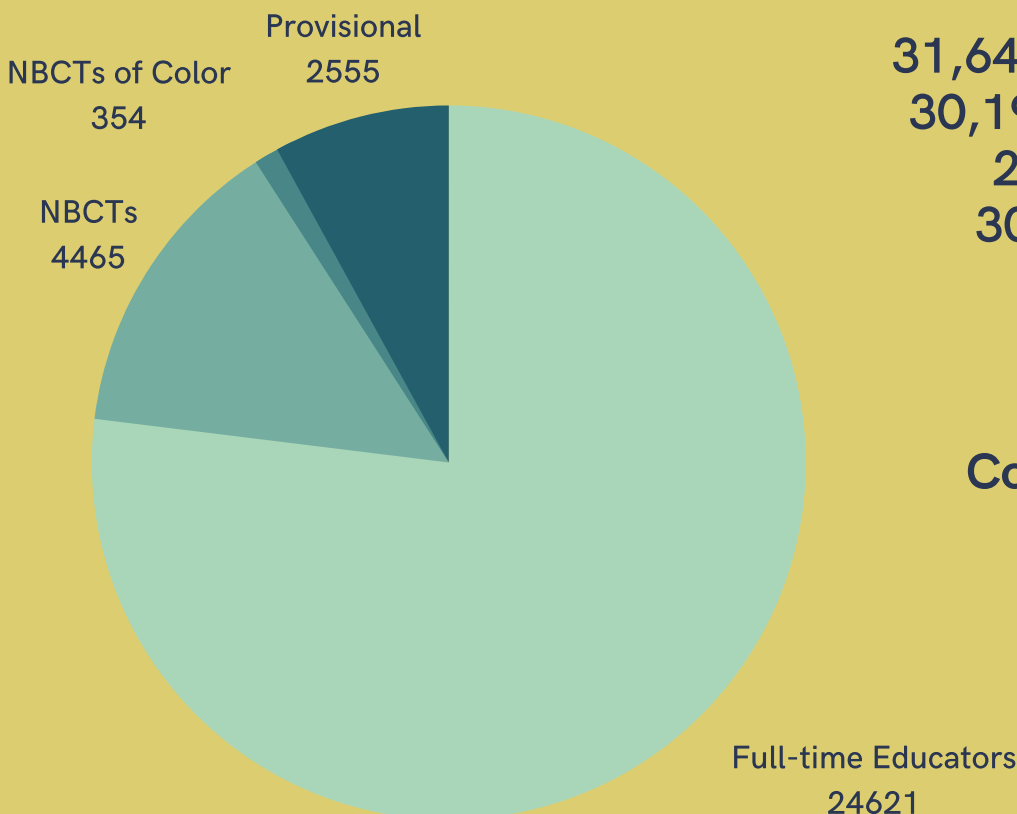
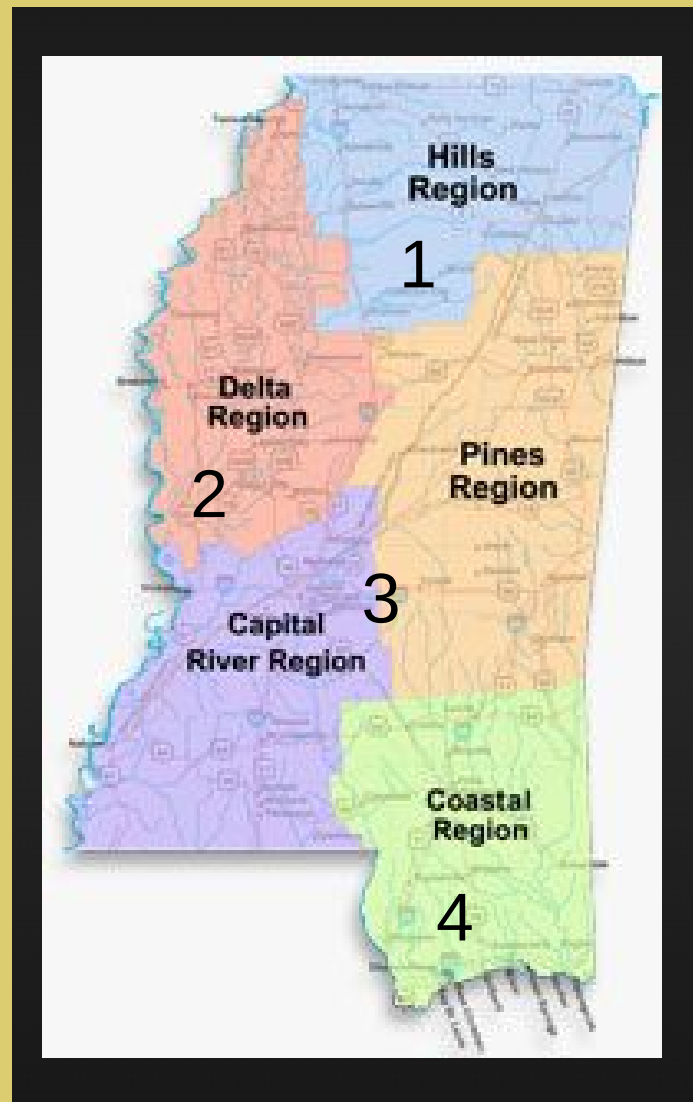
*Methods supported by the NB's Five Core Proposition and the Career Continuum undergirded this project, which*

