



Educator Equity in Arizona's ESSA State Plan¹

Strengths

Ineffective Teacher Definition

Arizona's strong definition of an ineffective teacher is based on its teacher evaluation system², which includes, among multiple measures, objective measures of student learning and growth that research demonstrates are critically important to measuring teacher quality.³

Promising Strategies

Arizona intends to implement multiple, promising, potentially high-impact strategies designed to eliminate its existing educator equity gaps, including: 1) strengthening the rating reporting system to provide more reliable data surrounding teacher effectiveness and training administrators on the use of such data, 2) reducing the number of inexperienced teachers by employing effective retention and recruitment strategies, and 3) providing incentives for teaching in high-need areas.

Opportunities

Inexperienced Teacher Definition

Arizona defines an inexperienced teacher as a teacher with fewer than three years of experience. Arizona should amend this definition to define an inexperienced teacher as a teacher with two or fewer years of experience, as research demonstrates that teachers experience the greatest increase in effectiveness in their first two years of teaching.⁴

Educator Equity Data, Timeline and Interim Target Transparency

Arizona does not include data demonstrating the rates at which low-income and minority students are taught by ineffective, inexperienced or out-of-field teachers, nor does it include timelines and interim targets for eliminating existing educator equity gaps in its ESSA state plan. Instead, these data are included in Arizona's 2015 State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators, for which the state provides the link in its ESSA state plan. To increase transparency and ensure that key stakeholders that are part of the ESSA state plan process have an opportunity to engage with these data, timelines and interim targets, Arizona should amend its state plan to fully incorporate this information.

State Response

Arizona affirmed the factual accuracy of this analysis.

1 <https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplan17/azcsa2017.pdf>

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