



# LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## LOUISIANA'S PLAN FOR ENSURING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO EXCELLENT TEACHERS FOR ALL STUDENTS

### SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) is pleased to submit to the U.S. Department of Education the following plan that has been developed to address the long-term needs for improving equitable access to great teachers and school leaders in Louisiana. This plan responds to Education Secretary Arne Duncan's July 7, 2014, letter to State Education Agencies (SEAs), as augmented with additional guidance published on November 10, 2014. Louisiana's plan complies with (1) the requirement in Section 1111(b)(8)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) that each state's Title I, Part A plan include information on the specific steps that the SEA will take to ensure that students from low-income families and students who belong to racial minority groups are not taught at higher rates than other students by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers, and the measures that the agency will use to evaluate and publicly report the progress of the agency with respect to such steps; and (2) the requirement in ESEA Section 1111(e)(2) that a state's plan be revised by the SEA if necessary.

Louisiana is committed to improving student outcomes across the state by expanding access to excellent teachers for all students. This includes students who are economically disadvantaged<sup>1</sup> and/or who are a racial minority. In Louisiana, these students constitute the majority of the state's public school student population. As such, this plan does not provide for a redistribution of high-quality educators from low-need to high-need local education agencies (LEAs), schools, or classrooms. Rather, this plan provides for a comprehensive approach to teacher recruitment, certification, and improvement across the state, with an emphasis on schools and classrooms with the greatest need. The plan builds on practices of "high-poverty" and "high-minority" LEAs with rich concentrations of excellent educators and addresses challenges in "high-poverty" and "high-minority" LEAs where students have more limited access to excellent educators.

This approach is built on the belief that Louisiana students are just as smart and capable as any in America. Recognizing this, Louisiana has committed to preparing its students to read, write, and perform math tasks on par with students nationwide. Specifically, Louisiana will steadily raise expectations for student achievement over the next ten years, so that all students are prepared for college or a career of their choice upon graduation from high school. By the year 2025, A-rated schools will average "mastery" or "level four" performance. Today, schools rated "A" at a minimum average "basic" or "level three." A "level four" or "mastery" is the standard for college and career readiness. To guide this transition, the LDOE produces [annual reports](#) with detailed student performance data at the district and school levels.

Louisiana educators are integral to this plan: they make this commitment a reality in classrooms across the state through engaging lessons and a commitment to growth for all students. Teaching to high standards is complex work and requires supportive school leadership and a collaborative work environment in which teachers come together to focus on the technical challenges of their craft. To support teachers, the LDOE has released a comprehensive suite of curricular tools

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<sup>1</sup> Students eligible for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Medicaid, awaiting foster care, migrant, and incarcerated children.

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and supports, including the [ELA](#) and [Math](#) Guidebooks, and [the Instructional Materials Review Process](#). [Louisiana Teacher Leaders](#), a group of over 5,000 outstanding educators, receive and deliver professional development to teachers in every public school in Louisiana. Finally, Louisiana educators have been held to higher standards and received more frequent feedback through the State's educator evaluation and support system, [Compass](#), legislated by Act 54 of 2010. LEA and school leaders play an important role in teacher success, too. These school leaders have the ability to create productive work environments in which teachers have time to collaborate with peers, and the ability to make critical workforce decisions, such as whom to recruit and hire. In Louisiana, school and LEA administrators have been granted broad authority to make workforce decisions around hiring, termination, reductions in force, and tenure, legislated through Act 1 of 2012. To support LEA and school leaders, the LDOE published the [Louisiana Principals' Teaching and Leadership Guidebook](#), the [High School Planning Guidebook](#), and the [Early Childhood Guidebook](#).

LEA and school leaders have begun to work more closely with teacher preparation programs, too, to collaboratively ensure that teachers are ready for day one in Louisiana's classrooms. Through [Believe and Prepare](#), the LDOE, in partnership with the Board of Regents (BOR), has provided opportunities for LEA and preparation programs to establish or strengthen partnerships that ensure that new teachers are meeting district workforce needs and are ready for the challenges of today's classrooms. Further, BOR has worked with teacher preparation programs over the past several years to ensure that teacher preparation curricula address Louisiana's standards for students and for educators.

The LDOE has dedicated staff and funding to support LEAs and schools in these endeavors. Network Support teams have provided direct support to LEAs on a range of instructional issues. Additionally, these teams assist LEAs in yearlong planning process, guided by the [District Planning Guide](#), to ensure that fiscal decisions support student achievement and educator growth. Through [Believe and Succeed](#), the LDOE has provided grants to empower LEAs, nonprofits, and individuals to turn around existing "D" and "F" schools and to create new, high-quality schools for students who would otherwise attend underperforming schools.

Despite these tools and supports, students' access to excellent teachers varies from parish to parish. This is true for parishes with high concentrations of students who are economically disadvantaged or who belong to a racial minority group. Some parishes that are "high-poverty" and "high-minority" are struggling to attract, develop, and retain excellent educators. In 14 "high-minority" and "high-poverty" parishes, student outcomes<sup>2</sup> are below the state average (ranging from 37 percent to 64 percent of students scoring "Basic" and above in 2013-14; the state average was 68 percent).

When considering teacher effectiveness, student growth data is used in this report. Specifically, transitional student growth data, which is calculated using the LDOE's value-added methodology, is used. Student growth data is used because it is the only teacher effectiveness measure that is consistent across all schools and LEAs; it is calculated using the same methodology for all teachers with state assessment data and, therefore, enables comparison across the state.

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<sup>2</sup> Measured by percent of students scoring Basic or above in 2013-2014.

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Students' access to teachers with effective or higher student growth data varies, as well. In 14 "high-minority" and "high-poverty" parishes, ten had a greater portion of struggling teachers<sup>3</sup> than the state average (ranging from 11 percent to 29 percent of their teachers<sup>4</sup>, compared to 9 percent across the state). These teachers' students are falling below academic growth expectations.

However, teachers in other "high-poverty" and "high-minority" parishes are producing extraordinary achievement gains. This is particularly evident in New Orleans and Baton Rouge. In 2013-2014, schools in Orleans Parish, a "high-poverty" and "high-minority" LEA, employed the greatest portion of *Highly Effective*<sup>5</sup> teachers of any parish in the state (35 percent of teachers in Orleans Parish were *Highly Effective*, compared to 18 percent statewide). Teachers in East Baton Rouge, a "high-minority" parish, also earned *Highly Effective* ratings at a greater rate than teachers in the rest of the state<sup>6</sup> (23 percent in East Baton Rouge Parish, compared to 18 percent statewide). A substantially higher-than-average proportion of these teachers' students consistently and substantially exceed academic growth expectations. Certain rural parishes that are "high-poverty" or "high-minority" also have high concentrations of excellent teachers. Students in St. John the Baptist Parish, East Feliciana Parish, and Iberville Parish all achieved growth in student performance at "Basic" and above from 2012-13 to 2013-14 and have a greater portion of *Highly Effective* teachers than the state average (27 percent, 22 percent, and 19 percent respectively, compared to 18 percent statewide).

Louisiana's state equity plan is built on the successes of these "high-poverty" and "high-minority" parishes that are recruiting, supporting, and retaining excellent educators. To create this plan, the LDOE's state equity plan workgroup took the following steps:

1. Defined key terms and data metrics for plan
2. Reviewed data from state databases to identify equity gaps
3. Discussed root causes for equity gaps based on data and conversations with stakeholders
4. Identified key strategies to target equity gaps
5. Set measurable targets and created a plan for measuring and reporting progress and continuously improving this plan

### **Scan of State-Level Policies, Initiatives, and Currently Available Data**

To begin, the LDOE performed a scan of current policies and initiatives that Louisiana has been implementing in recent years, as noted above, as well as a review of relevant and available data. This scan was conducted in collaboration with multiple teams within the LDOE. Specifically, LDOE staff reviewed:

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<sup>3</sup> As defined by an *Ineffective* transitional student growth data rating.

<sup>4</sup> This calculation accounts for teachers with transitional student growth data.

<sup>5</sup> *Highly Effective* is defined as receiving a highly effective transitional student growth data.

<sup>6</sup> Evaluation ratings of teachers in all parishes are available in the Compass Annual Report, available at <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/teaching/compass-final-report>.

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- Current licensure standards, requirements and barriers
- Implementation and data related to Compass, Louisiana's teacher evaluation and support tool, including transitional student growth data
- Implementation and data related to the Recovery School District and Believe and Succeed, Louisiana's school turnaround models
- Available data identified as relevant to the development and implementation of Louisiana's equitable access plan

## SECTION 2. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The LDOE believes that a successful state plan for teacher and leader equity in Louisiana could not be developed in isolation or solely in cooperation with LEA leaders. Rather, the plan's success will depend in large part on the long-term involvement of other stakeholders, including teachers, school and LEA leaders, institutions of higher education, civic school leaders and education advocates. As described below, the LDOE has involved stakeholders from the beginning and will continue to do so through public engagement opportunities and smaller workgroups. To ensure that the LDOE develops a comprehensive plan for better preparing teachers for the workforce so that all students can learn, the Department solicited feedback from stakeholders – in over 50 engagement opportunities including public forums and focus groups, workgroup meetings and conversations with education leaders. (See Appendices A–C for details about the stakeholder engagement process.)

Prior to starting its work on the state equity plan, the LDOE knew that there was a great need for engaging LEA and school leaders in supporting teacher preparation and certification in Louisiana. To learn more about teacher recruitment, certification, and preparation needs and opportunities, the Department in July 2014, in partnership with the Board of Regents (BOR), [surveyed teachers statewide](#) about their own experiences with preparation and in the classroom. Principals and personnel directors shared their experience hiring and supporting new teachers, and preparation program faculty shared their collaborations with partner schools and LEAs. Over 6,000 educators participated in the survey.

Those results have been released in the LDOE's [Partners in Preparation: A Survey of Educators & Education Preparation Programs](#) report. This report shares ideas from educators, including the Believe and Prepare pilots, as to how LEAs and preparation programs can collaborate to improve teacher recruitment, preparation, and certification practices.

The LDOE then led several engagement opportunities with educators across the state to gather their feedback on teacher preparation and certification practices and how they can be strengthened. These public events have not only informed LDOE-led grant opportunities, they have also informed the strategies to address student equity in this plan.

These engagement opportunities are detailed below:

- In October 2014, the LDOE in partnership with Keystone Consulting Group, held 32 focus groups with teachers, LEA and teacher preparation program leaders in eight major cities across the state to share with them the findings of the survey and discuss challenges and potential solutions. Over 200 stakeholders attended these

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meetings over a four-week period. Each meeting was facilitated by Keystone with no involvement of the LDOE so as to not stifle stakeholder feedback. Keystone shared a synthesis of the results from these focus groups with the LDOE in November.

- On December 3, 2014, over 60 legislators, educators, K-12 and higher education leaders, and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) members met to discuss the specific challenges and opportunities in recruiting and preparing the state's next generation of educators identified in the statewide focus groups. This event was the first in a series of public policy forums<sup>7</sup> where the Department provided stakeholders with the opportunity to review and discuss teacher certification and preparation policy proposals that will be developed over the course of the next year.
- A second public policy forum was held in March 2015.
- Regional policy forums were conducted across the state in April 2015.
- Finally, the Department conducted a workforce survey with all LEA human resource personnel to poll them on the barriers to hiring certified and qualified teachers. A total of 22 LEAs responded to the survey with a total of 37 suggestions for removing hiring barriers.

In addition to the above mentioned public engagement opportunities, the LDOE formed a workforce committee consisting of human resource directors from various LEAs across the state to advise the Department on teacher and leader recruitment, hiring and retention issues. Since its inception in February of 2015, the workgroup has reviewed the suggestions collected in the workforce survey and has been working with the LDOE to implement new recruitment and hiring practices, as well as advise on potential changes to certification policy.

The LDOE has also engaged key leaders of various educator groups throughout the development of the equity plan. Initially, the Department has met with the leadership of the Louisiana Association of State Superintendents, Louisiana Association of Principals, the Louisiana School Board Association, Louisiana PTA, and Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council. The LDOE gathered feedback on the equity gaps, root causes and strategies for reducing gaps.

The Department will continue to involve stakeholders in activities going forward through additional meetings, policy forums, and through the support of the workforce committee. These key stakeholders will play a vital role in not only the final policy development for teacher preparation and certification, but also in the implementation of these new policies in the field.

### **SECTION 3. EQUITY GAP EXPLORATION AND ANALYSIS**

In 2014-2015, 712,556 students enrolled in Louisiana's public schools, of which 54 percent were minority and 68 percent were economically disadvantaged.<sup>8</sup> The state has 1,303 public schools, including 104 charter schools. Under the

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<sup>7</sup> All policy forums were facilitated by the LDOE and were open meetings to the public.

<sup>8</sup> Students eligible for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Medicaid, awaiting foster care, migrant, and incarcerated children.

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Louisiana Scholarship Program, parents can also apply for a state-funded scholarship to attend the school of their choice, including private and religious schools. Additionally, students with disabilities may be eligible for a state subsidy for tuition to a private school that best meets their needs.

To ensure that Louisiana's equitable access work is data-driven, the LDOE has relied on multiple data sources to identify gaps in the equitable access of all students to high quality teachers. Discussions with stakeholders have provided context for the data and informed the LDOE's analysis of the root causes of the equity gaps and strategies to address them.

