Maryland

State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators

July 1, 2015

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Maryland's Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators is being developed in two parts. The first part is to collect and analyze data from the State perspective and identify State strategies that can reduce equity gaps. The initial work included analyzing the data to identify gaps in the percentages of poor and/or minority students taught by uncertified, out-of-field and inexperienced teachers. This data was run for the State and the Local Education Agencies (LEAs), but is reviewed at the State level from the State perspective. In the second part of the plan, MSDE is partnering with LEAs to address equity data and relate that data to student performance, attendance, and graduation rates. The State is working with identified LEAs to develop equity strategies individualized by LEA. Maryland's plan is an on-going, working document.

Section I: Introduction

Maryland has one of the nation's most honored systems of public education for one simple reason—it does not stand still. Over the past three decades, Maryland has built a strong foundation, policy by policy, to achieve national status as a leader in educational excellence. Through it all, one thing has remained constant – Maryland's commitment to continually improving the education and achievement of all students.

This commitment has resulted in many positive outcomes for Maryland students which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Maryland students—who have led the nation in Advanced Placement (AP) success for eight years—recorded more improvement in both AP assessment participation and success. In 2014, Maryland ranks first in the nation among the percentage of public high school juniors and seniors to score a three or higher—22.0 percent
- In Education Week's Quality Counts, after ranking #1 for five straight years (2009-2013), Maryland now ranks #3 in the nation. Maryland received a B for equity.
- According to a U.S. News and World Report, in 2014 Maryland has the highest percentage of top-performing high schools in the nation. The report states that nearly

30 percent of Maryland high schools ranked among the highest performers in its latest national study.

- Maryland's high school graduation performance has increased each year since 2010 when the graduation rate was 84.5 percent to 2014 when 87.5 percent of students graduated within five years.
- Results from the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) assessments illustrate growth in Maryland's reading and mathematics results for grade four.
- Maryland was the first state to develop specific STEM Standards of Practice, which detail the skills and knowledge students must master to be prepared to meet the increasing demands of the workplace where STEM skills are required, and lay a foundation of STEM education for all students.

State Context

Maryland has 24 LEAs from 23 counties and Baltimore City, serving 866,169 PreK-12 students.(2013-2014 school year) (see http://www.mdreportcard.org). Generally speaking, Maryland is made up of six regions. The Baltimore Metropolitan Region has six LEAs: Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Carroll County, Harford County, and Howard County. It also has the SEED School, a publicly-funded, residential boarding school (which is noted here but not included in the analysis for the purpose of this report). The Baltimore Metropolitan Region is the largest of the six regions. The National Capital Region includes two LEAs, Montgomery County and Prince George's County, and is the second-largest region in the State. The Western Maryland Region has four LEAs: Allegany County, Frederick County, Garrett County, and Washington County. The Upper Shore Region has five LEAs and includes Caroline County, Cecil County, Kent County, Queen Anne's County, and Talbot County. The Lower Shore Region has four LEAs and includes Dorchester County, Somerset County, Wicomico County, and Worcester County. Finally, the Southern Maryland Region is home to three LEAs and includes Calvert County, Charles County, and St. Mary's County.

Maryland State Equity Plan 2006 to 2015

In July 2014, U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, asked each State to write a plan describing the steps it will take to ensure that "poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers" as required by section 1111 (b)(8)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). In response to this request and as part of Maryland's continuous effort to provide equal educational opportunity to every child, including meaningful opportunities for all students to succeed, regardless of family income or race, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) worked with stakeholders throughout the State to develop this plan.

Maryland has worked to address this issue of equity since at least 2006. Working closely with its LEAs, Maryland completed an analysis of data and implemented strategies to increase the number of classes being taught by Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT). However, with the ESEA Renewal/Extension guidance, issued in 2013, Maryland began to look beyond just teacher qualifications, represented by HQT, and at the myriad of other options that could be creating an inequitable distribution of effective teachers to further ensure that all students had access to high quality teachers.

