



Educator Equity in Delaware's ESSA State Plan¹

Strengths

Ineffective Teacher Definition

Delaware's strong definition of an ineffective teacher is based on its teacher evaluation system², which includes, among multiple measures, objective measures of student learning and growth that research demonstrates are critically important to measuring teacher quality.³

Inexperienced Teacher Definition

Delaware's strong definition of an inexperienced teacher as a teacher with less than a year of experience is supported by research demonstrating that teachers experience the greatest increase in effectiveness in the first two years of teaching.⁴ Delaware's plan also includes a definition for a novice teacher, which it defines as a teacher with fewer than four years of experience. Delaware calculates and reports equity gaps for students with first-year teachers and novice teachers.

Promising Strategies

Delaware intends to implement multiple, promising, potentially high-impact strategies designed to eliminate its existing educator equity gaps, including: 1) publishing scorecards for educator preparation programs, 2) supporting school leaders to effectively use educator evaluation systems to target supports to teachers, and 3) providing excellent educator dashboards with state and district-specific educator equity data and toolkits to allow districts to identify their equity gaps by district and by school.

Inclusion of Additional Data

Delaware's plan includes calculating and reporting educator equity gap calculations for additional metrics. By calculating and reporting the rates at which certain subgroups of students are exposed to excellent educators, exiting educators and a positive environment, among other characteristics, Delaware positions itself well to determine and address any additional equity gaps that may exist or persist within the state.

Opportunities

Timelines and Interim Targets

Although Delaware clearly includes a timeline and interim targets for eliminating existing educator equity gaps, the state should consider whether its timeline is appropriately ambitious. Eliminating existing educator equity gaps is challenging work that takes time. Nevertheless, under Delaware's timeline, all educator equity gaps will not be eliminated until 2030. In practice, this means that a low-income or minority student who has not yet begun her formal schooling in Delaware public schools will be more likely to be taught by an ineffective, inexperienced or out-of-field teacher than her higher income, nonminority peers for her entire elementary and secondary scholastic career. Delaware should consider whether its timeline and interim targets are as ambitious as possible to ensure that where educator equity gaps currently exist, they will not persist.

1 <https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplan17/decsa2017.pdf>

2 For NCTQ's analysis of the role of student growth in Delaware's teacher evaluation system, see <http://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Delaware-snapshot>.

3 See, e.g., Kane, T. J., & Cantrell, S. (2013). Ensuring fair and reliable measures of effective teaching: Culminating findings from the MET Project's three-year study. Seattle, WA: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Chetty, R., Friedman, J. N., & Rockoff, J. E. (2014). Measuring the impacts of teachers II: Teacher value-added and student outcomes in adulthood. *American Economic Review*, 104(9), 2633-2679; and Adnot, M., Dee, T., Katz, V., & Wyckoff, J. (2017). Teacher turnover, teacher quality, and student achievement in DCPS. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 39(1), 54-76.

4 See, e.g., Boyd, D., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., Rockoff, J., & Wyckoff, J. (2008). The narrowing gap in New York City teacher qualifications and its implications for student achievement in high-poverty schools. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 27(4), 793-818; Henry, G. T., Bastian, K. C., and Fortner, C. K. (2011). Stayers and leavers: Early-career teacher effectiveness and attrition. *Educational Researcher*, 40(6), 271-280; and Papay, J. P., & Kraft, M. A. (2015). Productivity returns to experience in the teacher labor market: Methodological challenges and new evidence on long-term career improvement. *Journal of Public Economics*, 130, 105-119.



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State Response

Delaware was helpful in providing NCTQ with facts that enhanced this analysis.