### Definitions and Metrics

Louisiana's 2006 educator equity plan focused primarily on Highly Qualified Teacher status. In contrast, the current plan focuses on ensuring that all classrooms are led by excellent teachers. Recognizing that there are multiple dimensions of educator effectiveness the LDOE has elected to consider equitable access in terms of the following characteristics of teachers:

- **Highly Effective:** A Highly Effective teacher is a teacher who has received a transitional student growth rating of Highly Effective.<sup>9</sup>
- **Effective Teachers:** An effective teacher is a teacher who has received a transitional student growth rating of *Effective: Proficient or Highly Effective*.
- **Inexperienced Teachers:** An inexperienced teacher is any teacher in their first year of teaching in the classroom.
- **Out-of-Field Teachers:** An out-of-field teacher does not hold a license in their current teaching assignment.
  - Teachers who work in charter schools (Type 2 and 5) are not included in this category because charter schools are not required to hire certified teachers.
- **Unqualified Teachers:** An unqualified teacher does not hold a standard certificate.
  - Standard certificates include: A, B, C; Level 1, 2, 3; Practitioner Licenses (PL 1-3) and Out-of-State Licenses (OS).
  - Teachers who work in charter schools (Type 2 and 5) are not included in this category because charter schools are not required to hire certified teachers.

The LDOE identified equity gaps in student populations using the following definitions:

- **Poverty Students:** This group of students is identified as "economically disadvantaged," which includes students eligible for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Medicaid, awaiting foster care, migrant, and incarcerated children.

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<sup>9</sup> Transitional student growth data measures the extent to which students met, exceeded, or fell short of their expected performance on state tests. Scores are only generated for teachers in grades and subjects with statewide assessments.

- **Minority Students:** This group of students is identified as a member of a minority race or ethnicity (African American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander/Alaskan Native).

## Exploration of the Data

### *Methodology*

The LDOE explored equity gaps for two groups specified in ESEA: poverty and minority students. To start its analysis, the LDOE determined the percentage of poverty and minority students in every parish<sup>10</sup> in the state. Using those percentages, parishes were divided into quartiles for each category of students. The parishes that had the highest proportion of minority students were categorized as “high-minority” and the parishes that had the highest proportion of poverty students were categorized as “high-poverty.” The analysis includes all elementary and secondary schools that are located in each parish in 2014-15. For each group, the LDOE focused on four measures of teacher efficacy – results with students, out-of-field assignments, qualifications, and experience – across parishes in the state. The results are based on data from the 2013-14 school year, as data from 2014-15 were not available as of the completion of this report. This data is based on transitional student growth data, which measures the extent to which students met, exceeded, or fell short of their expected performance on state tests.

The out-of-field rate was calculated at the course level since it is possible that a teacher could be in-field for some course(s) and out-of-field for other course(s). An in-field teacher is an individual with a valid certificate and the correct area of certification for the course they are teaching. Since not all teachers have course data, this measure has a different denominator.

Charter schools are not required to hire certified teachers (per Louisiana Revised Statute 17:3996). Therefore, the LDOE separated charter schools from all other public schools in the analysis related to out-of-field and unqualified teachers. Although charter school data has been separated from traditional public school data in the analysis, all strategies included in this plan address all schools and parishes in Louisiana. Table 1 depicts the equity gaps in Louisiana. The analysis related to the percentage of highly effective and effective teachers and the percentage of inexperienced teachers includes teachers in charter schools.

The LDOE also worked to understand the underlying causes of equity gaps through surveys and focus groups. In September 2014, the LDOE worked with Louisiana State University's Public Policy Research Lab to conduct a survey of over 6,000 teachers, administrators, and representatives from teacher preparation programs. This survey found:

- Teachers do not feel adequately prepared for their first year of teaching. Of all teachers with one to five years of experience surveyed:
  - 50 percent indicated they were not fully prepared for the realities of a classroom.
  - 41 percent indicated they were not prepared to teach students how to read.

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<sup>10</sup> The LDOE analyzed equity gaps at the parish and district level rather than the school level because districts have authority to make workforce decisions that best serve their students. The LDOE does not have the authority to make district or school-level staffing decisions, however our ability to influence these decisions is grater at the district level than the school level.

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- 42 percent indicated they were not prepared to teach students with diverse needs.
- Teachers need more hands-on experience and high-quality coaching and feedback prior to entering the classroom full-time.
- Teachers and district personnel indicated that today’s classrooms require a different set of knowledge and skills and that greater collaboration with providers on preparation curriculum is needed.
  - 94 percent or more teachers and district leaders noted that new teachers need more instruction and experience with selecting and using curricular resources, assessments, and student data to inform instruction.
- Administrators face challenges in hiring teachers in every subject area.
  - 67 percent of principals and human resources directors stated that the preparation programs in their region do not prepare enough teachers in every content area to meet their staffing needs.

These findings were confirmed in dialogue with over 200 educators, school system leaders, and provider faculty conducted via thirty focus groups in seven locations across Louisiana in partnership with a qualitative research firm expertise in gathering stakeholder input.

**Table 1. Louisiana Equity Gaps in School Year 2014–2015<sup>11</sup>**

School Type	Teacher Data				
	Percentage of Highly Effective Teachers <sup>12</sup>	Percentage of Effective Teachers <sup>13</sup>	Percentage of Out-of-Field Teachers	Percentage of Unqualified Teachers <sup>14</sup>	Percentage of Inexperienced Teachers
All Schools	18.3 percent	50.6 percent	10.8 percent	5.4 percent	8.9 percent
Charter Schools	28.1 percent	56.9 percent	28.3 percent <sup>15</sup>	34.9 percent	23.5 percent

Income Equity Gap					
High Poverty Parishes	23.2 percent	50.8 percent	15.8 percent	8.8 percent	15.0 percent
Non-High Poverty Parishes	17.5 percent	50.6 percent	10.4 percent	5.1 percent	7.9 percent
Income equity gap <sup>16</sup>	5.7 percent	0.2 percent	5.4 percent	3.7 percent	7.1 percent

<sup>11</sup> Full data is included in Appendix D.

<sup>12</sup> Using 2013-14 transitional student growth data.

<sup>13</sup> Using 2013-14 transitional student growth data.

<sup>14</sup> See footnote 2.

<sup>15</sup> Charter schools are not required to hire teachers with valid teaching certificates so the Out-of-Field or Unqualified calculations exclude charter schools. The charter school percentages in these categories are included for informational purposes only.

Minority Equity Gap					
<b>High Minority Parishes</b>	23.1 percent	53.5 percent	12.7 percent	6.1 percent	12.6 percent
<b>Non-High Minority Parishes</b>	16.4 percent	49.4 percent	10.2 percent	5.1 percent	7.2 percent
<b>Minority equity gap<sup>17</sup></b>	6.7 percent	4.1 percent	2.5 percent	1.0 percent	5.4 percent

Source: Poverty and minority data: Student Information System and external agency files; Teacher effectiveness data: Compass Information System; Out-of-field, unqualified, and inexperienced data: Louisiana’s Profile of Educational Personnel (PEP), LEADS Reporting System (LRS), and Teacher Certification Management System (TCMS).

**Equity Gap Analysis**

When aggregated, this data reveals gaps in the rate at which teachers are “out-of-field,” “inexperienced,” and “unqualified” when comparing teachers in “high-poverty” or “high-minority” parishes to all other parishes. The size (in absolute value) of the gaps varies, from 3.7 percentage points for unqualified teachers in “high-poverty” parishes versus the rest of the parishes, to 7.1 percentage points for inexperienced teachers in “high-poverty” parishes versus the rest of the state. It also reveals that the rate at which teachers are effective in “high-poverty” or “high-minority” parishes is overall higher than in all other parishes.

Parish by parish, however, teacher qualifications vary, as does teacher effectiveness. Students in some “high-poverty” or “high-minority” parishes have higher-than-average access to qualified, in-field teachers whereas some “high-poverty” and “high-minority” parishes have a great deal of difficulty recruiting enough teachers and/or enough teachers of certain certification areas and, therefore, have lower rates of qualified, in-field teachers. Likewise, some “high-poverty” or “high-minority” parishes have strong programs of instructional support and, therefore, have high concentrations of effective teachers, whereas others do not.

Understanding the recruitment and placement challenges that many “high-poverty” and “high-minority” parishes face, and based on discussions with stakeholders, the LDOE determined that the highest priority equity gaps for Louisiana are:

- **Equity Gap 1:** “High-poverty” parishes have a higher rate of out-of-field teachers compared to the rest of the state’s parishes (15.8 percent and 10.4 percent respectively).
- **Equity Gap 2:** “High-minority” parishes have a higher rate of out-of-field teachers compared to the rest of the state’s parishes (12.7 percent and 10.2 percent respectively).
- **Equity Gap 3:** “High-poverty” parishes have a higher rate of inexperienced teachers compared to the rest of the state’s parishes (15.0 percent and 7.9 percent respectively).

<sup>16</sup> The difference in percentages of teachers in each category between “high poverty” parishes and non-“high poverty” parishes. For example, 15.8% of teachers in high-poverty parishes are out-of-field compared to 10.4% in non-high poverty parishes; therefore the equity gap on this metric is 5.4%.

<sup>17</sup> The difference in percentages of teachers in each category between “high minority” parishes and non-“high minority” parishes.

- **Equity Gap 4:** "High-minority" parishes have a higher rate of inexperienced teachers compared to the rest of the state's parishes (12.6 percent and 7.2 percent respectively).

The Department has chosen to prioritize the equity gaps pertaining to *out-of-field* and *inexperienced* teachers based on the feedback received from LEAs during our root cause analysis, confirming that these were the two areas that were of most concern to them in hiring quality teachers for all students.

#### **SECTION 4. STRATEGIES FOR ELIMINATING EQUITY GAPS**

The LDOE will build on the successes of LEAs that are ensuring access to excellent teachers. Specifically, the LDOE's strategies will center on innovative approaches to teacher recruitment and partnerships between LEAs and teacher preparation programs.

##### **Root Cause Analysis**

In order to understand why the gaps identified exist, the LDOE conducted a root cause analysis in conjunction with key stakeholders. The root cause analysis consisted of four steps:

1. **Identifying Relevant and Available Data:** Through the LDOE workgroup, the LDOE determined what data and data sources are available and relevant to identifying equity gaps and then conducted its analysis.
2. **Analyzing Data and Identifying Equity Gaps:** The LDOE then identified the equity gaps resulting from the analysis in preparation for the root-cause analysis.
3. **Analyzing Root Causes:** The workgroup and stakeholders brainstormed a complete list of root causes behind the equity gaps through public surveys, focus groups and policy forums and one-on-one meetings.
4. **Mapping Strategies to Root Causes:** The workgroup, based on feedback from stakeholders, identified practical strategies to address the root causes.

##### **Theory of Action**

As a result of the data and root cause analysis, the following theory of action was developed and serves as the basis for Louisiana's plan for ensuring equitable access to excellent educators.

*If Louisiana's school districts partner with teacher preparation programs to better meet their workforce needs and provide representative student teaching experiences,*

- *Then LEAs will be better able to recruit and retain certified and effective educators such that all students have equitable access to excellent teaching to help them achieve their highest potential in school and beyond.*
- *Then teachers will be better prepared and, therefore, more likely to continue teaching in Louisiana classrooms.*

Due to the fact that 54 percent of students enrolled in Louisiana public schools are minority and 68 percent are economically disadvantaged, the LDOE has chosen to pursue a holistic approach to addressing gaps in access to certified, effective educators. While Louisiana will employ a holistic approach to educator preparation, recruitment and retention, the LDOE will provide analyses and reporting on the extent to the equity gaps identified are closed, thus enabling the LDOE and LEA leaders to adjust their approach as needed.

**Key Strategies**

To achieve the state’s teacher equity objectives, the LDOE intends to initially pursue strategies that correspond to the root causes behind issues relative to teacher qualifications and experience:

- Expansion of the Believe and Prepare pilot program’s most promising teacher preparation practices
- Encourage more and stronger partnerships between LEAs and preparation programs
- Support innovative teacher recruitment and hiring practices

These strategies were identified not at random, but rather through a root cause analysis, described above, and through study of LEAs that are “high-poverty” or “high-minority” and ensuring access to excellent educators. The root cause analysis was conducted both internally and externally, with the stakeholder groups described above and in Appendix A.

The strategies and other actions described in this plan will not always be sufficient. Particularly in the most challenging schools, recruiting and retaining more (rather than equitable) excellent teachers and leaders might be necessary and might require restructuring the whole school—including bringing in new leadership, changing the instructional program, and taking a range of innovative actions to improve teaching and learning conditions. Although these actions are not fully described in this plan, this is and will continue to be accomplished through use of the Compass tool, the Recovery School District and the Believe and Succeed initiative.