- 2,000 Mississippi teachers (50% teachers of color) are currently engaged in the certification process, which can be attributed to grant awareness activities.*
- 20,000 teachers were reached via community awareness efforts provided through the grants NBCT peer consultants, Ambassadors, and March to the Future webinars.*
- Barriers to certification: COVID 19 virtual, hybrid, and in-person learning connection to teacher burnout; alternately certified educators' gaps in pedagogy; lack of support from school administration; and time commitment and certification costs.*
- Awareness helped yield a historical response to Time Cohort grant release netting 994 applications (56% ToC).*

*The Hewlett Packard Awareness Grant helped to increase awareness of NBC among teachers of color in Mississippi. Focus group findings showed time commitment and constraints, cost of the certification, need for policy changes that support certified teacher compensation regardless of teaching assignment as barriers. Next steps should include incorporating strategies for multi-level administrator exposure to NBC to promote the advanced certification among teaching staff. Finally, new engagement and awareness create a need for more funding to cover teachers' certification expenses.*

# MISSISSIPPI AT A GLANCE

- Ranked 4th in the country by the percentage of NBCTs in the state,
- In 2021, Mississippi ranks 35th in the nation for K-12 achievement--a 15 point leap from the bottom five in 2013 (Education Week,2021).
- Mississippi contends with teacher shortage and retention issues that plague education and create inequitable learning situations for students of color that make up half of the student population.
- One in three districts is classified as critical shortage.
- NB Projects have targeted Delta Region to grow more accomplished teachers in critical shortage districts and provide equity.



31,641 - Full-time Educators  
 30,198 - Valid/In-Field Cert.  
 2,555 - Provisional Cert.  
 3,036 - Teacher Vacancies

**Vacancies by  
 Congressional District (CD)**  
 CD 1 - 276  
 CD2 - 777  
 CD3 - 1,274  
 CD 4 - 709

## Five Core Propositions

### CORE PROPOSITION 1

Teachers are committed to students and their learning.

### CORE PROPOSITION 2

Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.

### CORE PROPOSITION 3

Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.

### CORE PROPOSITION 4

Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.

### CORE PROPOSITION 5

Teachers are members of learning communities.

In a time when one of the biggest challenges in education is ensuring there are enough teachers, National Board developed a scalable model that leverages teacher advocacy to strengthen policy and teacher awareness to increase the number of NBCTs, especially teachers of color in Mississippi.

Certification aims to establish a professional career continuum for teachers, which is actively applied in the Hewlett Awareness grant activities. The Five Core Propositions provide a concentration of content-specific standards that articulate what teachers should know and be able to do. The Career Continuum establishes a trajectory for pre-service and early career teachers to follow a natural progression to become Board-certified, achieve certification mid-career, and as NBCTs, lead both from the classroom and beyond.

To ensure equity with grant activities Mississippi NBCTs operating as ambassadors and peer consultants advocating NBC and promoting awareness among early career and teachers of color in critical shortage and high-need areas across the state where currently no NBCTs existed.

