



Educator Equity in Virginia's ESSA State Plan¹

Strengths

Inexperienced Teacher Definition

Although Virginia does not include a definition of inexperienced teacher in its ESSA state plan, the state does include the term in its 2015 Educator Equity Plan (which is specifically referenced in Virginia's ESSA state plan). Virginia's strong definition of inexperienced teacher as a teacher in his or her first year of teaching is supported by research demonstrating that teachers experience the greatest increase in effectiveness in the first two years of teaching.²

Inclusion of Additional Data

Virginia's ESSA state plan includes educator equity gap calculations for students with disabilities and English learners, as well as for some of the statutory subgroups. By calculating and reporting the rates at which students with disabilities or English learners are taught by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers, Virginia illuminates additional educator equity gaps, which is an important first step toward eliminating those gaps.

Promising Strategies

Virginia intends to implement promising, potentially high-impact strategies designed to eliminate its existing educator equity gaps, including: 1) utilizing university partnerships to improve the teacher pipeline, especially to increase the number of endorsed teachers of English learners; and 2) annually reviewing district data to support continued funding under ESEA.

Opportunities

Ineffective Teacher Definition and Data

Virginia's ESSA state plan does not include a definition of an ineffective teacher. Virginia should develop a definition of ineffective teacher that includes, among multiple measures, objective measures of student learning and growth, such as those that are included in Virginia's educator evaluation system³ that research demonstrates are a critically important component of measuring teacher quality.⁴

Although Virginia's ESSA state plan includes data on the rates at which low-income and minority students are taught by inexperienced and out-of-field teachers, the state does not include the rates at which students are taught by ineffective teachers. Without these data, Virginia cannot demonstrate that low-income or 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.

Timelines and Interim Targets

Virginia does not include timelines and interim targets for eliminating its identified educator equity gaps in its ESSA state plan. Although Virginia did incorporate a timeline into its 2015 Educator Equity Plan (which is specifically referenced in Virginia's ESSA state plan), most of these timelines have passed. Virginia should amend its ESSA state 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.

1 <https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplan17/vaconsolidatedstateplan.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 <https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Virginia-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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State Response

Virginia affirmed the factual accuracy of this analysis.