**Table 6. Details of Key Strategies**

<p><b>Priority: Encourage Partnerships between LEAs and Preparation Programs</b> When LEAs and teacher preparation programs partner, teacher candidates will have more time in the classroom, under the guidance of a highly effective mentor, in order to effectively prepare students for college and a career. Also, preparation programs will be more aware of and able to respond to LEAs’ hiring needs.</p>
<p><b>Root-Cause Analysis Findings</b> <b>More Time to Practice in the Classroom.</b> Aspiring teachers need more practice and strong mentors to master essential knowledge and skills in preparation for their first year in the classroom. Based on feedback received in the LDOE’s survey and focus groups, stakeholders believe that clinical experiences improve when LEAs and preparation programs partner to provide more time to practice.</p>

**Teacher Shortages.** Due to teacher shortages in certain subject areas and in certain geographies, including rural areas, LEAs are placing teachers in assignments out of their certification area. This outcome is supported by both quantitative data from the LDOE's human resource database and qualitative data collected in the district workforce survey collected in January 2015.

**Teacher Supply not Meeting Demand.** LEAs experience shortages of teachers in specific subject areas but typically do not work closely with preparation programs on recruitment into these subject areas. Sixty-three percent of LEA leaders surveyed reported their partnerships with preparation programs do not produce enough teachers to meet demand in all subjects and grade levels, while 48 percent of preparation program faculty members say they do not get enough information about LEAs' staffing needs to inform recruiting and selection.

**Current Certification Policies Place Hiring Barriers on LEAs.** School leaders have indicated that certain certification policies and statutes currently limit LEAs' flexibility relative to hiring and placing quality teachers.

#### **Relevant Metrics**

**Workforce Reporting Included in LDOE Annual Accountability Reports:** The will include workforce data metrics including teacher certification and performance into its existing annual public [accountability reports](#). The school-based public and district report cards will also include performance data on subgroups including *minority* and *poverty* students.

**Results of the Educator Preparation Survey:** The Department will release another educator preparation survey, similar to the version released in 2014 that will poll new teachers, principals, district and preparation programs leaders on the effectiveness of district and preparation program partnerships in preparing new teachers for a career in education.

**Certification Rates from LDOE Human Resource Database:** The LDOE's human resource database (TCMS) tracks certification, out-of-field and unqualified rates for LEA in the state.

**Annual Compass Report on Teacher Performance:** The LDOE's Annual Compass Report provides principals, LEAs and the LDOE with information on the rates of *Effective* and *Highly Effective* relative to student proficiency rates to show where LEA observation and feedback practices are or are not aligned with student outcomes.

#### **Stakeholder Feedback**

Louisiana's LEAs and teacher preparation programs have cited a need for stronger partnership that will enable a stronger connection between preparation experiences and district expectations (e.g., implementing curriculum, classroom management, assessment of standards, using data to inform instruction).

Schools system leaders have reported that current licensure requirements place limitations on LEAs' hiring practices.

Participants in the *Partners in Preparation* survey and teacher preparation policy forums and focus groups, expressed agreement that there is a strong need for increased collaboration between LEAs and preparation programs to ensure that the teacher pipeline is meeting workforce needs.

### **Strategies**

#### **Strategy 1: Expansion of Believe and Prepare Pilot Programs' Most Promising Teacher Preparation Practices.**

[Believe and Prepare](#), launched in April 2014, provides grants to empower schools and LEAs to design innovative, classroom and school-based preparation experiences for aspiring educators. Experiences give educators the opportunity to practice their developing skills with real students and draw on the expertise of Louisiana's best educators. 41 school systems and 20 teacher preparation programs are part of the Believe and Prepare community.

Believe and Prepare LEAs are working with their partner preparation program partners to identify skill gaps, enhance and provide more skill-based courses, and create more opportunities for clinical experience. Believe and Prepare pilots are also piloting full-year residencies and internships for teacher candidates alongside highly effective mentors. This experience allows teacher candidates the ability to experience teaching in its full continuum, giving them a more realistic view of school policies, procedure and culture and the opportunity to practice their craft alongside a high-performing teacher before entering the profession.

Over the past two years, the LDOE was awarded \$4.89 million in Believe and Prepare grants to school districts to develop yearlong teaching residencies and build the statewide cadre of mentor teachers prepared to work with teachers participating in these extended practice experiences. The last round of Believe and Prepare grants totaled \$2.85MM and funded: (1) the development of mentor teacher cadres in priority schools, as defined by Title I School Improvement provisions, and (2) programs designed to increase the number and quality of special education teachers across the state.

These promising practices are being vetted through key stakeholders in LDOE-hosted policy forums that began in December of 2014 and will continue through October of 2016. These shifts in program design are meant to better prepare teachers for the practical realities of the classroom and will form the basis for policy proposals to Louisiana's state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

#### **Strategy 2: Encourage More and Stronger Partnerships Between LEAs and Preparation Programs.**

In addition to increasing teacher effectiveness, Believe and Prepare pilots have demonstrated that increased LEA partnerships with preparation programs can help meet staffing needs in hard-to-staff schools and high-demand subject areas, such as special education, STEM and career and technical courses. Through the Believe and Prepare program, LEAs have been engaged in dialogue with preparation programs on their short-term and long-term hiring needs, and what it takes to be effective on day one in the classroom. As a result, these teacher pipelines that will more likely ensure that the new teachers are effective and that they hold the certifications they need to fill LEAs' most critical shortage areas.

An example of this is in Lafourche Parish, in which the district worked with Nicholls State University during the 2014-

2015 school year in order to fill multiple special education vacancies. Lafourche worked with Nicholls to offer current teachers the ability to earn a certification endorsement in special education through the University's master's degree program while serving as a full-time special education teacher in the district. As a result, the district will have seven new certified special education teachers to start the 2015-2016 school year.

Promising recruitment practices that result from the Believe and Prepare program will be included in the Teacher Preparation Toolkit that will be released in the winter of 2016. Moreover, the Believe and Prepare community will continue to grow over the coming years.

**Strategy 3: Support District Recruitment and Hiring Practices.**

Strong recruitment and hiring starts with a clear understanding workforce needs. To support LEAs' assessment of short- and long-term teacher hiring needs, the LDOE has enlisted the support of the South Central Comprehensive Center (SC3). SC3 is working with the LDOE to build a workforce projection tool that enables LEAs to project short- and long-term workforce needs. The goal is to share this tool with LEAs in the 2015-16 school year. (See Appendix D)

The LDOE will also promote the use of its Talent Recruitment System, an online database that matches teachers with the schools and LEAs interested in hiring them. This system is currently used by 91 percent of LEAs. The LDOE's Talent Office promotes the use of this system with human resource personnel during their bi-annual meetings, and with teacher candidates during college site visits held throughout the year.

LEAs in the Believe and Prepare program, such as Algiers Charter School Association in New Orleans and in St. Landry and Caddo Parishes, are also modeling innovative recruitment strategies such as recruiting future teachers from within their own communities, starting with high school seniors interested in making a difference in their own neighborhoods. These practices will also be included in the Teacher Preparation Toolkit, and serve as a resource to LEAs, especially those in rural parishes, which face significant hiring and recruitment challenges.

Through the LDOE workforce committee, the LDOE is also providing LEAs with tools and resources for PRAXIS exam preparation to help them move teachers from non-standard certifications to full, standard certifications, thus reducing the number of unqualified and out-of-field teachers in the state.

Finally, the LDOE will continue to provide LEA leaders with workforce support through the use of the [District Planning Guide](#), a how-to framework for making critical policy and financial decisions. It contains a section on workforce talent, in which it provides LEA leaders with strategies for staffing all schools to maximize student achievement and planning for future workforce needs.

**Performance Objectives**

By 2018, 50 percent of LEAs in Louisiana will have conducted a workforce analysis with the support of the LDOE that projects short and long-term hiring needs, thus enabling LEAs to improve recruitment and placement practices. Such analyses will include hiring needs in high poverty and high minority schools so that those needs can be better understood and met.

By 2018, 50 percent of LEAs in Louisiana will have a formalized partnership with a teacher preparation program that addresses LEA hiring needs, particularly in high need schools and subject areas, as identified through workforce analysis.

By 2020, the rate of out-of-field teachers in both high poverty and high minority parishes will reduce by 20 percent.

By 2020, the rate of inexperienced teachers in both high poverty and high minority parishes will reduce by 10 percent.

## SECTION 5. ONGOING MONITORING AND SUPPORT

Louisiana is committed to ensuring that students in “high-poverty” and “high-minority” parishes have equal access to effective teachers.

To ensure that the performance objectives above are met, the LDOE will annually measure the percentage of out-of-field and inexperienced teachers in high poverty and high minority parishes, and the percentage of those teachers in non-high poverty and non-high minority districts. This data will be used to calculate the equity gap in each category and determine whether the equity gap is closing over time. The information will be reported in an Equity Plan Data Summary Sheet and added to the [Statewide Results Data Center](#) on the LDOE website.

District-level equity information will be included in Workforce Reports that are provided to district leadership each year. These reports include school-level data and will be used as the basis for academic and workforce planning.

Further, for each strategy above, there is a plan in place to assess implementation. The LDOE has identified the following areas where it will begin collecting information, and is prepared to build on these efforts with further data collection and reviews as they emerge:

1. Inclusion of performance data for minority and poverty students in the LDOE’s annual public [school reports cards](#) (see Appendix E), and workforce data in the annual principal and superintendent profile reports. These reports are released each winter. LDOE staff lead individual meetings with LEA leaders in which the reported data is discussed in detail. In these conversations, supports are identified and plans of action are developed. By including equity and workforce metrics in these reports and conversations, school and district leaders will be encouraged to and have the tools to examine the rate at which minority and poverty (economically

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disadvantaged) students are achieving academically compared to their non-minority and non-poverty peers, the rate at which those students have access to qualified and effective educators, and how adjustments to staffing practices might improve rates of achievement and access to qualified, experienced educators.

2. Extended workforce management support through the LDOE workforce committee, LDOE Network teams, District Planning Guide (published each spring), and Talent Recruitment System. This includes support around workforce analyses, including a conversation to occur in spring of 2016 regarding workforce data and practices. Through the use of tools such as the workforce projection tool (see Appendix F), the District Planning Guide and ongoing support through the LDOE’s Network teams, districts will be provided with the support and resources they need to effectively recruit and retain quality teachers. As a result, districts and schools will be able to provide students with higher quality instruction, resulting in an increase in academic performance for all students, specifically minority and poverty students.
3. New and deepened partnerships between LEAs and teacher preparation programs supported through the Believe and Prepare program will result in teachers entering the workforce better prepared instructionally and with the real-world experience they need to be successful long-term in the classroom. This will increase the likelihood that these skilled, qualified teachers will choose to continue teaching.
4. Ongoing engagement with stakeholder groups for feedback and refinement of the implementation process at least annually.

The LDOE has established a detailed timeline (see Table 7) to guide the short-term and long-term implementation of this plan. Through the LDOE workforce committee, the Department will conduct an annual review of the state’s progress toward addressing root causes to eliminate equity gaps, and make adjustments to its strategic approaches as necessary. Every two years the LDOE will formally update this plan based on new data, new analyses of root causes, and new strategies.

**Table 7. Louisiana Implementation Timeline**

Major Activities	Parties Involved	Organizer	Time Frame	
			Start	Frequency
District workforce meetings	Participating LEA human resource personnel	LDOE Director of Educator Communications	February 2015	Monthly through December 2015, and then every other month starting in 2016
LDOE workforce management and planning support through the use of LDOE Network teams and the District Planning	All LEAs	LDOE Offices of Academic Content and Academic Policy and Accountability	Summer 2015	Ongoing

Guidebook				
LDOE budget support through the use of the District Planning Guidebook	All LEAs	LDOE Offices of Academic Content and Academic Policy and Accountability	Summer 2015	Ongoing
SC3-developed workforce analysis tool published (see Appendix F)	SC3, all LEAs	LDOE Office of Talent, SC3	Winter 2015	
Publishing of school report cards and principal and superintendent profiles including student and teacher performance data that will highlight the rate at which poverty and minority students have access to effective, certified and experienced teachers.	LDOE and all LEAs	LDOE Offices of Academic Policy and Accountability and Talent	December-January 2015	Annually
Publishing of annual Compass Report to provide principals, LEAs and the LDOE with information on the rates of Effective and Highly Effective relative to student proficiency rates to show where LEA observation and feedback practices are or are not aligned with student outcomes.	All LEAs	LDOE Office of Talent and Academic Content	January 2016	Annually
Public reporting of equity gap data in the Statewide Data Results Center of the LDOE website	All LEAs	LDOE Office of Talent	Summer/Fall 2016	Annually
Expansion of the Believe and Prepare pilot program, including consideration of revised teacher licensure and preparation policies	LDOE, BESE, all LEAs and teacher preparation programs	LDOE Talent Office Policy Director	2015-2016	Ongoing

## **SECTION 6. CONCLUSION**

The LDOE supports the U.S. Department of Education's goal of ensuring that every student has equitable access to excellent educators and welcomes this opportunity to present a plan for advancing this mission in Louisiana. This plan reflects outreach to education school leaders and thoughtful deliberation about actions that most likely will enable Louisiana's schools and LEAs to attain this important objective. Although the plan will evolve over time, the LDOE believes that the targeted strategies that are included in the plan embody a solid approach to improving all students' access to effective educators. The LDOE looks forward to proceeding with this plan.