## The Continuum for Professional Practice

**Preservice Stage**  
Learning to teach

**Novice Stage**  
First five years of teaching

**Career Stage**  
Reached Mastery in the classroom;  
Ready to lead

**Teacher Leader Stage**  
Leading through advocacy and policy involvement

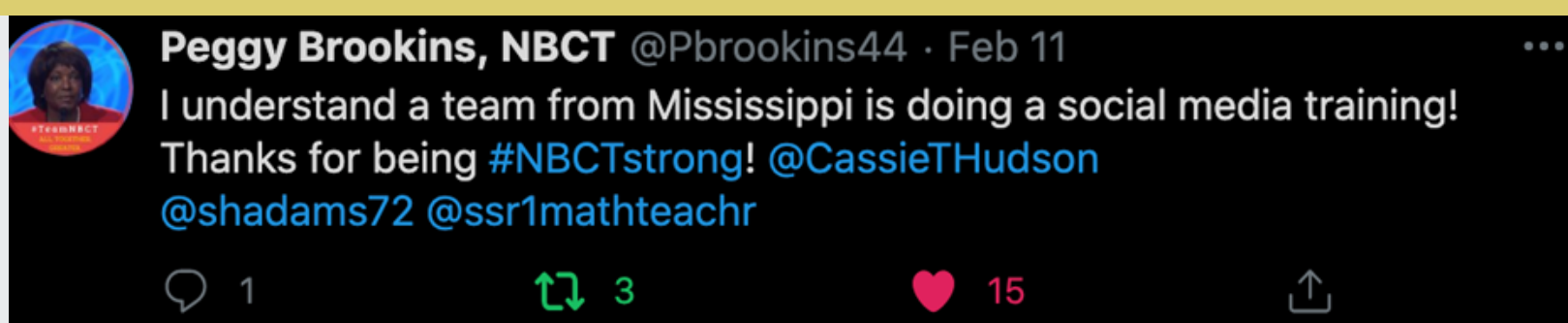
# IMPACT ANALYSIS

The Hewlett Foundation Grant activated a two-year field strategy with advocacy and voice-centered goals using Ambassadors and Peer Consultant focus groups:

- 1: Strengthen policy conditions through teacher advocacy and state/local legislative support for NBC.
- 2: Drive broad awareness through a statewide teacher-led campaign to significantly expand the number of early career NBCTs, in high-needs communities.

## NBCT Ambassadors

(2 cohorts/ 24 teachers) promote NB to teachers and administrators in their geographical regions with virtually and face to face.



## Activity

## Data / Outcome

in-person and/or virtual informational meetings

- Motivation-they will serve; invitation-they will attend. NBCTs desire opportunity to lead with financial compensation; teachers enjoyed the flexibility of virtual meeting but preferred face to face.

