



Educator Equity in Minnesota's ESSA State Plan¹

Strengths

Ineffective Teacher Definition

Minnesota's strong definition of ineffective teacher is based on its teacher evaluation system,² which includes, among multiple measures, objective measures of student learning and growth that research demonstrates are a critically important component of measuring teacher quality.³

Promising Strategies

Minnesota intends to implement promising, potentially high-impact strategies designed to eliminate its existing educator equity gaps, including supporting districts to craft their own equitable access plans so that districts can identify and address classroom and school gaps with regard to equitable access to effective, in-field, and experienced teachers.

Opportunities

Ineffective Teacher Data

Although Minnesota's ESSA state plan includes data regarding out-of-field and inexperienced teachers, Minnesota's ESSA state plan does not include data demonstrating whether low-income and minority students are taught at disproportionate rates by ineffective teachers. Minnesota 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.

Inexperienced Teacher Definition

Minnesota defines an inexperienced teacher as a licensed teacher who has been employed for three years or less. Minnesota 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.⁴

Timelines and Interim Targets

Although Minnesota's 2015 Educator Equity Plan (which is specifically referenced in Minnesota's ESSA state plan) clearly includes a timeline and interim targets for eliminating existing educator equity gaps, the state should consider whether its goals are appropriately rigorous. Eliminating existing educator equity gaps is challenging but necessary work; however, under Minnesota's timeline, not all existing educator equity gaps will be eliminated. Instead, Minnesota provides a timeline and interim targets to reduce, rather than eliminate, existing educator equity gaps. In practice this means, for example, that even after Minnesota reaches its goal, high-poverty students will continue to be 4.1 percent more likely to be taught by inexperienced teachers than their low-poverty peers while attending school in Minnesota. Minnesota should carefully consider whether its timelines and interim targets are as rigorous as possible, and where appropriate rigor is lacking, the state should update its ESSA state plan to reflect a timeline and interim targets that will represent Minnesota's ultimate goal of eliminating any existing educator equity gaps.

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

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

Minnesota was helpful in providing NCTQ with facts that enhanced this analysis.