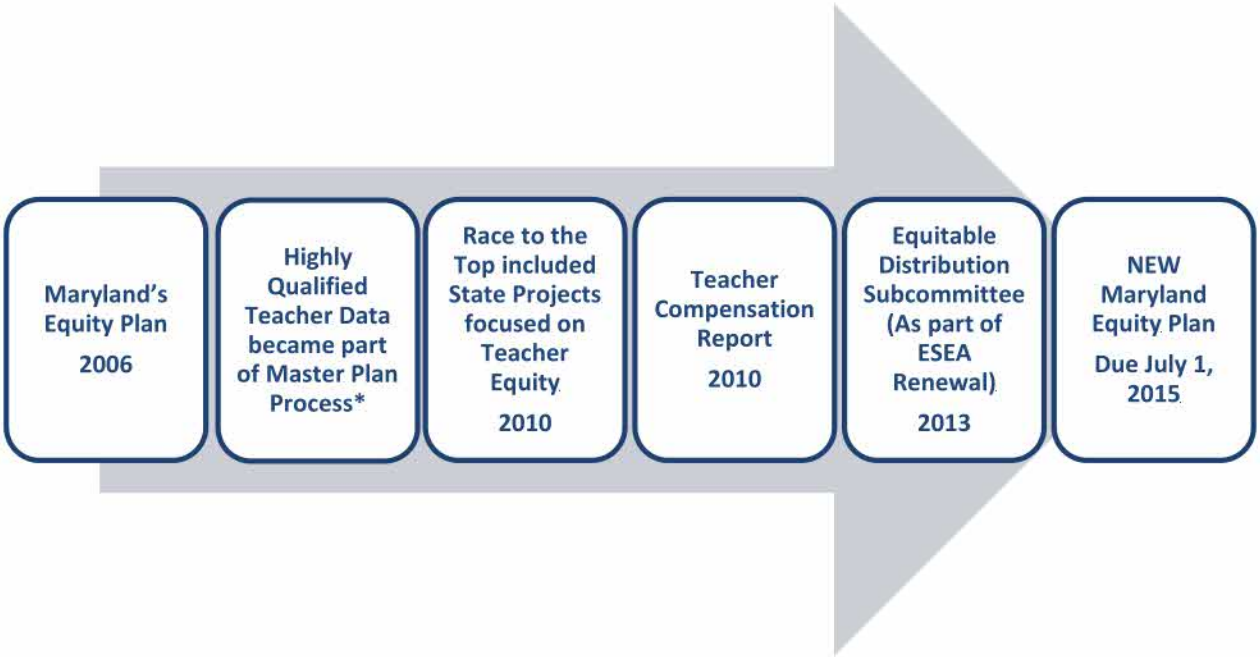
Maryland's Plan for Meeting the Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) Goal was submitted to the U.S. Department of Education July 7, 2006. The HQT Plan forms the foundation for Maryland's State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators (see www2.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/hqtplans/md.doc).This plan included a data analysis that demonstrated that Maryland has made steady progress in reducing the number of classes not taught by highly qualified teachers in both the highest poverty and lowest poverty quartile schools; that more than two thirds of non-HQT classes were taught by teachers with expired certificates, missing certification information, and conditional certificates; that four of Maryland's 24 LEAs accounted for seven of every ten classes taught by a non-HQT teacher; Six

of Maryland's 24 LEAs had more than 20 percent of their core academic subject classes taught by a non HQT teacher; English, math, science, and special education accounted for a significant share of non HQT classes; and Maryland had 241 schools in the School improvement continuum of which 163 (67.6 percent) of them were in the highest poverty quartile and none were in the lowest poverty quartile. In response to these findings, Maryland developed a strategic plan to decrease the number of classes not taught by an HQT teacher. These strategies included (but are not limited to) adding language and requirements for LEA plans to the Master Plan update, organizing a statewide HQT teacher consortium to evaluate and recommend action to MSDE on the status of meeting the HQT goal, expanding alternative preparation programs, developing and initiating middle school teacher preparation programs, using the Professional Development Schools Network to provide coursework that enabled conditional teachers to meet HQT, providing a statewide recruitment initiative, developing dual certification Institution of Higher Education (IHE) programs, providing mentor training, and obtaining resources and tools for enhanced data collection and analysis with the Educator Information System (EIS). These effective strategies led to an increase in the number of classes taught by HQT teachers over a ten year period (2004-2014) statewide. In 2004, only 75.4 percent of teachers statewide were HQT; by 2014 that number grew to 94.9 percent. All four of the concerning LEAs showed an increase in HQT teachers as well as an average increase for these four LEAs of 23 percentage points. It is on this successful work that Maryland is building the new plan.

Maryland's current plan provides statewide policy and practice changes to support LEAs as they further examine their equitable distribution gaps. The plan provides strategies to incentivize teachers, to collaborate with LEAs and with teacher preparation programs, to support current teachers with more individualized professional development, and to acknowledge the geographical, environmental, and institutional causes of attrition and address them through improvements in the quality of life for all teachers. As Maryland further develops the new State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators in partnership with its LEAs, it is expected that more specific and individualized strategies will be established.