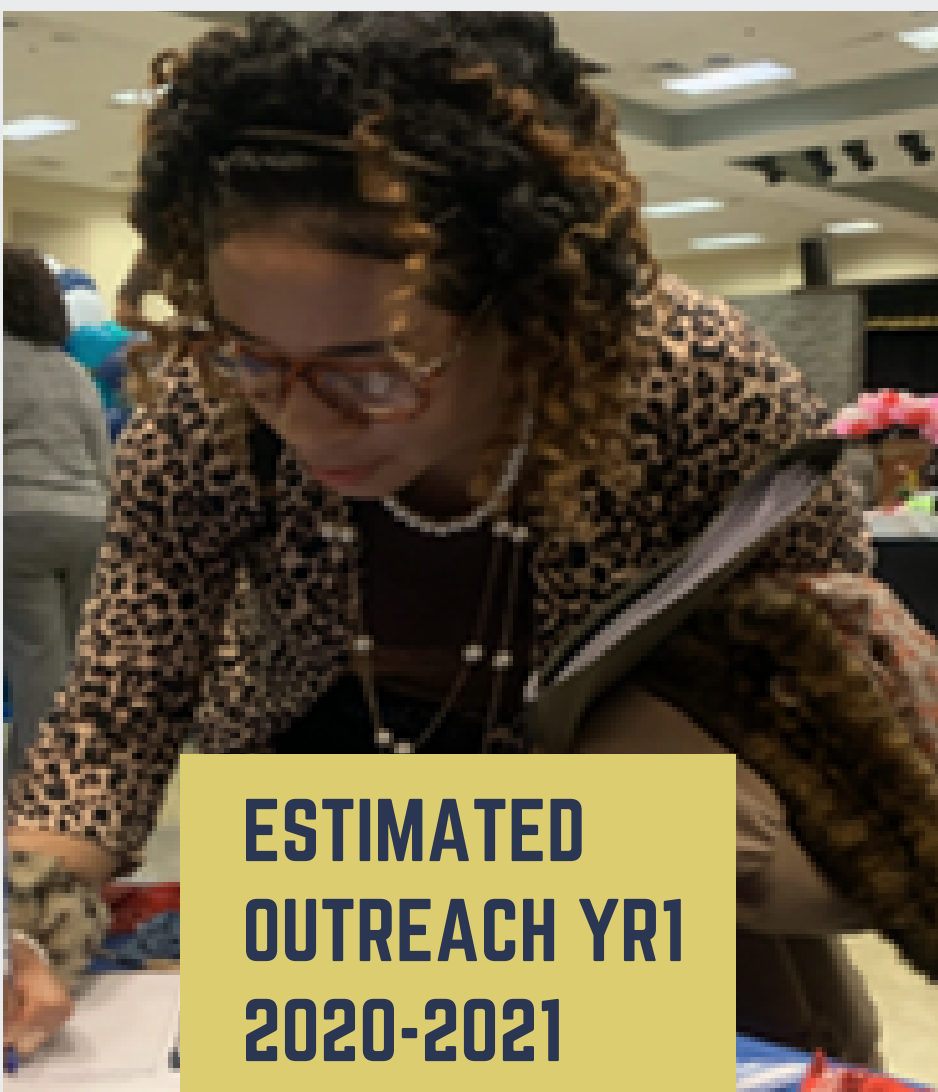
shoulder tap Cards; social media posts

- 57,000 teacher engagement opportunities Year 1 and 2
- Using a virtual variety of communication reaches a wide range teachers causing greater awareness
- Awareness- message and avenues (teacher to teacher)
- NB can send emails on your behalf
- Introduction webinar (have held zoom conferences, phone calls to teachers)
- send marketing materials to teachers in MS (engagement)

MPE Symposium

- Professional development engaged NBCT, MS NB Network offering exposure to veteran NBCTs
- We have the support of MPE
- We support and celebrate new candidates
- We did find positivity and excitement for the profession





## ESTIMATED OUTREACH YR1 2020-2021

**43K** PROJECT 1, 2, 3, 4

**28K** MPE JOURNAL ADS

**14K** RECRUITMENT:  
SHOULDER TAP  
CARDS, PHONE CALLS,  
SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

ional Board Certification for Mississippi Tea

What, Why, How, and Who (Hint: It's You!!)

rsuing National Board Certification during COVID-19 ... and  
yond. Providing you information, answering your questions,  
and encouraging your journey. Educating you about Board  
Certification (Educating is what we do!)

NATIONAL BOARD  
for Professional Teaching Standards®

- During YR 1 Ambassadors hosted a total of 507 virtual/in-person information meetings,
- Total outreach estimates from recruitment activities (distributions of shoulder tap cards/flyers, making phone calls, sharing National Board information via social media posts) 13,947

