



Educator Equity in Hawaii's ESSA State Plan¹

Strengths

Ineffective Teacher Definition

Although Hawaii does not provide an explicit definition of ineffective teacher in its ESSA state plan, it defines the inverse of this term — “effective teacher” — in its 2015 Educator Equity Plan (which is specifically referenced in Hawaii's ESSA state plan), based on its teacher evaluation system,² which includes, among other measures, objective measures of student learning and growth. Research demonstrates that linking objective measures of student learning and growth to teacher effectiveness in the context of educator equity is a critically important component of measuring teacher quality.³

Inexperienced Teacher Definition

Although Hawaii does not provide its definition of inexperienced teacher in its ESSA state plan, it defines this term in its 2015 Educator Equity Plan (which is specifically referenced in Hawaii's ESSA state plan). Hawaii defines an inexperienced teacher as a teacher who has not yet completed one full year of full-time teaching. This definition is supported by research that demonstrates that teachers experience the greatest increase in effectiveness in the first two years of teaching.⁴

Inclusion of Additional Data

Hawaii's ESSA state plan includes educator equity gap calculations for turnover rates of educators, as well as for some of the statutory subgroups. By calculating and reporting the rates at which schools with high populations of low-income or minority students struggle to retain teachers compared with schools with lower instances of poverty or fewer students of minority status, Hawaii illuminates additional educator equity gaps, which is an important first step in eliminating those educator equity gaps.

Opportunities

Ineffective Teacher Data

Although Hawaii's 2015 Educator Equity Plan (which is specifically referenced in Hawaii's ESSA state plan) includes data on the rates at which low-income and minority students are taught by out-of-field or 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, Hawaii cannot demonstrate that low-income and minority students are not taught at higher rates than other students by ineffective teachers, nor can it guarantee that where such educator equity gaps exist, the state is targeting its resources to ensure that they do not persist. Hawaii should develop and implement a plan to collect, calculate, and report these data.

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

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

Although Hawaii includes some broad timelines in its Strategic Plan (which is included in Hawaii's ESSA state plan), it does not include interim targets for closing existing educator equity gaps. In the absence of these interim targets, Hawaii and its stakeholders may have insufficient information to determine whether its strategies designed to eliminate its existing educator equity gaps are doing so and therefore may not be able to make any necessary course corrections or iterative improvements. Hawaii should amend its ESSA state plan to include interim targets so that the state and its stakeholders are able to ensure adequate accountability for eliminating educator equity gaps.

State Response

Hawaii declined to comment on the factual accuracy of this analysis.