Maryland defines an excellent educator as an educator who has been rated effective or highly effective by Maryland's high quality educator evaluation and support system. Educator evaluations are based on both professional practice and student growth. The purpose of educator evaluation is to provide more targeted and supportive professional development in a timely manner. In an analysis of Teacher/Principal Evaluation (TPE) ratings for the 2013-2014 school year of 43,805 teachers, 97 percent were highly effective (40.8 percent) or effective (56.4 percent). This plan will help to ensure high poverty and minority students have access to those teachers at the same rate or a higher rate as non-poor and non-minority students.

The graphic below offers a timeline of the work Maryland has done to demonstrate its continued commitment to ensuring equitable access to effective educators for all students:



* Each LEA is required to complete a Comprehensive Master Plan that outlines strategies for improving student achievement and eliminating achievement gaps. Each year, an update to the plan is submitted to MSDE and reviewed for sufficiency and to determine if progress is being made by the LEA. Each local plan is then submitted to the State Board for approval.

Section II: Stakeholder Engagement

When all ESEA Flexibility states originally received notice that their equity plans needed to be updated to specifically address equitable access for poor and minority students with regard to inexperienced, unqualified and out-of-field teachers, Maryland began with a review of the 2006 HQT Plan. In preparation for the equity requirements as identified in the ESEA Flexibility renewal guidance for the 2014-2015 school year, an ESEA equity subcommittee was formed in mid-2013. This subcommittee was chaired by the Assistant State Superintendent for the Division of Educator Effectiveness. This subcommittee included representatives from the Maryland State Education Association, the Baltimore Teachers Union, Principals from across the State, an LEA Deputy Superintendent, an LEA Deputy Chief Academic Officer, LEA Assistant Superintendent for Administration, teachers (including Maryland's teacher of the year), and staff from across various branches within MSDE including Title I, Student, Family, and School Support, and Teacher/Principal Evaluation Planning and Development. The subcommittee held at least two meetings before the guidance from USDE was changed (November 4 and 20, 2013) to review the previously existing documents and to develop recommendations and innovations for the renewal of the ESEA waiver in the area of equitable distribution. Breaking into smaller subgroups, the subcommittee determined which activities from the prior plan should be included, brainstormed additional strategies, addressed challenges, and developed a timeline. In their second meeting, the subcommittee reviewed current practices, determined areas for refinement, and prepared final recommendations for the larger ESEA Renewal Committee. Once the guidance for ESEA Extensions was issued, this subcommittee did not continue to meet in person; however, members of this subcommittee continued to be a part of the ESEA Renewal team and the External Equity Committee.

This ESEA Equity subcommittee submitted a report to the Chief Academic Officer and the Chief Performance Officer in December 2013. The report made recommendations around data collection and analysis, staffing of schools, rewards/stipends, and establishing professional learning communities around equitable distribution. The U.S. Department of Education revised the requirements from an ESEA Renewal to an ESEA Extension Request for the 2014-2015

school year and removed the equity plan requirement to be later added as a requirement for all states in the form of a State plan to ensure equitable access to excellent educators due by June 1, 2015. As Maryland began to develop this current plan for Ensuring Equitable Access to Excellent Educators, this group's recommendations were used to design the new plan and many members of the group were reconvened as part of the new extended group.

In the 2014-2015 school year, Maryland formed an internal committee from across the Department to gather and analyze the State data, to complete the root cause analysis, and to brainstorm strategies for addressing these causes. The internal group has generally met twice a month and has shared the draft plan with a number of stakeholders for feedback.

Outreach to stakeholders from this preliminary analysis included the State Superintendent and the Chief Academic Officer describing and discussing the draft plan with the LEA Superintendents at the Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland (PSSAM) meeting on June 5, 2015 and later requesting input by sharing an electronic copy of the draft plan.

At the May 19, 2015 State Board Meeting, Dr. Jack Smith, Chief Academic Officer, made a presentation on Maryland's State Plan for Ensuring Equitable Access to Excellent Educators. He described the process for developing the plan and for working with the LEAs. On June 8, 2015, the revised draft plan was shared electronically with the State Board and was posted on MSDE's website for public access and comment until June 19, 2015. No comments were received from the public posting of the plan. The plan was then returned to the State Board at their June 23, 2015 meeting to share comments and actions during the previous month and address any questions. The State Board approved Maryland's State Plan for Ensuring Equitable Access to Excellent Educators and approved the submission of the plan to the U.S. Department of Education on July 1, 2015. (Due to the loss of the April State Board Meeting, Dr. Lowery requested and received approval for the required date of submission for Maryland's plan to be extended to July 1, 2015.)