■ Year 1

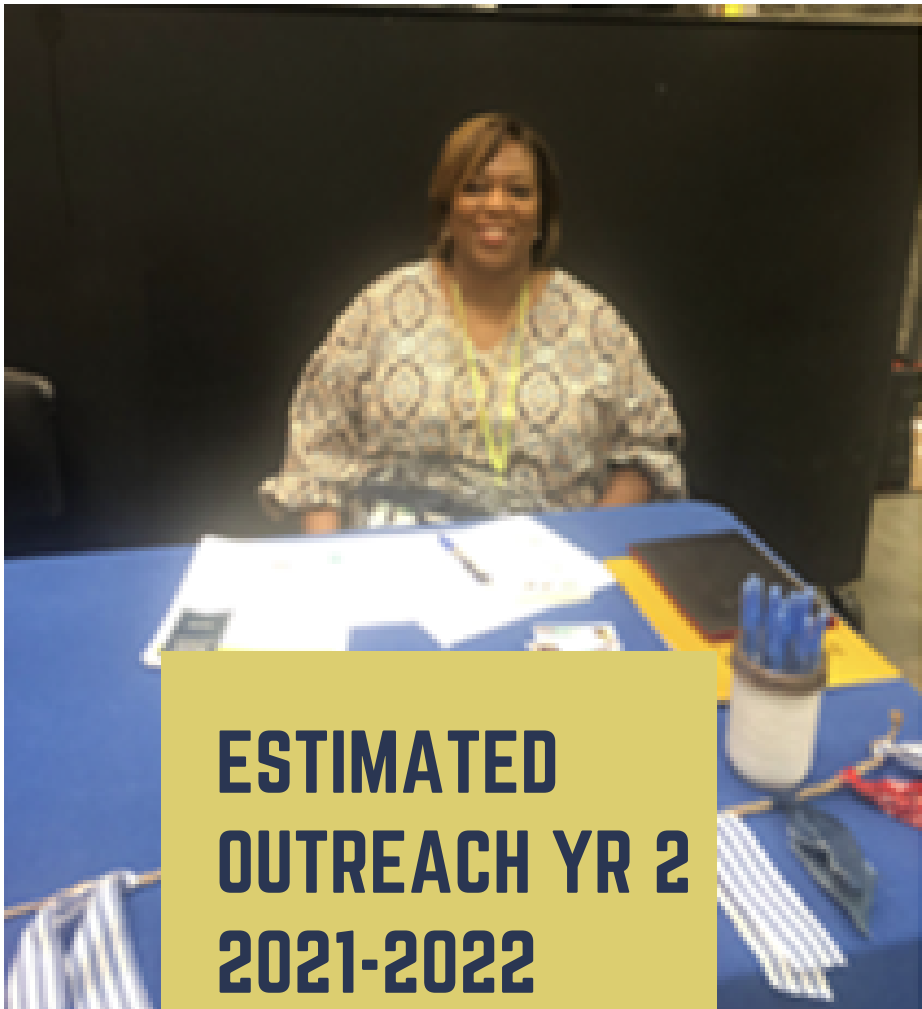
20,000

10,000

0

Recruitment

Outreach Journal



**ESTIMATED  
OUTREACH YR 2  
2021-2022**

- As of this printing, YR 2 Ambassadors hosted 374 virtual/in-person information meetings (Tentative as Project 4 was still in progress as of this printing. Teachers preferred the in-person interaction but appreciated the flexibility of virtual interactions.
- Social media, print media made a huge impact on the sheer number of engagement opportunitiess) -4,587

Sooo tell be about National Board Certification....  
Our district doesn't pay anymore for it so is it worth it  
😞

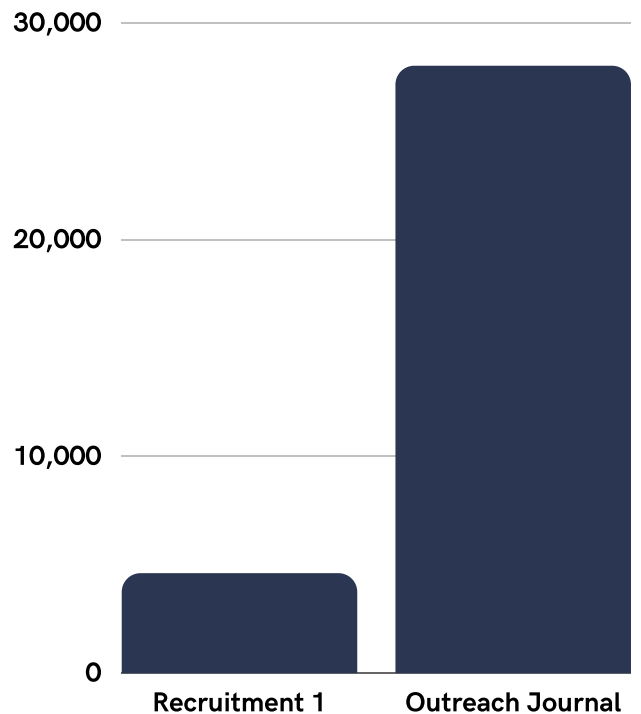
Yes! I would do it again, even if it wasn't. I learned so much thru the process. Some of the things that gave me comfort knowing I was okay to fight for things "different" for my kids and some that made me reflect and go "hmmm" why ARE we even doing it this way anymore.

