



Educator Equity in Connecticut's ESSA State Plan¹

Strengths

Ineffective Teacher Definition

Connecticut'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

Connecticut intends to implement multiple, promising, potentially high-impact strategies designed to eliminate its existing educator equity gaps, including: 1) providing additional resources and support to early career teachers in high-poverty, high-minority schools, such as extended time with a well-matched mentor, and 2) collaborating with the full range of existing educational entities to develop more robust collaborative, coordinated partnerships among institutions of higher education (IHEs), PK-12 systems and other educational entities to develop innovative solutions that increase collective responsibility and accountability for developing learner-ready teachers and school-ready principals.

Commitment to Student-Level Data

Connecticut has developed a detailed plan and timeline to calculate, pilot and report educator equity gaps using student-level data by the 2019-2020 school year. Student-level data is necessary to illuminate within-school educator equity gaps that school-level data necessarily obscure.⁴

Opportunities

Ineffective Teacher Data

Connecticut's plan does not include data on the rates at which low-income and minority students are taught by ineffective teachers. Without these data, Connecticut cannot demonstrate that low-income and minority students are being taught at higher rates than other students by ineffective teachers, nor can it ensure that where such gaps exist, the state is targeting its resources to ensure that they do not persist. Connecticut should work with its districts to develop and implement a plan to collect, calculate and report these data. The state's current practice of collecting data on the status of the implementation of teacher evaluation systems across its districts, including the frequency of evaluations, aggregate summative evaluation ratings and the number of teachers who have not been evaluated, is an important first step that Connecticut should use to inform this work with districts.

Inexperienced Teacher Definition

Connecticut defines an inexperienced teacher as a teacher with four or fewer years of experience. Connecticut 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 the first two years of teaching.⁵

1 <https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplan17/ctcsa2017.pdf>

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

5 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.



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Timelines and Interim Targets

Connecticut does not include timelines and interim targets for eliminating all identified educator equity gaps in its ESSA state plan. Connecticut should amend its plan to include timelines and interim targets for eliminating all identified educator equity gaps so that the state and its stakeholders can ensure adequate accountability for eliminating these gaps. To inform its work to develop ambitious and achievable timelines and interim targets to eliminate all educator equity gaps, Connecticut should build on its current work to support its 10 lowest-performing districts — Ed Reform Districts — to address their existing educator equity gaps.

State Response

Connecticut was helpful in providing NCTQ with facts that enhanced this analysis. The state added that its decision not to include timelines and interim targets for eliminating its identified educator equity gaps was based on the revised ESSA state plan template, issued in March 2017. Connecticut also indicated that it plans to establish targets and benchmarks.