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Speaker: Colby Ricci, N.B.C.T. Scholar

I am born and raised in a rural community, and I've always taught in rural communities. And I really appreciate the relationships that I can build. I have been teaching for fifteen years total, but six in Summit County. I'm a literacy interventionist and instructional literacy coach.

Speaker: Jessica Cuthbertson, Language Arts

Other professions, like medical professions (right?), have a board certification process. And most of us want a board-certified surgeon, right, if we're in need? All Colorado children deserve access to a board-certified educator.

Speaker: Amie Baca-Oehlert, Language Arts

The process of going through the National Board Certified teaching standards and being nationally board certified means that you are among the best of the best.

Speaker: Jessica Cuthbertson, Language Arts

Really, it's the work that teachers are doing in their classroom every day, and it's documenting that work, and submitting it for a rigorous scoring review process.

Speaker: Colby Ricci, N.B.C.T. Scholar

As a first-year cohort participant, it's been really inspiring. It's taken me to new places where I've learned a lot about my students, a lot about myself, the positives and the downfalls, and areas to pursue or learn more about to better enhance my instruction as a teacher. I've always wanted to do my board certification; it's been kind of in the back of my head for a long time. The prospect or the idea of doing it was very overwhelming and daunting. So when this cohort opportunity came along and I knew I would have the support and the coaching of others, that really just sealed the deal.

[Music]

Speaker: Colby Ricci, N.B.C.T. Scholar

There are not as many resources available in rural school districts, and sometimes rural schools

get passed over for funding opportunities or other opportunities that are readily available in urban areas. And so this is a great way to honor and recognize rural schools and teachers.

Speaker: Meaghan Anderson, N.B.C.T. Scholar

I have been teaching in Durango for fourteen years now. Our closest city is Albuquerque, which is three hours away, so we don't really have the resources that necessarily a city has.

I'm the only high school AE teacher in my area, and so I'm really, really remote. Coming into this cohort group, they're learning what I teach, and I'm learning what they teach.

Speaker: Karl Remsen, N.B.C.T. Scholar

I am the only teacher in my small rural school for my particular course, so I'm not co-planning with someone and talking about what we should be teaching. My nearest colleague who would be teaching the same course is an hour away.

I worked with Megan, who works down in Durango, and it was great to have someone to bounce ideas off of and to really work with someone who's very different than I am. I'm a math teacher; she works with exceptional students, so we have very different day-to-day jobs but could have some great conversations about how do we impact our students and how do we improve that.

Speaker: Meaghan Anderson, N.B.C.T. Scholar

I would never do this independently. I don't think I would have survived without my partner. It was so great getting to reach out to him, and we would make deadlines like, "Okay, by this date, we have to have these things turned in." We held each other accountable. We have two coaches that help us through the process, but we also have others to talk to who are going through it at the same time. And not only just supporting you but encouraging you and giving you feedback to help you keep going.

Speaker: Jessica Cuthbertson, Language Arts

When you're in the throes of it, it feels very intense and very rigorous, but upon reflection on the process, most educators walk away saying, "It forever changed me as an educator. It was the best professional learning I've engaged in." I have learned so much about myself as a teacher and an

educator. I've already been able to put new practices in place for my students, and ultimately, it's helping the students learn.

Not only am I connecting with the people in my cohort, the educators in the state, but also the educators in the nation. Ultimately, when this is complete, we'll be certified to teach in all states.

Speaker: Meaghan Anderson, N.B.C.T. Scholar

I see it in my students, I see it within the colleagues that I work with, and the families that I help support. Everything has just made me to be a better educator.

Speaker: Allison Sampish, Kindergarten

I knew that it would force me to be reflective, and it would force me to focus on my classroom. So often we do professional development around a book, or we look at a case study or an article, but it's not my case study, and it's not my article for my kids' needs. And so that's what drove me to want to become National Board Certified.

[Music]

Speaker: Amie Baca-Oehlert, Language Arts

Every single child in Colorado deserves access to a high-quality public school educator, and we are so happy to be able to offer this opportunity.

Speaker: Jessica Cuthbertson, Language Arts

It's just really an investment on the part of our state to say, "Yes, we will fund the process for you," so that the financial burden is lifted for candidates and they can just engage deeply in the process.

Speaker: Karl Remsen, N.B.C.T. Scholar

Prepare to really face the reality of what you may be lacking as a teacher, and understand that part of the journey to becoming a master teacher is recognizing, "These are the things I struggle with," and we're going to support you as we go through this to get better at it. But you are not a perfect teacher now, and that's okay. That's not what they're asking you to be in this program. They're asking you to be someone who's willing to work towards becoming a better teacher.

Speaker: Meaghan Anderson, N.B.C.T. Scholar

Every day when I go to work, those students depend on me, and I take that very seriously. And I want to be the best for them. And if I'm just complacent and just keep going day by day, and not building on how I can be a better teacher for them, then I'm not doing my job.

Speaker: Jessica Cuthbertson, Language Arts

It's a tremendous gift to educators. I hope many, many rural educators take advantage of applying, and that we just have this huge demand for more satellite cohorts all across our state in very remote areas where maybe this work hasn't touched yet.

Speaker: Colby Ricci, N.B.C.T. Scholar

My students inspire me to do better, and with the other educators, I think I want to do the best for my students, for their families, and for our schools and communities. So I couldn't think of a better way to gain more knowledge than through this experience.

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