■ Year 2

**33K** PROJECT 1, 2, 3  
EST. TOTAL

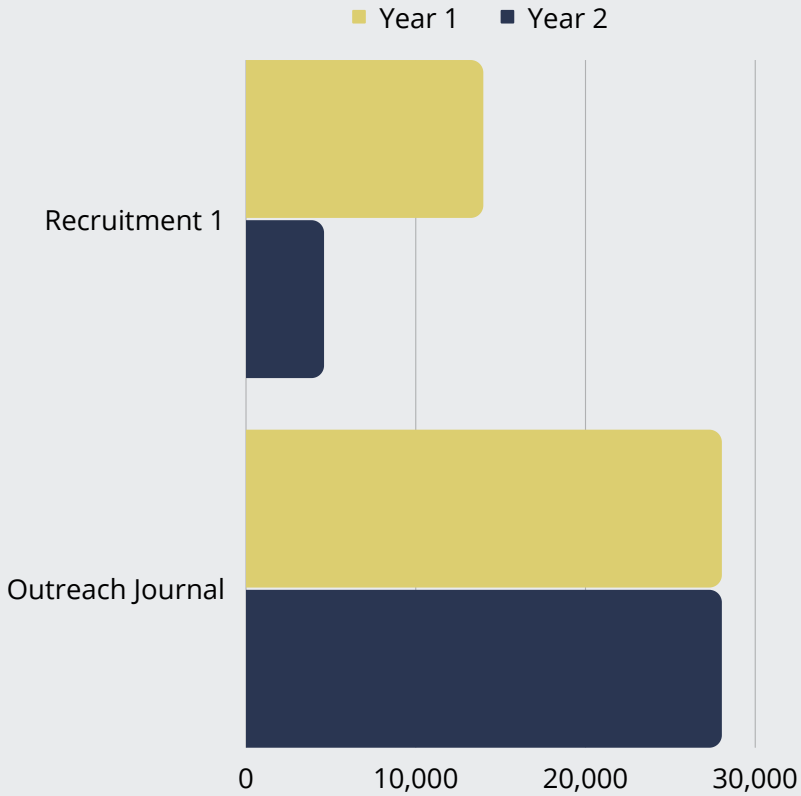
**28K** MPE JOURNAL ADS

**4.6K** RECRUITMENT:  
SHOULDER TAP  
CARDS, PHONE CALLS,  
SOCIAL MEDIA POST

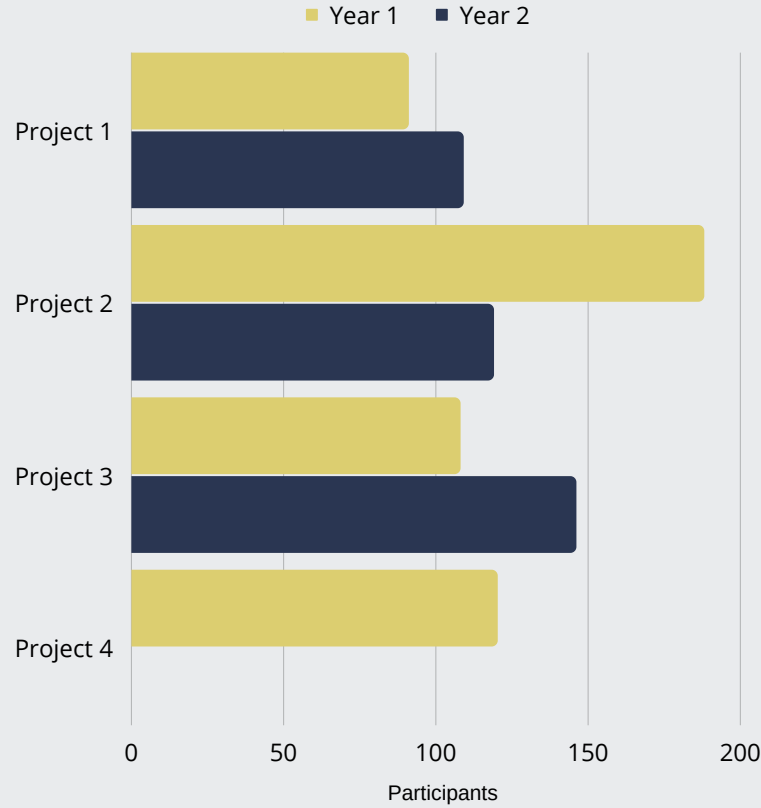




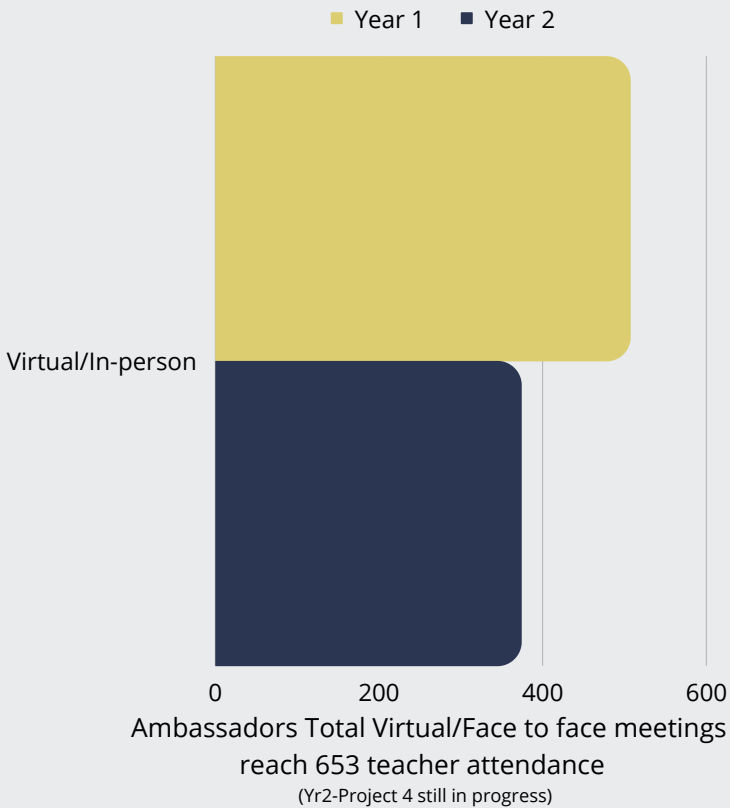
# PROJECT REACH YEARS 1 & 2



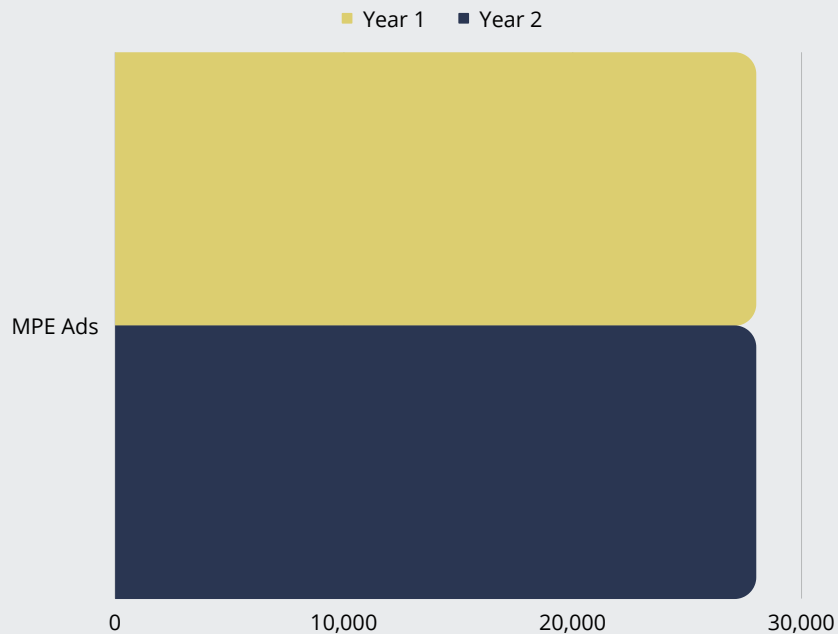
**Total Recruitment activities conducted by Ambassadors (Yr2-Project 4 still in progress)**



**Informational meetings conducted by Ambassadors (YR2-Project 4 still in progress)**



**Ambassadors Total Virtual/Face to face meetings reach 653 teacher attendance (Yr2-Project 4 still in progress)**



**56,000 MPE Journal Ads Published Yr 1 & 2**

## Peer Consultant Focus Group Impact Analysis

NBCTs conducted focal groups with TOC to gain insights certification catalysts/deterrents NB Peer Consultants shared their perspectives on barriers that stifle the rate of National Board Certification for teachers of color.

### Awareness

#### First Impressions

- First learned of National Board Certification from peers.
- campus administrators,
- Alumni Associations
- National Board publications

#### Misconceptions

- Program eligibility
- Unaware of recent changes in program process and procedures

#### First Impressions

- first learned of NBC from peers
- some gained knowledge from campus administrators,
- Alumni Associations,
- National Board publications

### Catalysts

#### Top Motivators

- Professional growth
- notoriety
- monetary benefits

#### Professionalism

- Being recognized as an expert in their field,
- obtaining leadership positions, and
- making substantial strides beyond the classroom roles.

#### In-person Support

- In-person interaction is preferred;
- Candidates appreciated virtual support; Overarching, virtual candidate support offered more flexibility.