Members of the internal group brought the plan to multiple meetings with individual stakeholder groups including Title I Coordinators (May 12-13, 2015), Title I Community of Practioners (May 27, 2015), English Language Learner Advisory (May 1, 2015), Master Teacher Training (May 26, 2015 and June 2, 2015), Superintendent's Parental Engagement Council, described below, (June 3, 2015), and Special Education Advocates (June 5, 2015). All comments and recommendations from these meetings were reviewed by the internal Equity committee and revisions were made as appropriate.

Maryland believes that family engagement is essential to student success. Maryland's Title I team of specialists designed a workshop for school staff that provides them with an understanding of parent involvement research, an understanding of the demographics that makes up their school community and populations, (e.g., high poverty/high minority families), and strategies to increase engagement. Allowing teachers and staff to have this fundamental understanding of the community in which they work allows them to better connect to the students and their families.

Maryland expanded its outreach to stakeholder groups that represent parents and guardians. Requests for comments/input for *Maryland's Plan for Ensuring Equitable Access to Excellent Educators* was sent via e-mail to the following groups on May 5, 2015: Superintendent's Family Engagement Council; Maryland's Parent Involvement Matters Awards winners (parents representing all 24 local school systems), and LEA Family Involvement Coordinators. Additionally, a discussion of the Equity Plan was added to the agenda for the Superintendent's Parental Engagement Council on June 3, 2015.

In Maryland's general consultation with stakeholder groups, staff asked groups three questions:

1. Identify concerns about the access all students have to excellent educators

2. Share what you believe to be causes of any inequities in access to excellent educators
3. Determine what strategies you believe could help ensure that all students have equitable access to excellent educators

The feedback received from different stakeholder groups was relatively consistent. When asked to identify concerns about the access all students have to excellent educators, the stakeholders focused on whether it was fair to call one to two year teachers inexperienced because every teacher was inexperienced when first given a chance to teach; time does not make the teacher ineffective. Stakeholders raised a concern about the definitions (inexperienced/highly qualified) as they felt that they do not apply well to teachers who teach English Language Learners (ELLs) since most content teachers are not experienced to work with ELLs or qualified in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). Stakeholders also identified larger workloads in the highest poverty quartile schools without a pay scale that takes this into consideration, the challenges of terminating ineffective teachers, a technology divide in the highest and lowest poverty quartile schools, and the lack of professional development for professors in educator preparation programs also arose as factors that may affect why students have less access to excellent educators in the highest poverty quartile schools.

When educators were asked to share what they believed to be causes of any inequities in access to excellent educators, the responses were relatively consistent across stakeholder groups. Educators cited differences in resources, salaries, and mentor teachers in the highest vs. lowest poverty quartile schools, school systems geography (urban vs. rural), the lack of belief in the abilities of students who are impacted by poverty, institutional racism, teacher turnover, lack of sufficient preparation, the cultural diversity of the teacher workforce, and the lack of preparation in teacher preparation programs for the realities of teaching in the highest poverty quartile schools.

The final question asked of stakeholders was to identify what strategies they believed could help ensure that all students have equitable access to excellent educators. Some suggestions include: offering dual certification courses like ESOL & Early Childhood; infusing ESOL strategies into existing teacher preparation programs/courses; incorporating accountability measures for teacher preparation programs; applying sanctions for hiring out of field teachers; incorporating more bonuses and incentives for teachers staying in the highest poverty quartile schools which may include credits, not just financial bonuses; offering a differentiation in class sizes; revising the transfer policy; defining mentoring programs more clearly; and developing more professional development on differentiation of instruction.

As indicated above, and as the second part of the plan, individual meetings are being scheduled with LEAs to review their data, conduct the root cause analysis, identify individual strategies to address the gaps, and collect best practices. Individuals invited to the meetings are those identified by the local superintendents as appropriate to their team and organizational structure. The initial phase of meetings is scheduled to take place between June 17, 2015 and July 16, 2015. Information about the meetings that have taken place is included in the data analysis section of the plan.

All input received from stakeholder groups, local superintendents, posting of the plan, etc. were shared with the Equity Committee to be considered for revision of the plan, distributed to other Divisions for consideration and action, and shared with the LEAs for local action.