**APPENDIX A. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT GROUPS**

**Louisiana Department of Education Equity Plan Workgroup**

OFFICE	NAME	TITLE
Academic Policy and Analytics	Jessica Baghian	Assistant Superintendent
Academic Policy and Analytics	Kim Nesmith	Data Quality and Management Director
Academic Policy and Analytics	Laura Boudreaux	Director of Strategic Research and Analysis
Operations	Bernell Cook	Director of Federal Reporting
Policy	Erin Bendily	Assistant Superintendent
Talent	Hannah Dietsch	Assistant Superintendent
Talent	Annie Morrison	Director of Communications
Talent	Alanna Rosenberg	Data Analyst
Talent	Julie Stephenson	Policy Director

**Key Stakeholder Groups**

ORGANIZATION	KEY CONTACT	TITLE
Louisiana Association of School Superintendents (LASS)	Doris Voitier	President and Superintendent, St. Bernard Parish Public Schools
Louisiana School Boards Association (LSBA)	Scott Richard	Executive Director
Louisiana State PTA	Gary Fayard	President
Louisiana Association of School Personnel and Administrators (LSASPA)	Ricky Armelin	President
LaTEACH-Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council	Ashley McReynolds	Region 2 Leader

Many more stakeholders participated in the LDOE's teacher preparation focus groups, policy forums and regional forums in northern, central, and southern areas of Louisiana.

Stakeholder Group	Focus Groups (October 2014)	Policy Forum (March 6, 2015)	Regional Forums (April 2015)
Teachers	123	1 (Louisiana State Teacher of the Year)	N/A
Principals	50	1 (Louisiana High School Principal of the Year)	N/A
LEA Administrators	67	50	86
Institution of Higher Education Leaders	45	32	60
Education Advocates	N/A	7	N/A
State Legislators/Board of Elementary and Secondary Education/Board of Regents	N/A	8	2

**APPENDIX B. LOUISIANA STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROCESS TIMELINE**

Major Activities	Parties Involved	Organizer	Dates
LDOE conducts <i>Partners in Preparation</i> survey	6,000 educators	Office of Talent	September 2014
Educator preparation focus groups (30 meetings statewide)	District and preparation program school leaders	Office of Talent and Keystone Consulting Group	October 2014
Formation of internal state equity plan workgroup	Offices of: Talent, Assessment, Data Governance and Federal Programs	Director of Communications, Talent Office	November 3, 2015
LDOE hosts first policy forum on teacher preparation	All key stakeholder groups: LEAs, IHEs, legislators, BESE/BOR	Office of Talent	December 3, 2015
LDOE conducts workforce survey	All district and charter human resource personnel	Office of Talent and Louisiana Association of School Personnel and Administrators	January 2015
Initial discussions with key stakeholders	Office of Talent, and Louisiana Superintendents, and School Boards Associations	Assistant Superintendent of Talent	January 26, 2015
Formation of Workforce Committee	District and charter human resource personnel	Office of Talent and LSASPA	February 11, 2015
Define key terms and data parameters	State Equity Plan Workgroup	Director of Communications, Talent Office	February 11, 2015
LDOE hosts second policy forum on teacher preparation	All key stakeholder groups: LEAs, IHEs, legislators, BESE/BOR	Office of Talent	March 6, 2015
Identify key stakeholder engagement groups	Offices of Talent and Policy	Assistant Superintendent of Talent	March 6, 2015
Identify broader stakeholder engagement groups	Offices of Talent and Policy	Assistant Superintendent of Talent	April 2, 2015
Teacher preparation regional forums (eight meetings statewide)	District and teacher preparation program leaders	Office of Talent and Keystone Consulting Group	April 13-16, 2015
Confirmation of equity gaps, root causes and theory of action	State Equity Plan Workgroup	Director of Communications, Talent Office	April 27, 2015

Workforce committee meeting to review final equity plan gaps and strategies	Workforce Committee	Office of Talent	May 6, 2015
Meet with remaining stakeholder groups to review equity gaps and strategy development	Louisiana PTA, LATEach	Office of Policy and Talent	May 2015
Finalize strategies for addressing gaps and assessment metrics	State Equity Plan Workgroup	Talent Office	May 19, 2015
Submit equity plan	Office of Talent	Director of Communications, Talent Office	June 1, 2015

**APPENDIX C. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT MEETING AGENDAS AND MEETING TRACKER**

*Stakeholder Engagement Tracker*

<b>Engagement Opportunity</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Stakeholder Groups Participating</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>
Teacher Preparation focus groups (32 meetings)	October 2014	Identify teacher preparation challenges in Louisiana	Over 200 teachers, principals, district administrators and teacher preparation school leaders	LDOE and Keystone Consulting Group
Call to kick-off equity plan development work	January 26, 2015	Notification of LDOE's intent to submit plan and its purpose	Louisiana Associations of School Superintendents, Principals and School Boards	Hannah Dietsch, Assistant Superintendent of Office of Talent
Workforce Committee meeting	February 19, 2015	Review results of workforce survey and identify key barriers to hiring qualified and certified teachers	Workforce Committee: 16 district human resource directors	Annie Morrison, Director of Communications, Office of Talent
Teacher preparation policy forum	March 6, 2015	Share and gather feedback on proposed policy shifts for teacher preparation and certification	Legislators, district and teacher preparation program school leaders, Board of Elementary and Secondary Education members	LDOE: State Superintendent John White, Hannah Dietsch and Julie Stephenson
Regional teacher preparation forums	April 13-16, 2015	Share and gather feedback on revised policy shifts for teacher preparation and certification	District and teacher preparation program school leaders	LDOE and Keystone Consulting Group
Workforce Committee: review final equity gaps and strategies	May 6, 2015	Review identified equity gaps, root causes and identified strategies for plan	Workforce Committee: 16 district human resource directors	Annie Morrison, Director of Communications, Office of Talent
Calls with key stakeholder groups	May 15-20	Review final equity gaps and strategies	Louisiana PTA and LATeach	Erin Bendily, Office of Policy; Julie Stephenson, Office of Talent

**APPENDIX D: LOUISIANA EQUITY GAPS IN SCHOOL YEAR 2014-15– FULL DATA TABLE**

School Type	Teacher Data				
	Percentage of Highly Effective Teachers <sup>18</sup>	Percentage of Effective Teachers <sup>19</sup>	Percentage of Out-of-Field Teachers <sup>20</sup>	Percentage of Unqualified Teachers <sup>21</sup>	Percentage of Inexperienced Teachers
<b>All Schools</b> Teachers: Highly Effective and Effective Calculation: 13,858 <sup>22</sup> Out-of-Field Calculation: 38,712 Unqualified Calculation: 42,570 For Inexperienced Calculation: 47,148	18.3 percent N=2,542	50.6 percent N=7,011	10.8 percent N=4,176	5.4 percent N=2,283	8.9 percent N=4,195
<b>Charter Schools</b> Teachers: Highly Effective and Effective Calculation: 1,144 Out-of-Field Calculation: 2,916 Unqualified Calculation: 4,190 For Inexperienced Calculation: 4,190	28.1 percent N=322	56.9 percent N=651	28.3 percent N=825	34.9 percent N=1,462	23.5 percent N=983
<b>High Poverty Parishes</b> Teachers: Highly Effective and Effective Calculation: 2,021 Out-of-Field Calculation: 2,670 Unqualified Calculation: 3,160 For Inexperienced Calculation: 6,719	23.2 percent N=468	50.8 percent N=1,027	15.8 percent N=422	8.8 percent N=277	15.0 percent N=1,005
<b>Non-High Poverty Parishes</b>	17.5 percent	50.6 percent	10.4 percent	5.1 percent	7.9 percent

<sup>18</sup> Using 2013-14 transitional student growth data.

<sup>19</sup> Using 2013-14 transitional student growth data.

<sup>20</sup> Charter schools are not required to hire teachers with valid teaching certificates so the Out-of-Field or Unqualified calculations exclude charter schools. The charter school percentages in these categories are included for informational purposes only.

<sup>21</sup> See footnote 2.

<sup>22</sup> This includes all teachers who received transitional student growth data in 2013-14.

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Teachers: Highly Effective and Effective Calculation: 11,837 Out-of-Field Calculation: 36,042 Unqualified Calculation: 39,410 For Inexperienced Calculation: 40,429	N=2,074	N=5,984	N=3,754	N=2,006	N=3,190
<b>Income equity gap<sup>23</sup></b>	5.7 percent	0.2 percent	5.4 percent	3.7 percent	7.1 percent
<b>High Minority Parishes</b> Teachers: Highly Effective and Effective Calculation: 4,018 Out-of-Field Calculation: 9,624 Unqualified Calculation: 10,871 For Inexperienced Calculation: 14,721	23.1 percent N=930	53.5 percent N=2,150	12.7 percent N=1,220	6.1 percent N=661	12.6 percent N=1,856
<b>Non-High Minority Parishes</b> Teachers: Highly Effective and Effective Calculation: 9,840 Out-of-Field Calculation: 29,088 Unqualified Calculation: 31,699 For Inexperienced Calculation: 32,427	16.4 percent N=1,612	49.4 percent N=4,861	10.2 percent N=2,956	5.1 percent N=1,622	7.2 percent N=2,339
<b>Minority equity gap<sup>24</sup></b>	6.7 percent	4.1 percent	2.5 percent	1.0 percent	5.4 percent

Source: Poverty and minority data: Student Information System and external agency files; Teacher effectiveness data: Compass Information System; Out-of-field, unqualified, and inexperienced data: Louisiana's Profile of Educational Personnel (PEP), LEADS Reporting System (LRS), and Teacher Certification Management System (TCMS).

<sup>23</sup> The difference in percentages of teachers in each category between "high poverty" parishes and non-"high poverty" parishes.

<sup>24</sup> The difference in percentages of teachers in each category between "high minority" parishes and non-"high minority" parishes.

APPENDIX E: SAMPLE SCHOOL REPORT CARD

**WEST FELICIANA HIGH SCHOOL**  
 2014-2015 • West Feliciana Parish • Grades 8-12 • 063003

A

SPS = 109.7



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602 Enrolled • 9% Special Education • 46% Economically Disadvantaged

**HOW PREPARED ARE STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE & CAREER SUCCESS?**

**END-OF-COURSE EXAMS: PROFICIENT**  
Students are assessed on their performance towards meeting grade-level expectations.

SCHOOL	14/15 vs 13/14	DISTRICT	STATE	MINORITY STUDENTS	14/15 vs 13/14	STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	14/15 vs 13/14	ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS	14/15 vs 13/14
<b>75%</b>	↑	<b>75%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>63%</b>	↑	<b>26%</b>	↑	<b>62%</b>	↑
					<small>IMPROVED</small>				

**ACT: COLLEGE-GOING SCORE OF 18**  
A score of 18 or above on the ACT indicates twelfth grade students have minimum proficiency for college & career success.

**ACT: AVERAGE SCORE**  
Average score is based on all enrolled twelfth grade students.

SCHOOL	14/15 vs 13/14	DISTRICT	STATE	MINORITY STUDENTS	STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS	AVERAGE SCORE	DISTRICT	STATE	NATIONAL
<b>74%</b>	↑	<b>74%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>20.4</b>	<b>20.4</b>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>19.7</b>
					<small>IMPROVED</small>					

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**WHAT PERCENT OF STUDENTS ARE EARNING COLLEGE AND CAREER CREDIT?**  
Students have the opportunity to earn college & career credits prior to graduation.

**GRADUATES SCORING 3+ ON ADVANCED PLACEMENT TEST**

SCHOOL	13/14 vs 12/13	DISTRICT	STATE	NATIONAL
<b>8%</b>	↑	<b>8%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>21.6%</b>
<small>IMPROVED</small>				

**GRADUATES EARNING DUAL ENROLLMENT CREDIT**  
\*Does not include students already represented as earning AP credit.

SCHOOL	13/14 vs 12/13	DISTRICT	STATE
<b>30%</b>	↑	<b>29%</b>	<b>28%</b>
<small>IMPROVED</small>			

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**WHAT PERCENT OF STUDENTS GRADUATED IN FOUR YEARS WITH A DIPLOMA?**  
The cohort graduation rate is the percent of students who enter the ninth grade and successfully graduate within four years.

SCHOOL	13/14 vs 12/13	DISTRICT	STATE	NATIONAL 12/13	MINORITY STUDENTS	STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS
<b>92%</b>	↑	<b>92%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>93%</b>
<small>IMPROVED</small>							

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**WHAT PERCENT OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN COLLEGE AFTER GRADUATING?**  
Students enrolling in two- or four-year colleges within the 2nd Fall semester after high school graduation.

SCHOOL	DISTRICT	STATE
<b>73%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>59%</b>

**DID THIS SCHOOL MAKE PROGRESS WITH STUDENTS WHO STRUGGLED ACADEMICALLY?**  
Schools earn a maximum of 10 progress points for students previously non-proficient but who exceeded expectations in the current year.