### Deterrents

#### Time and Money Barriers

- Time and cost as key drawbacks for pursuing the program.
- Anxiety of not certifying,
- Stipend forfeiture caused by local agency technicalities.
- Future growth conflicts of interest

#### Environmental Stressors

- COVID 19 virtual and in- person learning lead to teacher burnout.
- Gaps relating to pedagogy for alternative educators,

#### Mixed Perceptions on Equity and Equality

- Concerns over fairness of \$6,000 vs. 10,000 stipend incentives in same region
- Must renew NBC while advanced degrees are permanent

# MARCH TO THE FUTURE

## Webinar Series

"CERTIFICATION CHANGES YOUR MINDSET; IT  
MAKES YOU MORE REFLECTIVE"



The March to the Future funded by the Hewlett Packard Awareness grant is centered around reflection and honors James Meredith, the first black student to attend the University of Mississippi.

The webinar series was an opportunity for NBCTs of color to hear Meredith's story and tell personal stories and reflections on the following:

- the impact of Board Certification,
- impacts of historical and current events on teachers and students of color,
- discussions on equity in the classroom and in support for teachers seeking NB,
- opportunities to expand the learning community of African American teachers in Mississippi, and more.

The sessions launched in January 2022 will climax in June 2022 at the OASIS convening at the Civil Rights Museum in Jackson, MS.



James Meredith being escorted through campus by the US Marshals, 1962.

The finale commemorates the 56th anniversary of the March Against Fear, Which led voting right activists to 22 voting registration stops in the state during the 60's.

The March to the Future series presented 22 opportunities to engage a diverse audience in a focus on building and strengthening communities of Mississippi teachers of color while similarly creating a registration drive for teachers.

