



# Educator Equity in California's ESSA State Plan<sup>1</sup>

## Strengths

### Inexperienced Teacher Definition

California's strong definition of an inexperienced teacher as a teacher with less than two years of experience is supported by research that demonstrates that teachers experience the greatest increase in effectiveness in the first two years of teaching.<sup>2</sup>

## Opportunities

### Ineffective Teacher Definition and Data

California's definition of an ineffective teacher is one who is misassigned based on credentialing or teaching without a credential. Because California's ineffective teacher definition does not include, among other measures, objective measures of student growth, California should amend its definition to explicitly include objective measures of student learning and growth, which research demonstrates are a critically important component of measuring teacher quality.<sup>3</sup>

Although California's ESSA state plan includes data regarding unqualified and out-of-field teachers, California's ESSA state plan does not include data demonstrating whether low-income and minority students are taught at disproportionate rates by ineffective teachers. California should amend its plan to include these data, as calculating and reporting these rates is a critically important first step in eliminating any existing educator equity gaps.

### Timelines and Interim Targets

California's ESSA state plan does not include timelines and interim targets for eliminating its identified educator equity gaps. California should amend its 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

California affirmed the factual accuracy of this analysis and indicated that its definition of ineffective teacher was approved by its State Board of Education in September 2017 and that it is currently working to implement its data collection and reporting based on this definition.

1 <https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplan17/caconsolidatedstateplan.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 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.