TOTAL POINTS EARNED	14/15 vs 13/14
<b>7.0</b>	↑
<small>IMPROVED</small>	

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2013-2014	2014-2015	<b>ADDITIONAL PERFORMANCE INFORMATION</b>	<b>DATA CENTER</b>
B	A		
SPS 93.2	SPS 109.7		

**APPENDIX F: LOUISIANA EDUCATOR SHORTAGE PREDICTOR MODEL PROPOSAL**

 <p><b>South Central Comprehensive Center</b> at the University of Oklahoma</p>	<h1>Project Overview</h1>
<p><b>Louisiana Educator Shortage Predictor Model and Resource Tools</b></p> <p><b>South Central Comprehensive Center (SC3)/Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE)/ Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center)/ Augenblick, Palaich, and Associates Consulting (APA Consulting)</b></p>	
<p><b>Background/ LDOE Need to be Addressed</b></p>	<p>LDOE is currently undertaking a multi-year process to revise educator preparation policies with the input of stakeholders. Potential policy revisions include accountability for educator preparation programs to meet the staffing targets established by local education agencies (LEAs). To support LEAs in development of these targets, LDOE would like to predict future education workforce needs and provide LEAs with tools and resources that will assist them in predicting their own staffing needs in the upcoming years.</p>
<p><b>Purposes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assist LDOE in the development of the Louisiana Educator Shortage Predictor Model.</li> <li>● Assist LDOE in the development of tools and resources for LEAs when predicting their staffing needs and creating staffing targets for partnering educator preparation programs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Expected Outcomes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased knowledge of educator workforce dynamics in Louisiana</li> <li>● Increased ability to interpret educator workforce data</li> <li>● Improved stakeholder engagement in addressing the issues of educator workforce dynamics in Louisiana</li> <li>● Enhanced educator preparation policies designed to meet LEA staffing needs</li> <li>● Redesigned educator preparation programs that meet the staffing targets of LEAs</li> <li>● Creation of opportunities for SC3 to provide deeper technical assistance (TA) to build greater capacity for LDOE to implement Educator Effectiveness goals</li> </ul>
<p><b>Process</b></p>	<p>LDOE will partner with SC3, the GTL Center, and APA Consulting to engage Louisiana stakeholders in the development and use of tools and resources required to predict educator workforce supply, demand, and shortages. LDOE and its partners will provide training to stakeholders on how to use the tools and how to interpret the data produced.</p>

<b>Timeline</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Summer 2015 – Determine which data elements will produce the best predictions for the Louisiana model through data analysis and stakeholder participation.</li> <li>● Early Fall 2015 – Provide training to stakeholders on the data produced by the model and how to use the tools and resources.</li> <li>● Fall 2015 – Provide prototypes of tools and resources to LEAs.</li> <li>● Winter 2015/2016 – Gather feedback on prototypes.</li> <li>● Spring 2016 – Refine model, tools, and resources.</li> <li>● Summer 2016 – Train stakeholders on interpreting information produced through the model, tools, and resources.</li> </ul>
<b>Next Steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● LDOE Office of Talent will collaborate with other offices and divisions of LDOE to determine the best course of action for moving forward.</li> <li>● SC3, GTL Center, and APA Consulting will prepare initial documents.</li> <li>● When LDOE is ready to begin, SC3 will schedule a face-to-face meeting to launch the project.</li> </ul>

**Partnership List**

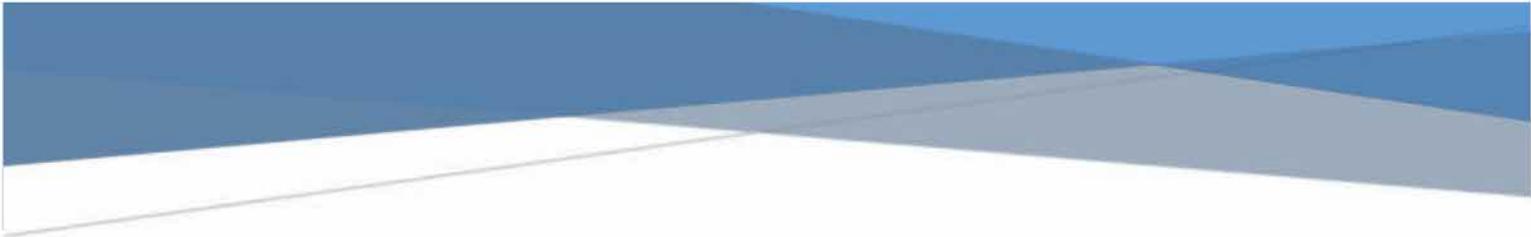
<b>Augenblick, Palaich, and Associates Consulting (APA Consulting)</b>	
<p><b>Robert Reichardt</b>  Senior Associate  <a href="mailto:rer@apaconsulting.net">rer@apaconsulting.net</a>  303.803.4412</p>	

<b>Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center)</b>	
<p><b>Alex Berg-Jacobson</b>  Technical Assistance Support  <a href="mailto:aberg-jacobson@air.org">aberg-jacobson@air.org</a>  202.403.6639</p>	<p><b>Laura Goe</b>  Senior Research and Technical Assistance Expert  <a href="mailto:lgoe@ets.org">lgoe@ets.org</a>  609.734.1076</p>
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# ADDENDUM TO IOWA'S STATE PLAN TO ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO EXCELLENT EDUCATORS

Iowa Department of Education, November, 2015

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**1. Response to Questions from Carol Manitaris, July 7, 2015**

1. All data sources used for calculating the equity gaps for poor and minority students taught by inexperienced, unqualified and out of field.

The data we used for examining the differences in the number of inexperienced teachers serving in schools with the highest and lowest percentages of students in poverty and minority students were provided in our Iowa Equity Profile. For the purposes of that profile – inexperienced was defined as: “the number of FTE classroom teachers in their first year of teaching. The number of year(s) of teaching experience includes the current year but does not include any student teaching or other similar preparation experiences. Experience includes teaching in any school, subject, or grade; it does not have to be in the school, subject, or grade that the teacher is presently teaching.” For the purposes of our deeper study (see Tables included under question 2) inexperienced teachers was defined as the number of FTE classroom teachers in their first year of teaching (initial teaching license).

The data sources we used to calculate the differences in the qualifications of the teachers included the fall statewide Basic Education Data Survey - Staff and Enrollment Files and the Board of Educational Examiners educator licensing data system. In order to get the high minority/low minority and the high poverty/low poverty breakdown we used the student reporting in Iowa (SRI) data collection.

We did not go further to calculate equity gaps based on these criteria (differences in tenure and qualifications of teachers in high and low poverty schools and high and low minority schools) because the differences in qualifications were not significant and therefore not likely to explain the differences in achievement.

We then used the number of Class B and Executive Director Decision Conditional Licenses to further study the potential impact of underqualified and out-of-field teachers. (For the purposes of this plan, the Class B and the Executive Director Decision conditional licenses are both considered to be equivalent to the federal definition of non-highly qualified.)

- Class B conditional licenses can be obtained if the licensed educator has completed 2/3 of the program of study in the area for which they are seeking additional licensure or endorsement.
- An Executive Director Decision conditional license can be obtained for 1 year if the district has done extensive search for a fully qualified candidate and one can not be found. This conditional license is only available to licensed teachers seeking additional licensure in specific areas and requires that the teacher has completed nearly half the program of study. Areas such as K-6 elementary classroom teacher, PK-12 principal/supervisor of special education, and superintendent are excluded from this conditional license. One factor related to this type of license that needs to be considered is that most of these licenses are held by teachers teaching in other areas and the license may only apply to a portion of their teaching assignment – often only one period of the day. It would take further analysis of the data to determine the percentage of the total teaching load that is covered by Executive Director Decisions and we do not have access to this data at this time if it is even available.

As we reviewed the data for these types of licenses we observed no differences in the percent of Executive Director Decision conditional licenses granted in high poverty/high minority schools as compared to low poverty/low minority schools and all schools.

As for the achievement gaps in general, we have studied the achievement gaps for poor and minority students using the Iowa Test data (our statewide accountability assessment) for grades 4, 8, and 11 looking at both reading and mathematics over multiple years. We looked at the differences in the percentage of students meeting the proficiency standard by sub-groups of students as compared to everyone else over time. This data analysis was reported in the full report.

- Calculations showing the equity gaps for the subgroups: inexperienced, unqualified and out of field.

#### 2013-14 Full Time Public School Teacher Licensed

License Type	High Poverty			Low Poverty			All Schools		
	Total License	Total License with License Type	Percent	Total License	Total License with License Type	Percent	Total License	Total License with License Type	Percent
Initial License	19,899	285	1.43	17,857	146	0.82	66,462	681	1.02
Class B	19,899	2,375	11.94	17,857	1,927	10.79	66,462	7,815	11.76
Executive Director Decision	19,899	195	.98	17,857	120	0.67	66,462	534	0.80

License Type	High Minority			Low Minority			All Schools		
	Total Licenses	Total License with License Type	Percent	Total Licenses	Total License with License Type	Percent	Total License	Total License with License Type	Percent
Initial License	22,959	304	1.32	10,873	114	1.05	66,462	681	1.02
Class B	22,959	2,621	11.42	10,873	1,434	13.19	66,462	7,815	11.76
Executive Director Decision	22,959	186	0.81	10,873	98	0.90	66,462	534	0.80

The percent of teachers on initial licenses does not differ significantly between high poverty and low poverty schools, or between high minority and low minority schools, and all four categories (high poverty, low poverty, high minority, and low minority) are similar as compared to all schools as a whole.

The percent of teachers on Class B licenses does not differ significantly between high poverty and low poverty schools, or between high minority and low minority schools, and all four categories (high poverty, low poverty, high minority, and low minority) are similar as compared to all schools as a whole.

The percent of teachers on Executive Director Decision licenses does not differ significantly between high poverty and low poverty schools, or between high minority and low minority schools, and all four categories (high poverty, low poverty, high minority, and low minority) are similar as compared to all schools as a whole.

### 3. Rationale for reporting no correlation between subgroups and achievement gaps.

Iowa used a very specific logic model to drive the evaluation of our equity data, set forth in John Salvia (Penn State University) and Jim Ysseldyke's (University of Minnesota) seminal text "Assessment" (1988). In essence, the model states that every data analysis should be conducted to answer specific questions – otherwise the data analysis is ungrounded and can often lead evaluators astray. The logic model follows a specific, positivist approach to examination of data. The questions are as follows:

Assessment Decision	Question Answered	Action Taken
Screening	Is there a problem and what is it?	1. There is a problem: move to Diagnostic Analysis 2. No problem identified: Stop and/or redefine the problem
Diagnostic	Why is it happening?	Once hypotheses regarding problem etiology are generated and validated, interventions are selected to match proximate causes.
Intervention	What shall we do about it?	Intervention data are collected during implementation to ensure interventions are implemented with fidelity.
Progress Monitoring	Is our intervention working?	Sensitive, formative data are collected on intervention results to determine in-vivo whether the intervention is working to diminish the problem

Evaluation	To what extent is the problem solved?	Re-do Screening to determine whether the size of the gap has been reduced sufficiently
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This decision making model is at the heart of nearly every strategic planning or continuous improvement model in one form or another (citations provided in our plan). An important result of these linked decisions is that only enough of the right kind of data are collected to answer any specific question. Also, ALL decisions are made in a data-based way. Stated differently, and this is important to our context here, we follow what the data tell us.

To our point, then. With regard to inexperienced, underqualified and out of field teachers, we examined the data provided in our data profiles and found very small differences in these summaries across high poverty/low poverty and high minority/low minority dimensions. Where there were differences, they were very small, likely due to measurement error, not of a size that we considered meaningful and practically not actionable. Indeed, differences of this magnitude could certainly not explain the large differences in achievement gaps that in Iowa, which we believe represent inequities in result, if not in opportunity. In short, the data did not provide an affirmative answer to the screening question. That is, the answer from our initial data analysis was NO, there did not appear to be an equity problem in Iowa as a result of inequities in being taught by inexperienced, under-qualified and out of field teachers. In other words, when thinking of inputs and outcomes, we found significant gaps in the student learning outcomes between students living in poverty and minority students as compared to all other students but we did not find significant gaps in the inputs when studying the data related to inexperienced, under-qualified and out of field teachers. Therefore, we assume that some other “inputs” must be contributing to the differences we see in outcomes. Based on the research and best thinking in the field, which convincingly illustrates the powerful impact of the quality of teaching on student learning (*one researcher concludes “. . .the single most important factor for improving student learning is the quality of instruction they receive.”*) our hypothesis is that significant variability exists in the quality/effectiveness of the teaching in our schools serving high percentages of poor and/or minority children as compared to our low poverty, low minority schools. With that hypothesis in mind, we developed our strategies around building a statewide system of support for improving teaching and learning with an emphasis on increasing instructional effectiveness and stability in the schools serving our most needy students.

To illustrate the defensibility of this logic, a medical analogy will be used. Physicians (and most professions) use this same general logic model when diagnosing and treating disease. When any of us go to the doctor for an annual check-up, the doctor does a physical exam. S/he examines data on a series of screening variables (called vital signs). Data from these screening variables are considered against a standard to identify deviations, or “gaps” from normalcy. Once those data are collected, a screening decision is made by the physician – and this is the important part.

The physician decides whether a problem or problems exist that warrants further data collection. Remember that a screening decision only says there IS a problem, not what is causing that problem. If a problem exists (the screening question answer is YES), the doc will likely order additional diagnostic tests. HOWEVER, if the answer to the screening question is no, it is not assumed that a problem exists and NO ADDITIONAL diagnostic data are collected or analyzed. Stated bluntly, if all of your vital sign data look good, you do not get an X-Ray or an MRI. It would not be rational, defensible nor cost effective to collect additional expensive data nor to implement expensive, intrusive interventions on variables that we do not have compelling data to demonstrate they are causally related (or even correlation ally related) to our observed gaps in equitable outcomes (a proxy for equitable access to high quality teaching).

