



# Educator Equity in South Carolina's ESSA State Plan<sup>1</sup>

## Strengths

### Ineffective Teacher Definition

South Carolina's strong definition of ineffective teacher is based on its teacher evaluation system<sup>2</sup>, which includes, among multiple measures, objective measures of student learning and growth that research demonstrates are a critically important component of measuring teacher quality.<sup>3</sup>

### Student-Level Data

South Carolina calculates and reports its educator equity gaps for all statutory student and teacher subgroups for English/language arts, mathematics, and science and intends to update these data for additional subject areas, when available. Using student-level data illuminates within-school equity gaps that school-level data necessarily obscure.<sup>4</sup>

### Promising Strategies

South Carolina intends to implement promising, potentially high-impact strategies designed to eliminate its existing educator equity gaps, including providing targeted support to districts with Title I schools that show significant discrepancies in educator equity, as they develop and implement plans to close educator equity gaps.

## Opportunities

### Inexperienced Teacher Definition

South Carolina defines an inexperienced teacher as a teacher with less than three full years of teaching experience. South Carolina should amend this definition to limit it to a teacher with two years or less of experience, as research demonstrates that teachers experience the greatest increase in effectiveness in the first two years of teaching.<sup>5</sup>

### Timelines and Interim Targets

South Carolina's ESSA state plan does not identify timelines or interim targets for eliminating its identified educator equity gaps. South Carolina should amend its ESSA state plan to include interim targets so that the state and its stakeholders are able to ensure adequate accountability for eliminating educator equity gaps.

## State Response

South Carolina affirmed the factual accuracy of this analysis and provided that the ESSA state plan template does not require states to set timelines and interim targets for eliminating educator equity gaps.

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

2 For NCTQ's analysis of the role of student growth in South Carolina's teacher evaluation system, see <https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/SouthCarolina-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., Kalogrides, D., & Loeb, S. (2013). Different teachers, different peers: The magnitude of student sorting within schools. *Educational Researcher*, 42(6), 304-316; and Goldhaber, D., Lavery, L., & Theobald, R. (2015). Uneven playing field? Assessing the teacher quality gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students. *Educational Researcher*, 44(5), 293-307.

5 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.