



Educator Equity in Wisconsin's ESSA State Plan¹

Strengths

Promising Strategies

Wisconsin intends to implement promising, potentially high-impact strategies designed to eliminate its existing educator equity gaps, including: 1) targeting the nine districts with the most inequitable distribution of teachers and providing them with additional resources; and 2) dedicating resources to teacher preparation programming in the state for the purpose of decreasing turnover rates of educators.

Opportunities

Ineffective Teacher Definition and Data

Although Wisconsin does not include a definition of ineffective teacher in its ESSA state plan, it defines the term in its 2015 Educator Equity Plan (which is specifically referenced in Wisconsin's ESSA state plan). Wisconsin defines an ineffective teacher as one who does not meet the Wisconsin Teaching Standards, which do not explicitly require that student growth be included in all teachers' evaluations as a measure of their effectiveness.² Because Wisconsin's ineffective teacher definition does not clearly include an objective measure of student growth, Wisconsin should require that its definition of ineffective teacher explicitly includes objective measures of student learning and growth, such as those that are included in Wisconsin's educator evaluation system,³ which research demonstrates are a critically important component of measuring teacher quality.⁴

Although Wisconsin's 2015 Educator Equity Plan (which is specifically referenced in Wisconsin's ESSA state plan) includes data on the rates at which low-income and minority students are taught by out-of-field and inexperienced teachers, the state does not include rates at which students are taught by ineffective teachers in either its ESSA state plan or its 2015 Educator Equity Plan. Without these data, Wisconsin can neither demonstrate that low-income and minority students are not taught at higher rates than other students by ineffective teachers, nor can it ensure that where such educator equity gaps exist, it is targeting its resources to ensure that they do not persist. Wisconsin should work with its districts to develop and implement a plan to calculate these data as soon as is practicable.

Inexperienced Teacher Definition

Although Wisconsin does not include a definition of inexperienced teacher in its ESSA state plan, it does include the term in its 2015 Educator Equity Plan (which is specifically referenced in Wisconsin's ESSA state plan). Wisconsin defines an inexperienced teacher as a teacher with three or less years of teaching experience in a particular subject area or is teaching out-of-field. Wisconsin 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.⁵

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

2 To review Wisconsin's Teaching Standards, see <https://dpi.wi.gov/tepd/programs/standards/teacher>

3 For NCTQ's analysis of the role of student growth in Wisconsin's teacher evaluation system, see <https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Wisconsin-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.

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.



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Timelines and Interim Targets

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

State Response

Wisconsin was helpful in providing NCTQ with facts necessary for this analysis and provided that it uses the term "students of color" in lieu of "minority students." This analysis was updated subsequent to the state's review.