Educator Equity in **Tennessee's** ESSA State Plan[1]

Strengths

Ineffective Teacher Definition

Tennessee's strong definition of an 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 critically important to measuring teacher quality.[3]

Student-Level Data

Tennessee calculates and reports its educator equity gaps using, among other data, student-level data, which illuminate within-school equity gaps that school-level data necessarily obscure.[4]

Inclusion of Additional Data

Tennessee's plan includes educator equity gap calculations by content area (i.e., English language arts and Mathematics), which illuminate whether certain subjects have more significant or persistent educator equity gaps and therefore provides Tennessee with an opportunity to more narrowly target its strategies to eliminate existing gaps.

Opportunities

Inexperienced Teacher Definition

Tennessee defines an inexperienced teacher as a teacher with fewer than three years of teaching experience in Tennessee public schools. Tennessee should amend this definition to limit it to 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]

Timelines and Interim Targets

Tennessee does not include timelines and interim targets for eliminating its identified educator equity gaps. Tennessee 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 educator equity gaps.

State Response

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

1 https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplan17/tncsa2017.pdf

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