



Educator Equity in Washington's ESSA State Plan¹

Strengths

Commitment to Additional Data

Washington has proposed a timeline for calculating and reporting educator equity gaps using English learner data by the 2018-2019 school year. By calculating and reporting the rates at which English learners are taught by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers, Washington illuminates additional educator equity gaps, which is an important first step toward eliminating those educator equity gaps.

Opportunities

Ineffective Teacher Definition and Data

Washington's ESSA state plan does not provide a definition of ineffective teacher. Washington should develop a definition of ineffective teacher that includes, or that requires districts to include, among multiple measures, objective measures of student learning and growth, such as those that are included in Washington's educator evaluation system², which research demonstrates are a critically important component of measuring teacher quality.³

Although Washington's ESSA state plan includes data on the rates at which low-income and minority students are taught by out-of-field and inexperienced teachers, the state does not include rates at which students are taught by ineffective teachers in its ESSA state plan. Without these data, Washington cannot demonstrate that low-income and minority students are not taught at higher rates than other students by ineffective teachers, or determine where intervention is appropriate to eliminate any existing educator equity gaps. Importantly, Washington's ESSA state plan contains a plan to calculate and report these data no later than January 2018. Washington should move forward on this timeline so that it can help guarantee that where such educator equity gaps exist, it is targeting its resources to ensure that they do not persist.

Inexperienced Teacher Definition

Washington's ESSA state plan defines an inexperienced teacher as a teacher with less than five years of teaching experience. Washington 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

Washington's ESSA state plan does not include timelines and interim targets for eliminating its identified educator equity gaps. Washington should amend its ESSA state plan to include timelines and interim targets so that the state and its stakeholders are able to ensure adequate accountability for eliminating educator equity gaps.

State Response

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

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

2 <https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Washington-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