



Educator Equity in Georgia's ESSA State Plan¹

Strengths

Promising Strategies

Georgia intends to implement promising, potentially high-impact strategies designed to eliminate its existing educator equity gaps, including: 1) providing technical assistance to districts and institutions of higher education to support their collaboration; 2) developing an equity data dashboard, including data such as principal and teacher retention rates; 3) using Equity Labs to collaborate more thoroughly with stakeholders; and 4) supporting the collaboration of government entities and nonprofit groups in the state as they develop teacher preparation routes that address the staffing needs of the most difficult-to-staff areas of the state.

Inexperienced Teacher Definition

Although Georgia does not provide its definition of inexperienced teacher in its ESSA state plan, the state does define the term in its 2015 Educator Equity Plan (which Georgia indicated was appropriate to evaluate as part of this ESSA analysis). In its 2015 Educator Equity Plan, Georgia defines an inexperienced teacher as a teacher in his or her first year of teaching. This definition is supported by research demonstrating that teachers experience the greatest increase in effectiveness in the first two years of teaching.²

Opportunities

Ineffective Teacher Definition and Data

Georgia does not provide a definition for an ineffective teacher within its ESSA state plan. Particularly considering that Georgia's statewide teacher evaluation system includes, among other measures, objective measures of student growth,³ the state should amend its ESSA state plan to include a definition for an ineffective teacher that explicitly includes objective measures of student learning and growth that research demonstrates are a critically important component of measuring teacher quality.⁴ Aligning its educator evaluation system to its ineffective teacher definition would enable Georgia to more fully realize the potential of the teacher evaluation system it has developed and begun implementing.

Although Georgia's 2015 Educator Equity Plan (which Georgia indicated was appropriate to evaluate as part of this ESSA analysis) contains the rates at which low-income and minority students are taught by out-of-field or inexperienced teachers, Georgia's ESSA state plan does not include data on the rates at which low-income and minority students are taught by ineffective teachers. Without these data, Georgia cannot demonstrate that low-income and minority students are not taught at higher rates than other students by ineffective teachers, nor can it guarantee that where such educator equity gaps exist, it is targeting its resources to ensure that they do not persist. Georgia should work with its districts to develop and implement a plan to collect, calculate, and report these data.

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

² See, e.g., Boyd, D., et al. (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., & 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.

³ For NCTQ's analysis of the role of student growth in Georgia's teacher evaluation system, see <http://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Georgia-snapshot>

⁴ 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.

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Timelines and Interim Targets

Georgia's ESSA state plan does not include timelines and interim targets for eliminating the identified educator equity gaps in its ESSA state plan. Although Georgia's 2015 Educator Equity Plan (which Georgia indicated was appropriate to evaluate as part of this ESSA analysis) includes some timelines for decreasing educator equity gaps in the state, most of these dates have since passed. Georgia should amend its ESSA state plan to include prospective dates for timelines and interim targets so that the state and its stakeholders are able to ensure adequate accountability for eliminating existing educator equity gaps.

State Response

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