



Educator Equity in Vermont's ESSA State Plan¹

Strengths

Inexperienced Teacher Definition

Vermont's strong definition of an inexperienced teacher as an educator 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

School and District Leadership Data

Vermont's plan includes information regarding the rates at which low-income and minority students are led by principals and superintendents with differing turnover and compensation rates. Inclusion of these data illuminates additional educator equity gaps, which is the first step in eliminating those gaps.

Opportunities

Ineffective Teacher Definition

Vermont defines an ineffective teacher as a teacher teaching out of field on an emergency or temporary license. Vermont should amend that definition to include, among multiple measures, objective measures of student learning and growth, which research demonstrates are critically important to measuring teacher quality.³

Student-Level Data

In its ESSA state plan, Vermont calculates and reports the rates at which low-income and minority students are taught by ineffective, inexperienced and out-of-field teachers, as well as the school and district leadership data referenced above. Based on these data, Vermont concludes that intervention is not currently necessary to correct problems of a disproportionate number of low-income and minority students being taught by ineffective teachers. To ensure that Vermont is able to identify and address all potential educator equity gaps, it should consider calculating and reporting student-level data, which may illuminate within-school equity gaps that school-level data necessarily obscure.⁴

State Response

Vermont was helpful in providing NCTQ with facts that enhanced this analysis. The state added that many of the core assumptions of the Educator Equity Report do not hold in Vermont and that schools that have proportionately higher rates of students from historically underserved populations tend to be taught by teachers who are paid more, are more likely to be fully endorsed and have more experience than schools with larger percentages of students who are historically more advantaged. Vermont also added that although its historically marginalized students underperform compared to its historically advantaged students, its research suggests that teacher characteristics are not a contributing factor to this underperformance in Vermont.

¹ <https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplan17/vtcsa2017.pdf>

² 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.

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.