



# Educator Equity in Illinois' ESSA State Plan<sup>1</sup>

## Strengths

### Ineffective Teacher Definition

Illinois does not provide an explicit definition for an ineffective teacher within its ESSA state plan. It does, however, define effective and highly effective teachers in its 2015 State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators (Educator Equity Plan), which is included as an appendix to its ESSA state plan. This plan is based on the state's teacher evaluation system<sup>2</sup>, which includes objective measures of student learning and growth that research demonstrates are critically important to measuring teacher quality.<sup>3</sup>

### Inexperienced Teacher Definition

Illinois does not explicitly define an inexperienced teacher in its ESSA state plan; however, it does define an inexperienced teacher in its Educator Equity Plan, which is included as an appendix to its ESSA state plan. Illinois's strong definition of an inexperienced teacher as a teacher who has less than one year of teaching experience is supported by research demonstrating that teachers experience the greatest increase in effectiveness in the first two years of teaching.<sup>4</sup>

## Opportunities

### Timelines and Interim Targets

Illinois fails to include timelines and interim targets for eliminating identified educator equity gaps in its plan. Illinois should amend its plan to include timelines and interim targets so that the state and its stakeholders are able to ensure adequate accountability for eliminating educator equity gaps.

### Update Educator Equity Plan to Reflect Lessons Learned and Future Implementation Plans

Illinois includes its full Educator Equity Plan as an appendix to its ESSA state plan, rather than including updated or amended information regarding educator equity within the text of its ESSA state plan. Although much of the information that ESSA requires is included in Illinois's Educator Equity Plan, the state should take the opportunity presented by ESSA to review and, where appropriate, update its Educator Equity Plan based on engagement with ESSA stakeholders to help ensure that the plan it is implementing includes the most timely and actionable data and reflects any lessons learned by Illinois during its initial implementation of its Educator Equity Plan.

## State Response

Illinois was helpful in providing NCTQ with facts that enhanced this analysis. Illinois also provided NCTQ with additional information about how its ESSA state plan includes measures of interim progress for accountability purposes. Although we appreciate this additional information, we did not include it above because this analysis is focused on the educator equity provisions of the ESSA.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplan17/ilcsa2017.pdf>

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

<sup>3</sup> 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; 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.

<sup>4</sup> 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.