We as a state stand ready to re-examine our analyses, conclusions and strategies if USED finds inaccuracies in our approach, our data or our analyses.

#### But the Problem Persists

Despite our unsuccessful efforts to identify teacher variables related to inequities in opportunity for students, our workteams acknowledged that large gaps in achievement persist in our state. These gaps, to us, reflected inequity in result – which to our group is unacceptable. At this point in our deliberations, a decision had to be made – should we keep searching for a needle in a hay stack related to teacher qualifications variables, or should we acknowledge the large gaps in achievement and begin exploring other variables that are highly likely to be operational in the observed achievement gaps. Our group chose the latter approach, which is described at length in our overall equity plan.

**2. Information regarding the evaluation plan for studying the implementation and impact of the key strategies identified in the Equity Plan for closing achievement gaps.**

**Table 1: Key goals and outcomes associated with developing teacher leaders within Iowa school districts (Referred to as the Teacher Leadership and Compensation Initiative - TLC) - Strategy 3 supported by Strategy 2.**

Key Goals	Outcome(s)
1. Attract able and promising new teachers	A. Has the development of the TLC program increased: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The overall number of high school students intending to pursue a degree in education</li> <li>• The average ACT score of high school students intending to pursue a degree in education</li> <li>• The number of applicants for teacher licensure in Iowa</li> <li>• The diversity (in terms of race, gender and geography) of applicants for teacher licensure in Iowa</li> </ul>
2. Retain effective teachers	A. Has the adoption of a local TLC plan increased teacher retention in the school districts with approved plans? B. Has the development of the TLC system increased teacher retention state-wide? C. Has the development of the TLC system led to differences in retention rates between urban and rural school
3. Promote Collaboration	A. Are teachers more likely to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-plan with other teachers</li> <li>• Observe with teachers</li> <li>• Be observed by other teachers</li> <li>• Co-teach with other teachers following the implementation of a local TLC plan</li> </ul> B. Do teachers now have more time available for collaboration once a district has adopted a local TLC plan and has the quality of collaborative opportunities increased?
4. Reward professional growth and effective teaching	A. Has the development of the TLC program created multiple new leadership roles for teachers?

5. Improved student achievement	<p>A. Has the development of a local TLC plan led to improved student achievement results, as measured by the annual state assessments as well as other sources such as district formative assessments and other student learning and performance measures?</p> <p>B. Has the development of a local TLC plan led to an increase in the graduation rate?</p>
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**Table 2: Key components and measures associated with developing teacher leaders within Iowa school districts (Referred to as the Teacher Leadership and Compensation Initiative - TLC) - Strategy 3 supported by Strategy 2.**

Key Component (or Element)	Measures
1. Increase minimum salary to \$33,500	<p>A. How many districts increased their minimum salary to \$33,500?</p> <p>B. What was the average of the increase?</p> <p>C. What impact has the development of the TLC system had on the average beginning teacher salary and average teacher salary (for all teachers) in Iowa?</p>
2. Improve entry into the profession	<p>A. What supports are being provided for first and second year teachers?</p> <p>B. What impact is that having on first and second year teachers instructional practice, satisfaction, efficacy?</p>
3. Create multiple, meaningful, differentiated teacher leadership roles in which at least 25% of the teachers serve	<p>A. Has the development of the TLC system created multiple new leadership roles for teachers?</p> <p>B. What percentage of teachers are now in leadership roles because of TLC funding?</p> <p>C. How much time, on average, is each teacher serving in a leadership capacity outside of their own classroom?</p> <p>D. What teacher leadership roles have districts defined?</p>
4. Develop a rigorous selection process for leadership roles	<p>A. What criteria was used for selecting teachers into the leadership role?</p>
5. Align professional development with the IPDM and the local TLC plan	<p>A. What characteristics of collaborative inquiry are evident within the school culture and the professional learning opportunities?</p> <p>B. Are teachers more involved in designing and facilitating school-wide collaborative inquiry processes as the key means of professional learning as a result of implementing the TLC plan?</p>
6. School District Fidelity in Plan Implementation	<p>A. Have districts implemented their initial TLC plan as described in their TLC application?</p> <p>B. What adjustments have districts made to their plans and what factors caused these changes?</p>

**Table 3: Key components, outcomes, and measures for the systemic collaboration strategies (Referred to as the Collaborating for Iowa’s Kids initiative – C4K) – Strategies 1, 2, 4, and 5.**

Key Component	Outcome(s)	Measures
1. Assessment and Data-Based Decision-Making	<p>A. All students are assessed with a valid and reliable universal screener</p> <p>B. All students are assessed with a valid and reliable progress monitoring assessment</p>	<p>A. percent of students assessed with a valid and reliable universal screener</p> <p>B. Percent of students not meeting benchmark assessed with a valid and</p>
	<p>C. All districts/schools have a comprehensive balanced assessment system in place</p>	<p>reliable progress monitoring assessment</p> <p>C. Not known at this time</p>
2. Universal Instruction	<p>A. All students have access to, and are successful in, evidence-based universal instruction</p> <p>B. All districts/schools have an evidence-based universal core?</p>	<p>A. Percent of students at benchmark on universal screening assessment-and change in percentage at benchmark over time</p> <p>B. Percent of districts/schools scoring at the acceptable range for universal instruction on the MTSS School Implementation Tool</p>
3. Targeted and Intensive Supports	<p>A. All students who require targeted support receive evidence-based targeted interventions</p> <p>B. All students who required intensive support receive evidence-based intensive interventions</p> <p>C. All districts/schools use progress monitoring data to monitor intervention efficacy (targeted and intensive) over time to make instructional changes</p>	<p>A. Percent of schools implementing evidence-based interventions for student identified as at-risk</p> <p>B. Percent of schools implementing evidence-based interventions for students identified as substantially deficient</p> <p>C. Percent of at-risk/substantially deficient students exhibiting acceptable growth</p>
4. Leadership	<p>A. All districts/schools have a process to establish consensus to implement and sustain MTSS. All districts/schools have consensus to implement and sustain MTSS</p> <p>B. All districts/schools have an established quality leadership team to implement and sustain MTSS</p>	<p>A. Percent of districts/schools scoring at the acceptable range for consensus on the MTSS School Implementation Tool</p> <p>B. Percent of districts/schools scoring at the acceptable range for quality leadership on the MTSS School Implementation Tool</p>

5. Infrastructure	<p>A. All districts/schools use the Iowa Professional Development Model to provide ongoing professional learning and coaching to support staff members</p> <p>B. All MTSS districts/schools implement, and use the results of, the School Implementation Tool to monitor the</p>	<p>A. Percent of districts/schools using IPDM to provide professional learning and coaching</p> <p>B. Percent of districts/schools using the MTSS School Implementation Tool to monitor progress of MTSS over time</p>
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**Table 4: Research questions and data sources for the study of implementation and impact**

Research Questions	Tchr Survey	Tchr Leader Focus Groups	AEA/Dist Interview	Extant Data	Studnt Ach. Data	Tchr Eval	Analytic Method
<b>Implementation</b>							
Has the development of TLC created multiple new leadership roles for teachers? How have districts defined these roles? How are teachers selected for leadership roles, and how many teachers participate in leadership roles? What percentage of time is spent on these roles?	X	X	X	X			Descriptive, qualitative
What supports are being provided to new teachers? What are teachers' perceptions of the association of these supports and their impact on instructional practice, satisfaction, and efficacy?	X	X	X				Descriptive, qualitative
Has teacher collaboration increased? Is there more time for teachers to collaborate and has the quality of collaboration improved?	X	X					Descriptive, qualitative
Do teachers in TLC districts see alignment between IPDM	X	X					Descriptive, qualitative

and TLC? Is collaborative inquiry evident within schools and how are teachers involved in this process?							
Have TLC districts implemented their plans with fidelity?	X	X	X	X			Descriptive, qualitative
To what extent have TLC districts increased their minimum salary? Has TLC impacted teacher salaries across the state?				X			Descriptive, qualitative
Are all students assessed with evidence-based assessments? Are evidence-based assessments delivered with fidelity (to vendor specifications)?	X	X		X	X		Descriptive, qualitative
Do all students have access to and are successful in evidence-based universal instruction?				X			Descriptive, qualitative
Is there a process for identifying movement across levels of intervention and determining appropriate instruction and interventions based on student need?	X	X		X			Descriptive, qualitative
Are students who require targeted or intensive support receiving evidence-based interventions? Are data used to align interventions with student needs? Are they delivered with fidelity (to vendor specifications or intervention plans)?	X	X		X			Descriptive, qualitative
Have schools and districts established a leadership team to implement and sustain MTSS? Are processes within the team collaborative?	X	X	X	X			Descriptive, qualitative
Has the IPDM been implemented with fidelity? Does IPDM provide teachers with professional	X	X	X	X			Descriptive, qualitative

development and coaching needed to effectively implement assessments, interventions, and making data-informed decisions?							
Has the MTSS School Implementation Tool been implemented with fidelity?	X	X	X	X			Descriptive, qualitative
Does C4K support the alignment of the Iowa Core Standards, research-based strategies, and differentiated instruction? Has the DE and the AEA's aligned their guidance and support for MTSS?	X	X	X	X			Descriptive, qualitative
Have students receiving targeted and intensive interventions shown growth over time?	X	X		X	X		Descriptive, qualitative
<b>Student and Teacher Impact</b>							
Is TLC associated with an increase in high-quality and diverse teacher applicants? Has teacher retention improved in TLC districts and across the state? Is TLC associated with retention differences between urban and rural districts?				X			Descriptive, inferential
Is TLC associated with improved teacher effectiveness?				X	X	X	Inferential
Is TLC associated with improved student outcomes (student achievement, graduate rates, and student attendance)?				X	X		Inferential
Has the distribution of student performance changed over time? Has the percentage of students moving from more intensive tiers to less intensive tiers changed over time? Is MTSS				X	X		Descriptive, inferential

associated with improved student achievement?							
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**Table 5: Evaluation activities and priorities for Year 1 (H=high priority, M=medium priority, L=low priority)**

Research Activities	DE has data	Year 1	
		Priority TLC	Priority C4K
Develop theory of action for overall evaluation - initial kick off meeting in-person		H	H
Annual online surveys - Likert-type response scales		H	H
Annual Teacher Leader Focus groups in 8 districts		H	L
Incentives for participation in surveys, focus groups, and interviews		L	L
Annual district and AEA staff interviews in the 8 districts		H	L
Travel to Iowa on the schedule mentioned below: initial, quarterly (3 formative and 1 summative), one week to conduct interviews and focus groups - repeated annually		H	H
<b>Extant District Data</b>			
<b>Human Resources Data</b>			
Years of service - teachers	y	H	L
Date of hire	y	H	L
compensation history	y	H	L
leadership history	y	H	L
individual demographic characteristics	y	H	L
school, grade, and subjects taught	y	H	L
teacher applicant - ACT scores and other performance measures	n	L	L
Applicant characteristics	n	H	L
Whether or not applicants were offered and accepted a position	n	H	L
<b>DE, AEA, District Data</b>			
TLC program data on implementation plans	y	H	L
C4K program data on implementation plans	n		M
assessment schedules	y	H	L
leadership positions	y	H	L
guidance and support documents related to MTSS	y	M	H
data on all teacher evaluations since implementing TLC	y	M	L
data on all teacher evaluations since implementing C4K	y	M	L
Evaluation data from the period prior to implementing TLC		L	L
Evaluation data from the period prior to implementing C4K		L	L

lowa assessment data	y	H	H
NEW (2016-17) Assessment data		H	H
lowa TIER data	y	L	H
<i>Healthy Indicators for ELI, Phase I, Implementation tool (year 2)</i>	<i>half yes</i>	H	H
Teacher mean student growth percentiles	maybe	H	H
Ensure ability to link data from all of these sources at the teacher and student levels		H	H
<b>Data Analysis - Implementation</b>			
Analyze survey data - descriptive, Rasch model for ordered categories, psychometric validation, vertical equation, distribution of responses on individual items, disaggregate results by teacher characteristics & leadership role		H	H
Analyze focus group data - M&H sequential processes - identify themes on transcripts, analyze transcripts using Nvivo, inductive approach incorporating systematic method of management of data through reduction, organization, and connection. Second coder cross check. create and analyze summaries and data displays.		H	
analyze interview data - same processes as focus group data		H	
analyze extant data - program data to study fidelity of implementation,		H	H
<b>Data Analysis - Teacher &amp; Student Outcomes</b>			
Student Outcomes - CITS design - see detail pages 14-16		H	H
Teacher recruitment, retention, and effectiveness - pages 16-17		H	
<b>Communication and Reporting</b>			
In-person meeting at project initiation		H	H
PI and PD meet twice monthly with key DE program staff		H	H
In-person quarterly meetings with PI/PD and DE to review findings		H	H
Three interim formative reports		H	M
One annual summative report		H	H

### PLANNED RESEARCH/EVALUATION ACTIVITIES:

This section contains information about our current plans for conducting the evaluation activities. The subsections are related to data collection, data analysis, communication and reporting activities recommended by our external evaluator (American Institute for Research – AIR) in collaboration with our evaluation team within the Department of Education.