Future input will be integrated as part of Maryland's plan to review the equity data on an annual basis in conjunction with the Master Plan reviews. Each fall, teams from across the State which include State and LEA level educators, Special Education, ELL, and Title I specialists meet to review each LEA's Master Plan. In the past, data on the number of classes not taught by HQ teachers was part of the reporting requirements and was reviewed as part of the LEA's plan. Moving forward, the data and monitoring for all components of the Equity Plan will be added to the Master Plan. Additionally, MSDE will run data annually and share with the LEAs for analysis.

Maryland will continue to collaborate with LEAs and other stakeholders to monitor and support the progress of equity. The State Superintendent uses her weekly communication to the LEA Superintendents to highlight state educational issues, announcements, etc. and may use this as a vehicle for communicating changes in the data and successful strategies around equity. Further consultation and outreach strategies are included in the plan.

Section III: Equity Gaps

Maryland's Key Definitions:

- *Inexperienced teachers*
  - Inexperienced teachers in the first year includes teachers with a year of experience or less.
  - Inexperienced teachers 1-3 years includes teachers with one to three years of experience.
- *Unqualified teachers*- Teachers that are not certified or have a provisional/conditional certificate
- *Certified teachers*- Teachers holding a certification other than a Conditional Certification or a Provisional Certification. These certifications are Professional Eligibility Certificate (PEC), Standard Professional I Certificate (SCPI), Advanced Professional Certificate (APC), or Resident Teacher Certificate (RTC)
- *Out of field teachers*- Teachers teaching in a subject they are not certified to teach.
- *Poor students* – Maryland uses the Free and Reduced Price Meal (FARMS) data and ranks the schools based on the percentage of those students within each school in MD from low to high. Each school is designated as either an elementary or secondary school. One calculation includes all elementary schools in the state and the other includes all the secondary schools in the state. The quartiles are determined as two distinct calculations. Quartiles are assigned with the 1st quartile being lowest poverty (non-poor) and the 4th quartile being highest poverty (poor). Each quartile contains the elementary schools in that quartile and the secondary schools in that quartile.
- *Minority students*- Maryland defines minority students as those in all racial categories with the exception of white, to include: Hispanic/Latino of any race, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and Two or more Races. Quartiles are assigned with the 1st quartile being low minority and the 4th quartile being high minority.
- *Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) (general definition)* - All teachers teaching in any core academic subject area (including early childhood and elementary) must:

- Hold at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education (IHE);
- Hold a valid Standard Professional Certificate or Advanced Professional Certificate or Resident Teacher Certificate in the subject area they are teaching; and
- Satisfy the requirements associated with specific teaching levels (early childhood and middle or secondary)

- *Core Academic Classes* - a core academic subject is one where students receive core content credit and includes English, reading or language arts, math, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history and geography.
- *All HTQ and Non HQT (NHQT) Classes* – Includes all core academic classes in either poor, non-poor, minority, or non-minority schools that are taught by HQT or Non HQT teachers.
- *All Teachers* – Includes all teachers in either poor, non-poor, minority, or non-minority schools.
- *Excellent Educator*- For the purpose of equity, teachers who receive a rating of effective or highly effective on a 3 scale rating.
- *Effective Educator*- An educator who is deemed successful by a State approved local evaluation model.
- *Highly Effective Educator*- An educator who is deemed exceptional by a State approved local evaluation model.
- *Ineffective Educator*- An educator who is deemed unsuccessful by a State approved local evaluation model.

Data Sources:

The collection of staff data by MSDE is authorized under Section 2-205 and 5-109 of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR). This data has traditionally been used to monitor compliance with federal and state law, respond to federal reporting requests, respond to state legislative and State Board of Education requests, produce

annual statewide staff reports, determine funding allocations by the state and LEAs, and provide information for designing research and staff development.

Each school year, the 24 LEAs in Maryland submit a report, through the Master Plan, to MSDE containing data on staff members actively employed, as well as staff who separated during the reporting period. Based on the data received, MSDE prints summary information in various MSDE publications, including: (1) Analysis of Professional Salaries; (2) Staff Employed at School and Central Office Levels; (3) Professional Staff by Type of Degree and Years of Experience; and (4) Professional Staff by Assignment, Race/Ethnicity and Gender. These four reports are posted on the MSDE web site (www.marylandpublicschools.org).

Also, LEAs in Maryland are required to submit a data file to MSDE that contains class level counts of the number of students being instructed in core academic subjects, as well as information on the teacher that instructs each class.