# CONCLUSION

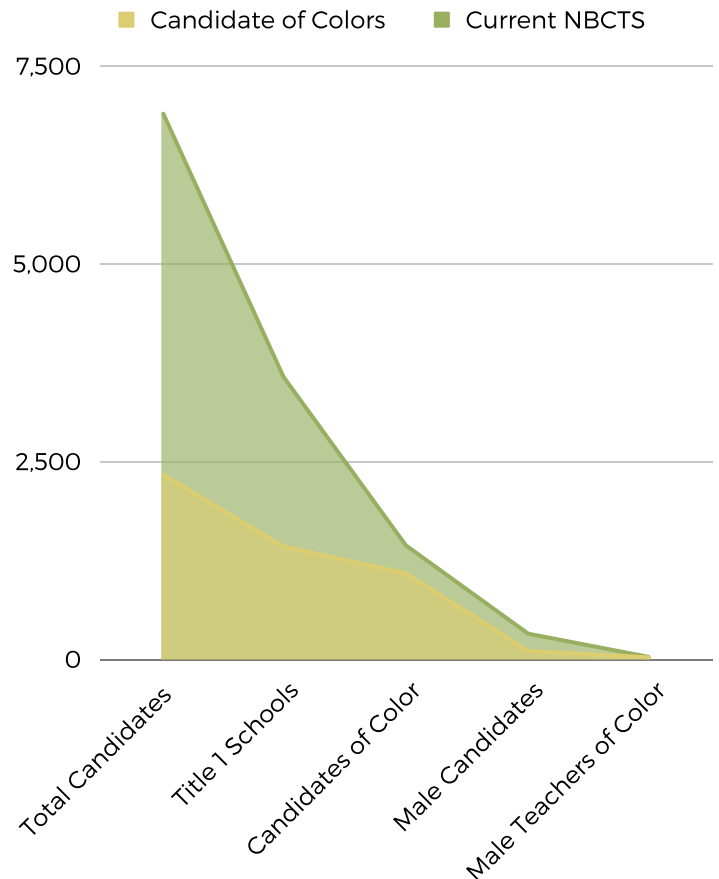
## Key Findings:

Hewlett Awareness Grant advocacy and awareness activities provided intentional exposure of National Board Certification to Teachers' of Color which improved awareness and acted as **catalysts** for teachers of color to consider National Board Certification.

**Barriers** to certification in recent years centered around stresses due to many accommodations made for COVID 19 virtual, hybrid, and in-person learning leading to teacher burnout. Other barriers are preparedness and gaps in pedagogy for alternative educators, in addition to the time and cost necessary to pursue certification.

## Implications:

- More than 2,000 teachers are currently in the NB Certification process in Mississippi.
- Almost **50% of the current candidates are teachers of color (1084)**
- Current TOC candidates certification would mean a 66% increase in the current NBCTS of color (354) in Mississippi, increasing accomplished TOCs in more than half of Mississippi's Title 1 schools.
- Publicity from the Hewlett Awareness grant created an **explosive response from teachers of color** to the **Time Cohort** opportunity,
  - which fully funds the NB Certification process, provides candidate support, an iPad, and Apple technology training.
- In the first 24 hours of the TIME grant application release, more than 100 Mississippi teachers submitted applications with more than 50% of this representation from teachers of color and low performing districts.
  - **994 Time Cohort applicants**
  - **56% Teachers of Color from C-F ranked districts**
  - **9% Male**
  - **181 applicants from Delta Counties (10K Stipend)**
  - **131 applicants from Jackson Public Schools**



Current NB Candidates in Mississippi

## NEXT STEPS

In response to such rich information National Board should:

- Provide opportunities to ensure NBCTS are visible and active. Teacher respond to teachers.
- Consider providing additional World Class Teaching Program (WCTP) outreach to TOC in each congressional district..
- Prime the MS NB Network and promote NBCT engagement through working with the TIME Cohort project.
- Find ways to engage principals ensuring they know how NBC benefits all aspects of school effectiveness.
- Provide funding for applicants not selected for the Time Cohort who desire to become certified.



**PEGGY BROOKINS,  
NBCT, PHD**

President, NBPTS



**MICHELLE ACCARDI,  
NBCT, J.D.**

V.P. Policy and Partnerships,  
NBPTS



**STACEY DONALDSON,  
NBCT, PHD**

Asst. Professor  
Belhaven University



A black and white photograph of a hand holding a pen, writing on a notepad. The notepad has some handwritten text, including "My school is", "my friends", and "my family". The background is a dark, textured surface.

# THANK YOU!

ANY QUESTIONS?

NATIONAL  
BOARD

*Contact us at [nbpts.org](http://nbpts.org)*