



Educator Equity in South Dakota's ESSA State Plan¹

Strengths

Ineffective Teacher Definition

South Dakota's ESSA state plan indicates that its districts must define ineffective teacher using criteria that are based in part on objective measures of student learning and growth² that research demonstrates are a critically important component of measuring teacher quality.³

Promising Strategies

South Dakota intends to implement promising, potentially high-impact strategies designed to eliminate its existing educator equity gaps, including collaborating with WoLakota, a teacher-mentoring program that supports inexperienced instructors serving in schools with high populations of American Indian students. WoLakota works exclusively with the schools in South Dakota that have the highest turnover rates and lowest rates of performance.

Opportunities

Ineffective Teacher Data

Although South Dakota's 2015 Educator Equity Plan (which South Dakota indicated was appropriate to evaluate as part of this ESSA analysis) includes data on the rates at which low-income and minority students are taught by out-of-field and inexperienced teachers, neither South Dakota's Educator Equity Plan nor its ESSA state plan includes data on the rates at which low-income and minority students are taught by ineffective teachers. Without these data, South Dakota 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. South Dakota should work with its districts to develop and implement a plan and a timeline to collect, calculate, and report these data, which the state indicates it has already begun implementing with its Student Teacher Accountability Reporting System (SD-STARS).

Inexperienced Teacher Definition

South Dakota defines an inexperienced teacher as a teacher inside of his or her first three years of practice. South Dakota 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.⁴

Timelines and Interim Targets

South Dakota does not include timelines and interim targets for eliminating its identified educator equity gaps in its ESSA state plan. Although South Dakota includes a timeline in its 2015 Educator Equity Plan (which South Dakota indicated was appropriate to evaluate as part of this ESSA analysis), all of these dates have since passed. South Dakota should amend its ESSA plan to include updated timelines and interim targets so that the state and its stakeholders are able to ensure adequate accountability for eliminating educator equity gaps.

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

2 <https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/SouthDakota-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., 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.



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State Response

South Dakota affirmed the factual accuracy of this analysis and was helpful in providing fact that enhanced it.