#### Data Collection

**Surveys.** Online surveys will be administered annually to all relevant, participating Iowa teachers. The surveys will be administered in March each year. The content of the survey will cover constructs on both program implementation fidelity and satisfaction with the programs' components. AIR will work closely with the DE staff to identify the core set of constructs for the surveys and items for the constructs (see Appendix A for a sample survey).

The surveys will include primarily fixed-response items with Likert-type response scales (e.g., agreement scales, frequency scales). The surveys will be designed to gather information on the TLC and C4K components and processes to examine respondents' perceptions of:

- **TLC:** Leadership roles, supports for teachers, teacher collaboration, alignment of TLC with the Iowa Professional Development Model (IPDM), TLC program implementation fidelity, and general perceptions
- **C4K:** Implementing evidence-based assessment, instruction, intervention, and support, leadership roles, use of IPDM to support MTSS professional development, MTSS implementation fidelity, alignment of the DE and AEA MTSS guidance and support, the association between interventions and student growth, and general perceptions

To ensure a high response rate, we will implement multiple strategies that have been successful in past project work. Before launching the surveys, we will ask the DE to send an e-mail to AEAs and districts to introduce the survey and ask them to encourage participation. We also will work closely with the DE to identify incentives to encourage survey completion. The online survey interface will allow for follow-up with nonrespondents to ensure that response rates are as high as possible.

**Teacher Leader Focus Groups.** To supplement the data collected through the teacher survey and to gain the perspectives of teacher leaders who are essential to both TLC and C4K, we will conduct teacher leader focus groups each April. The content of the focus groups will be similar to that of the survey. However, the focus group format will allow for richer responses than a fixed-response survey and will allow us to probe areas of interest particular with regard to teacher leaders (see Appendix B for a sample focus group protocol and process). In total, data from the two data sources will provide a detailed picture of TLC and C4K program implementation, highlighting what is working well, and where improvements and refinements are needed.

Each April, we will conduct eight teacher leader focus groups. To identify focus group participants, we will first draw a stratified sample of districts and AEAs from across the state. We propose selecting districts/AEAs so that they are representative of the state in terms of urbanicity, demographic makeup, and past academic performance. However, we will work closely with the DE to identify districts/AEAs that would be most meaningful to include in our sample. Within each sampled district/AEA, we will draw a random sample of eight to 10 teachers and invite them to participate in the focus group. The process that we undertake during the development of the survey instrument will inform focus group protocol development, allowing us to ask the teacher leaders targeted questions about TLC and C4K. Focus groups will last approximately 90 minutes and will be held in a central location within selected districts/AEAs. All focus groups will be conducted in person and will be led by experienced facilitators. We will work with districts/AEAs to find a time that will work well for convening teachers without interfering with instruction. With permission, focus groups will be recorded and transcribed to ensure accuracy.

**District and AEA Staff Interviews.** In each of the eight sampled districts/AEAs, we will also conduct interviews with two or three key district and AEA staff working on TLC and MTSS in those sites. Like the teacher leader focus groups, these interviews will deepen our understanding TLC and C4K implementation. The interviews will be conducted in person, if possible, in April of each year of the evaluation, and will last approximately 30 minutes. If key staff are unavailable for an in-person

interview, we will conduct the interview by phone. The interview protocols will be semistructured, designed to gather open-ended responses about the constructs covered in the teacher survey and teacher leader focus groups. Like the focus groups, all interviews will be recorded, with permission, and transcribed to ensure accuracy.

**Extant District Data.** In addition to the new data collection described previously, the evaluation will draw on existing data collected by the DE, AEAs, and districts. Extant data that will be used in the evaluation will include human resources data, program data, evaluation system data, and student achievement and Iowa TIER data. From the DE and districts' human resources offices, we will request data on the teachers who are employed by the district, including years of service, date of hire, compensation history, leadership history, and individual demographic characteristics, as well as school, grade, and subjects taught. In addition, we will request data on teacher applicants, including their ACT scores and other available measures of performance, as well as their individual characteristics and whether they were offered and accepted a teaching position to examine the association between TLC and increases in quality and diversity of teacher candidates. From the DE, AEAs, and districts, we will request TLC and C4K program data on implementation plans, assessment schedules, leadership positions, and guidance and support documents related to MTSS. We will request data on all teacher evaluations conducted since implementing TLC and C4K and any evaluation data that may have been kept from the period prior to program implementation. We also will request data on student performance as measured by the Iowa Assessments and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Finally, we will request teacher mean student growth percentiles (SGPs), as available. We will work with the DE, AEAs, and districts to ensure that we are able to link data from all of these sources at the teacher and student levels. For all of these sources, we will request data, if possible, from the 2012–13 school year through the final evaluation year (2017–18).

### Data Analysis

The data collected from the above sources will be analyzed using the following approaches.

**Examining Implementation.** The AIR evaluation team will analyze survey, focus group, interview, and extant data to further understand TLC and C4K program implementation, for the state overall and for each district in TLC. AIR will descriptively analyze the *surveys* at each administration to depict progress in implementing TLC and C4K. To analyze survey constructs, AIR will employ the Rasch model for ordered categories (Andrich, 1978; Rasch, 1980; Wright & Masters, 1982; Wright & Stone, 1979). Psychometric validation allows the evaluator to create scale scores for each of the constructs described above. These scale scores, which are made up of multiple items that fit together from a theoretical perspective, provide a summary of the consistency and intensity of an individual's responses related to each of the constructs (e.g., leadership roles, teacher collaboration, use of IPDM to support MTSS professional development). We also will vertically equate the survey to allow for the rigorous measurement of changes in response patterns over time. As needed, we also will examine the distribution of responses on individual survey items. The evaluation team will disaggregate all results by teacher characteristics (e.g., years of experience, grades served, evaluation rating) and by leadership role.

The analysis of data gathered from *focus groups* and *interviews* will follow a rigorous process to summarize data while maintaining the rich variation in interviewees' perceptions. Evaluators will analyze data using the following sequential processes, as outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994). First, we will

review the transcriptions of the focus group and interview audio recordings for clarity and to identify themes that might be included in the coding structure. Second, we will analyze transcripts from focus groups, using NVivo qualitative software, using an inductive approach and incorporating a systematic method of managing data through reduction, organization, and connection (Dey, 1993; LeCompte, 2000). This process relies on structured procedures for coding and categorizing the data in order to recognize patterns within and across sites. A second coder will independently cross-check the coding to ensure that codes are appropriately and consistently applied. Third, we will create and analyze summaries and data displays and, finally, consider this analysis in conjunction with all other data analyses.

In addition to the data from surveys, focus groups, and interviews, we will draw on **TLC and C4K program data** to examine whether the programs have been implemented with fidelity. Specifically, we will examine whether

- **TLC and C4K created new leadership roles for teachers.** We will examine the extent to which these roles have been developed, how districts have defined these roles, how teachers are selected for these roles, and what percent of time teachers spend on leadership-related activities.
- **TLC has had an impact on minimum salaries.** One goal of TLC is to increase minimum salaries in participating districts and across the state. Drawing on compensation data from the DE, we will examine changes in compensation and, specifically, changes in minimum salaries, for districts participating in TLC as compared to those that are not and for districts with varying urbanicity (e.g., rural vs. urban districts).
- **All students are assessed, instructed, and supported using evidenced-based tools.** We will examine program data from the DE, AEAs, and districts, including the Iowa TIER and results from the MTSS School Implementation Tool, to determine the extent to which each of these five components in the Iowa MTSS framework are being implemented within schools.
- **IPDM is used to support TLC and C4K.** TLC and C4K are intended to complement and be supported by the IPDM and its operating principles, which include a focus on curriculum, instruction and assessment, participative decision making (school and district), leadership, and simultaneity. We will review program documentation from TLC and C4K (e.g., district TLC plans, school and district implementation plans for MTSS, professional development schedules) to determine the extent to which TLC and MTSS are aligned and supported by IPDM.
- **MTSS guidance and support from the DE, AEAs, and districts are aligned.** Given that C4K is intended to align efforts across the DE, AEAs, and school districts to focus on early literacy and closing achievement gaps through MTSS implementation, guidance and support from each entity should be consistently aligned. Similar to the document review of the alignment between TLC, C4K, and IPDM, we will review MTSS guidance and support documents from the DE, AEAs, and districts to evaluate their alignment and make recommendations for improving their integration and streamlining communication related to MTSS.

**Examining Student and Teacher Outcomes.** The TLC and C4K programs are ultimately designed to improve student achievement and teacher effectiveness in participating districts and schools across the state. The proposed evaluation will examine whether student achievement has improved since implementing TLC and C4K. The proposed evaluation will also draw on extant district data to examine

whether the teacher applicant pool has improved and become more diversified, whether the best teachers stay, and how teacher effectiveness changes over time.

**Student Outcomes.** The ultimate goal of the TLC and C4K programs is to improve the performance of Iowa students. The proposed evaluation will use a comparative interrupted time series (CITS) design to examine the effect of program implementation on student outcomes. CITS is one of the strongest quasi-experimental designs when a comparison or control series can be constructed (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002). In such a design, the program effects are identified by comparing changes in the outcomes of one group over time to changes in the outcomes of another (comparison) group over the same time period. This approach thus relies on two sources of variation to inform the analyses: comparisons across individuals and comparisons over time. This combination supports more robust impact estimates than a design that relies only on change over time (the standard interrupted time series framework) or on comparisons across individuals (such as a propensity score analysis).

To estimate the impact of TLC on student outcomes, we will conduct a CITS analysis at the district level, comparing districts participating in TLC with similar districts who have not yet implemented TLC. We will work with the DE staff to identify appropriate comparison districts to draw on for this analysis. We will begin by identifying districts with performance prior to 2014 that closely parallels that of districts participating in TLC. We will then ask the DE staff to confirm whether these are appropriate comparison districts.

If the data are available, we will conduct a similar CITS analysis to estimate the impact of MTSS on student outcomes, although this analysis will be performed at the school level.<sup>9</sup> Again, we will work with the DE and AEAs along with district staff to identify appropriate comparison schools for this analysis, following the process described above.

The analysis will compare the outcome trends in participating districts (TLC) and schools (MTSS) in the years preceding implementation to outcome trends in the years following program implementation to determine: (1) the extent to which there is a sharp discontinuity at the point of implementation and (2) the extent to which there is a change in the slope after the program was introduced.

The simplest CITS design specification for TLC<sup>11</sup> is as follows:

$$Y_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 T_t + \beta_2 TLC_i + \beta_3 T_t TLC_i + u_i + e_{it}$$

where  $Y_{it}$  is the average student achievement for district  $i$  in time  $t$ ;  $\beta_0$  is a constant term showing average outcomes in comparison districts before the intervention;  $T_t$  is a vector of indicators for each postintervention time period  $t$ ;<sup>12</sup>  $\beta_1$  is a vector showing the difference in average outcomes between the preintervention time period and each postintervention time period  $t$  for comparison units;  $TLC_i$  is an indicator for whether the district has implemented TLC;  $\beta_2$  shows the average difference in performance between TLC and comparison districts in the preintervention time period;  $\beta_3$  is a vector showing the change in the difference in average performance between TLC districts and comparison districts at each time  $t$  after the intervention was implemented (the treatment effect);  $u_i$  is a unit-level random error term, with an assumed normal distribution with mean zero and variance  $\phi^2$ ; and  $e_{it}$  is an individual-level error term at time  $t$ , also assumed to have a normal distribution with mean zero and variance  $\sigma^2$ . We will examine the pretreatment trends in TLC districts and the comparison districts

to determine if the model should account for differential pretreatment trends.

To the extent that it is possible, we will also explore the impact of TLC and MTSS jointly on average student achievement. That is, we will examine the effect of implementing MTSS in a school located in a district that has implemented TLC. We will account for the nested structure of the data (i.e., that schools within the same district are more similar than schools in different districts) by clustering standard errors.

There are two important caveats to this modeling approach. First, many things could have changed in the implementation year in the participating districts (or schools, for MTSS) to affect student achievement. The CITS design cannot disentangle the effect of these other changes that occurred simultaneously with TLC and MTSS implementation on student achievement. We will consult with the DE staff to examine the extent to which other major changes occurred at the same time as program implementation that could confound any treatment effects identified in this analysis. Second, Iowa is transitioning from the Iowa Assessments to the PARCC assessment. To ensure that this change does not bias the results of this analysis, we will standardize student assessment data within year and grade prior to analysis, putting the outcomes on a comparable scale. Further, the change in assessment will affect both comparison and treatment district and will therefore be accounted for in the CITS design.

**Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Effectiveness.** One of the key goals of the TLC program is to recruit and retain high-quality teachers and to improve teacher effectiveness. In addition, TLC seeks to increase the diversity of the applicant pool and mitigate differences in retention between urban and rural districts. We will examine progress toward recruitment goals by describing any observable changes in the diversity (in terms of race, gender, and geography) and quality of applicants over time (as measured by mean SGP scores and teacher evaluation ratings, and historical measures of teacher candidate quality such as Praxis exam scores and competitiveness of undergraduate institution).

To estimate the effect of TLC on teacher retention within participating districts and across the state, we will employ linear probability models to estimate the probability of individual teachers departing from their current teaching position as a result of TLC, other individual characteristics, and the characteristics of the school in which they teach.<sup>13</sup> Probability models are conceptually appealing for studies of teacher mobility. They predict the probability of a teacher departing from his or her school after year  $t$ , depending on the length of time the teacher has been at a school. Each model represents time as discrete because the school year provides the field with an annual hiring cycle during which most new hires, transfers, or exits occur. Accounting for time is important because new teachers are significantly more likely to move or leave than those who have more teaching experience.

