



Educator Equity in Massachusetts's ESSA State Plan¹

Strengths

Ineffective Teacher Definition

Although Massachusetts does not provide an explicit definition for an ineffective teacher within its plan, it calculates the rates at which certain students are taught by teachers who receive needs improvement or unsatisfactory overall ratings based on its teacher evaluation system², which includes objective measures of student learning and growth that research demonstrates are critically important to measuring teacher quality.³

Inclusion of Additional Data

Massachusetts's plan includes educator equity gap calculations for additional student and teacher subgroups as well as for the statutory subgroups. By calculating and reporting the rates at which English learners and students with disabilities, as well as low-income and minority students, are taught by ineffective, inexperienced and out-of-field teachers, and by including data regarding professional teacher status, long-term substitutes and teachers who are absent 10 or more days⁴, Massachusetts illuminates additional educator equity gaps, which is the first step in eliminating those gaps.

Clear Timelines and Interim Targets

Massachusetts's plan includes clear, ambitious timelines and interim targets for entirely eliminating its identified equity gaps by the 2021-2022 school year. Transparently including these timelines and interim targets enables Massachusetts and its stakeholders to help ensure adequate accountability for eliminating educator equity gaps.

Promising Strategies

Massachusetts intends to implement multiple, promising, potentially high-impact strategies designed to eliminate its existing equity gaps, including: 1) enhancing educator preparation through development and implementation of a teacher and principal performance assessment and 2) adding indicators to its district post-grant monitoring that address equitable access to in-field and highly rated teachers.

Opportunities

Inexperienced Teacher Definition

Massachusetts does not provide an explicit definition for an inexperienced teacher within its plan; however, it calculates the rates at which certain students are taught by teachers with fewer than three years of experience. Massachusetts should explicitly define an inexperienced teacher as a teacher with two years or fewer of experience, as research demonstrates that teachers experience the greatest increase in effectiveness in the first two years of teaching.⁵

State Response

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

- ¹ <https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplan17/macsa2017.pdf>
- ² For NCTQ's analysis of the role of student growth in Massachusetts's teacher evaluation system, see <http://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Massachusetts-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; 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., Miller, R. T., Murnane, R. J., & Willett, J. B. (2008). Do teacher absences impact student achievement? Longitudinal evidence from one urban school district. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 30(2), 181-200.
- ⁵ 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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