The simplest estimating equation is analogous to the one we presented previously, although the dependent variable of interest  $P(\text{leave})_{idt}$  is the probability that a teacher will depart in time  $t$ , given that the teacher has remained in that district through time  $t$  rather than departing. These models provide some flexibility with the data by allowing us to analyze the movement of teachers without necessarily viewing the entire career of all teachers. The models also allow the effects of explanatory variables to differ, depending on the type of move the teacher makes.

We will examine changes in overall effectiveness, drawing on teacher evaluation ratings and mean SGPs as available, of teachers in participating TLC districts and whether there is evidence that the most effective teachers are more likely to remain in these districts over time. We will disaggregate these analyses by important teacher characteristics, including seniority, level of education, whether teachers

have leadership roles, whether they teach in low-performing schools, and grades and subjects they teach. Although these descriptive analyses will not be able to distinguish the impact of TLC on teacher effectiveness and retention from other potential influences, they will provide important information on TLC districts' progress towards improving teacher effectiveness.

### **Communication and Reporting**

Implementing the TLC and C4K programs is multifaceted and evolving. Therefore, it is especially important that we closely coordinate our work with the DE staff and with other stakeholders to ensure the findings from our evaluation are relevant and informative to decision making. To ensure that our evaluation meets the DE's needs, we propose working collaboratively with the DE to finalize the evaluation plan. To begin this work, we suggest an in-person meeting at project initiation to discuss the evaluation plan, as proposed, and to make any needed changes to better meet state and stakeholder needs, and in light of the data available. In addition, to facilitate ongoing coordination, we suggest that the AIR principal investigator and project director meet twice monthly with key DE program staff.

The evaluation of the TLC and C4K programs is designed to provide ongoing formative and summative feedback to the DE that is useful, relevant, and actionable. To provide this ongoing actionable feedback, the primary reporting format for the evaluation will be reports coupled with in-person meetings, in which we present findings in an accessible format and provide concrete guidance for the ongoing work around teacher effectiveness and student performance in Iowa.

In-person meetings to present findings are proposed to facilitate conversation between our team and key DE stakeholders. The principal investigator and project director will be available to travel to Des Moines, Iowa, four times annually to present and discuss findings from these reports; other team members will participate in person or via teleconference. During the meetings, we will work with the DE stakeholders to cointerpret findings presented during the meeting. The cointerpretation process consists of several steps, starting with interpreting the data from individual data sets, followed by identifying key findings across data sets, and concluding with identifying program strengths and potential restraining forces that may be brought to bear on the issues facing the DE, AEAs/districts, schools, and teachers.

The basis for the meetings will be three interim, formative reports and one annual, summative report that will synthesize findings across data sources (see Project Timeline section). In the interim reports, we will provide a written summary of the most recent data collection activities and subsequent recommendations for improvement and refinement of the program components. In the annual reports we will fully explore evaluation topics so that stakeholders understand key findings, which will be illustrated to clearly convey meaning in the context of program design and implementation. Discussions of findings also will address conditions and circumstances that create variance across school settings and over time. The reports will be written in clear and accessible language and will avoid technical jargon. The organizational structure of the reports will be logical, and formatting approaches will visually convey report structure and key points.

### **3. Project Timeline**

The evaluation will begin in June 2015 and conclude in August 2018. As mentioned previously, the primary reporting format will be in the form of three interim reports and one summative report,

annually, accompanied by meetings to cointerpret the findings. Reports and meetings will occur approximately once a quarter. We propose the following report/meeting schedule but plan to work with the DE to revise and refine this schedule as needed:

- Quarter 1 (March): Student achievement and teacher effectiveness findings
- Quarter 2 (June): Survey and qualitative findings
- Quarter 3 (September): Summative findings
- Quarter 4 (December): Program fidelity, teacher recruitment and retention

We will implement the evaluation with quality and efficiency, using the proposed timeline outlined in Table 6.

**Table 6. Timeline of Major Evaluation Activities**

Evaluation Activity	2015			2016				2017				2018		
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Finalize evaluation plan	X	X												
Develop/revise teacher surveys		X	X	X			X	X			X	X		
Administer teacher surveys				X				X				X		
Analyze teacher surveys					X				X				X	
Develop/revise interview and focus group protocols		X	X				X				X			
Conduct interviews and focus groups				X				X				X		
Analyze qualitative data				X				X				X		
Interim report and presentation on teacher survey and qualitative findings					X				X				X	
Collect extant		X	X			X			X					

achievement and effectiveness data														
Analyze extant achievement and effectiveness data			X	X			X	X			X	X		
Present achievement and effectiveness analysis				X				X				X		
Collect extant program, HR and retention data		X	X	X			X	X			X	X		
Analyze program, HR, and retention data				X	X			X	X			X	X	
Interim report and presentation on program, HR and retention data			X				X				X			
Submit annual report						X				X				X

**3. Information about Iowa's plans to disaggregate data (including poor, minority, students with disabilities and English Language Learners) for the purposes of monitoring progress related to implementation and impact of the strategies for closing the achievement gaps.**

The IDE recognizes the importance of ensuring educational equity is maintained between different groups of students statewide. To address this issue, the IDE will annually analyze and disaggregate data to ensure equity is maintained. The IDE will breakdown data by key subgroups including: low SES, race/ethnicity, students with disabilities and English Language Learners. The IDE will examine differences such as high minority and low minority schools and high SES and low SES breakdown to determine if parity exists between groups.

The IDE is working to develop a School Report Card for all schools in Iowa. The launch for the report card is December 2015. The purpose of Iowa's School Report card is to establish specific performance goals and evaluate the effectiveness of each attendance center. The Report Card combines multiple measures to create an overall school ranking. Measures include: Proficiency, Growth, Closing the Achievement Gap, College Readiness, Graduation Rate, Attendance and Staff Retention.

While an overall school ranking does not provide important contextual information about a school nor does it make a conclusion about the quality of staff or ongoing work to raise student achievement, it does provide a high level view of student performance across a number of measures. Users can use these data to compare a school against the state average and show trends in performance. Schools can use this information to assist in developing achievement goals and to guide improvement efforts.

More specifically, the information contained in the School Report Card can be used in analyzing Iowa's educational equity. The Closing the Achievement gap measure will provide a score for all schools on this important topic. The score will identify schools that are struggling as well as showcase those that are making significant progress in closing performance gaps between subgroups. Further, the Closing the Achievement Gap metric will be used in the IDE's analysis of education equity. As we have done for this report, we will continue to analyze and report gaps between the achievement of students in our highest poverty and highest minority schools as compared to other schools in our state. This analysis will also include a study of the rates at which students in the high poverty and high minority schools are being taught by inexperienced, underqualified and/or out-of-field teachers as compared to their peers in other schools.

#### 4. Connections between the proposed strategies and the achievement gaps the state is experiencing.

Five of the six strategies described in Iowa's Equity Plan were selected based on the research providing evidence of success these strategies have demonstrated for helping teachers and leaders increase their effectiveness in relation to generating high and equitable student learning outcomes.

For a complete description of these strategies, please see Section 4, pages 40 – 66, of the original Equity Plan. The following Table is an effort to make the connections between the identified strategies and the anticipated impact on student learning more explicit.

**Table 1: Equity Plan strategies and connection to intended outcomes:**

Strategy	Connections
<p><b>Strategy 1:</b> Implement multi-tiered systems of support in all Iowa schools that are sustained by evidence based practices, early warning systems and ongoing progress monitoring</p>	<p>The multi-tiered systems of support is a decision making model that has been shown to be especially effective for closing gaps among our hardest to reach students – including students living in poverty and minority students. This is accomplished by increasing teachers' and leaders' capacity to use data and information to inform decision making about student progress and needed interventions to ensure students succeed. Improving the core instruction and providing immediate and forceful intervention for those who need more has had significant impact on ensuring all students succeed and closing achievement gaps.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 2:</b> Create and support coaching networks that focus on building the capacity of teachers and leaders to create effective cultures of learning for students and adults</p>	<p>Ensuring poor and minority students are taught by highly effective educators is critical for closing the achievement gaps that exist in our state. Our hypothesis regarding the variability of teaching effectiveness in our highest poverty and highest minority schools caused us to examine strategies that build the capacity of the teachers and leaders as the means for improving the interactions between teachers and students that result in improved student learning. A key lever for change and closing achievement gaps within the 2011 McKinsey Study was building the technical skills of teachers and principals through group or cascaded training and support. Developing teachers as leaders to support principals' instructional leadership and capacity building for the teachers has been shown to have positive effects on the ability of teachers to increase their repertoire of skills necessary for ensuring the success of their students and significantly closing</p>

	<p>achievement gaps. This is being accomplished through the direct training of teacher leaders and principals, coaching for teacher leaders and principals, and building the capacity of teacher leaders and principals to create and sustain a culture of learning for both students and adults.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 3:</b> Create structures and supports for increasing teacher leadership roles within Iowa schools</p>	<p>In order for strategy 2 to be as effective as possible for closing the significant achievement gaps in our state we realized we would need to increase the instructional leadership within our schools serving the highest percentages of poor and minority students. Developing teachers as leaders to support principals' instructional leadership and capacity building for teachers has been shown to have positive effects on the ability of teachers to increase their repertoire of skills necessary for ensuring the success of their students and significantly closing achievement gaps. This is being accomplished through the direct training of teacher leaders and principals, coaching for teacher leaders and principals, and building the capacity of teacher leaders and principals to provide coaching and support for the teachers they serve.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 4:</b> Create a statewide structure for scaling instructional improvement initiatives with consistent levels of support and accountability at the local, state, and regional level</p>	<p>Schools serving the highest number of high poverty and high minority schools are scattered across the state and are served by different regional service agencies. In the past, this has contributed to significantly different levels of support and guidance for improvement efforts to improve student learning and close achievement gaps – resulting in very little change. A review of the research on implementation science indicates that systemic efforts to change learning outcomes had better results after developing an infrastructure to support and sustain the implementation efforts. As a result, we are creating an infrastructure for scaling initiatives in partnership with our regional service agencies with the intent of creating consistency of support and accountability during implementation and ultimately reducing the variability in the instructional effectiveness across classrooms. This new structure provides leverage in four ways: (1) Alignment of resources, including fiscal and personnel, focused on one priority (literacy) across priority areas that have the greatest success across children/youth (work teams); (2) Collaboration of the DE, AEA and LEAs as part of C4K; (3) Identification/development of evidence-based frameworks, strategies and programs by experts in the field regardless of affiliation or location; and (4) Intentional statewide scaling based on implementation science.</p> <p>The infrastructure for scaling helps us ensure that all students benefit from the initiatives being scaled, regardless of the district or AEA in which they reside. This is critical to our effort to ensure</p>

	high and equitable achievement for all students while closing the achievement gaps for sub-groups of students.
<p><b>Strategy 5:</b> Create and implement a statewide differentiated accountability system aligned to our continuous improvement model</p>	<p>Our schools serving our most needy students currently receive the same “cookie cutter” approach to accountability as any other school in our state. Obviously, schools serving higher numbers of students in poverty and/or minority students and demonstrating larger achievement gaps need more support and should be able to count on that support from all levels of the system. To reduce fragmentation and increase focus on improving outcomes for our most needy students, Iowa is developing a differentiated approach to accountability and school improvement (referred to as Differentiated Accountability).</p> <p>The intent of Differentiated Accountability is to leverage compliance to improve implementation of evidence-based content (i.e., the Iowa Early Learning Standards and Iowa Core Standards) and practices (i.e., multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS)). This approach relies upon the Iowa Department of Education monitoring compliance while our statewide delivery system known as Collaborating for Iowa’s Kids (C4K) engages in on-site coaching and support to diagnose implementation barriers and to identify evidence-based solutions to those identified barriers. Iowa’s approach to Differentiated Accountability includes the following: (a) data-based, tiered support for schools and districts; (b) use of healthy indicators to help prioritize focus areas; (c) earned school and district autonomy based on performance; (d) a collaborative approach to improvement grounded in a common set of collaborative inquiry questions; (e) a single, unified continuous improvement process grounded in the Iowa Professional Development Model (IPDM); (f) streamlined reporting; and (g) an emphasis on results for Iowa’s learners preK-Grade 12. Our differentiated accountability approach will allow us to provide differentiated support to schools and districts that need it most and increase their capacity to close achievement gaps and increase learning for all of their students.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 6:</b> Create a statewide definition of effective teaching which can</p>	<p>In order to ensure students in our high poverty and high minority schools are receiving equally effective instruction as those in other schools in our state – we must first clarify what effective</p>

<p>guide strategic actions focused on improving teaching and learning.</p>	<p>teaching looks like and use that “definition” to monitor the instructional practices of educators. Building agreement and shared understanding about the research on effective instruction that has the biggest impact on student learning outcomes will undergird all the other strategies. Each strategy is intended to impact the effectiveness of teaching in order to improve student learning. A clear definition of the characteristics of effective teaching will be necessary to focus our efforts, monitor progress, and adjust actions to accomplish intended results for both adults and students.</p>
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