The collection of class level membership data by MSDE is authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 2001, No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The data are used to conform to the federal reporting requirement of the percentage of classes not receiving instruction by highly qualified teachers in the elementary low and high poverty quartile and the secondary low and high poverty quartile. Calculations are made for the state and local report cards. The information may also be used to calculate average class size and student/teacher ratios.

Additionally, Maryland collects and publicly reports data on student achievement annually for the "all students" group, each subgroup described in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II), and for any combined subgroup information on student achievement at each proficiency level; data comparing actual achievement levels to the State's annual measurable objectives; the percentage of students not tested; performance on the other academic indicators for elementary and middle schools; and graduation rates for high schools.

In April 2015, using the most recent data (from the 2013-2014 school year), Maryland staff ran an analysis of the following categories:

- poor students being taught by inexperienced teachers v. non-poor students being taught by inexperienced teachers;
- poor students being taught by unqualified teachers v. non-poor students being taught by unqualified teachers;
- poor students being taught by out of field teachers v. non-poor students being taught by out of field teachers ;
- number of classes taught by non-highly qualified teachers in high poverty v. low poverty schools;
- minority students being taught by inexperienced teachers v. non-minority students being taught by inexperienced teachers;
- minority students being taught by unqualified teachers v. non-minority students being taught by unqualified teachers;
- minority students being taught by out of field teachers v. non-minority students being taught by out of field teachers; and
- number of classes taught by non-highly qualified teachers in high minority v. low minority schools.

Maryland determined the quartiles statewide. Since the quartiles were determined using all schools, it is important to note that an LEA may not have schools in each of the quartiles and specifically for this report may not have schools in the highest or lowest quartile (all schools may be in the middle two quartiles). However, if there were no schools in the non-poor lowest quartile or the non-minority lowest quartile, and there were schools in the highest poverty and/or highest minority quartiles, Maryland determined a gap based on the data in the highest poverty or highest minority quartile. All data is provided at the end of this document in Attachment I. Maryland added the ability to look at trends by also running the 2011-2012, and 2012-2013 data.

Normal Distribution of Quartiles

The distributions of data on poor and minority students were examined and, while not conforming to a normal distribution based on the Shapiro-Wilk test, using quartiles still appeared to be an appropriate way to define the high and low groups. (The Shapiro-Wilk is a statistical test that utilizes the null hypothesis principle to check whether a sample came from a normally distributed population. The Shapiro-Wilk test calculates a W statistic that tests whether a random sample, x1,x2,…,xn comes from (specifically) a normal distribution. Small values of W are evidence of departure from normality.) By definition, any distribution of scores along a continuum arranged in ascending order can be divided into quartiles.

For poverty, the data were reviewed separately for elementary and secondary schools. In both cases, the mean and median values for poverty percentage were very close (elementary n = 935, mean = .518676, median = .519459; secondary n = 479, mean = .417015, median = .395699). For minority, which was reviewed overall at the state level, the n of 1414 yielded a mean of .593306 and a median of .606318. The fact that the mean and median are very close in each case leads us to believe that there is indeed some type of symmetry in the overall distribution.

Additionally, since poverty is determined using FARMS data, as explained in the definition, alternative schools and non-traditional schools that do not serve meals and therefore do not have FARMS data, may be misrepresented and count as non-poor schools. Upon analysis that a school in this category was an alternative school and was landing in the category because of a null value, Maryland eliminated these schools to appropriately measure the gap. This was specific to Wicomico County which had an evening school with a null value as its only school in the lowest poverty quartile (non-poor) and Baltimore City which had one school with no data in its lowest poverty quartile (non-poor). Maryland removed those two schools in order to not mask the actual gaps in these two LEAs. Maryland will consider alternative definitions for measuring poverty and determine if there are other discrepancies as the State continues to improve and refine its plan. As demographics within the State continue to change, it will also

be necessary to review the measures used to identify highest poverty quartile and highest minority quartile schools.

Below are the 25th, 50th, and 75th percentiles for Elementary and Secondary poverty percentage and for minority percentage:

	25th percentile	50th percentile	75th percentile
Elementary Poverty	27.4131270%	51.9458540%	76.5853660%
Secondary Poverty	21.0116730%	39.5698920%	60.4489160%
Minority	29.5003788%	60.6318044%	93.3200580%

High Poverty/Minority values are defined as anything at or above the 75th percentile (the upper quartile) and Low Poverty/Minority values are defined as anything at or below the 25th percentile (the lower quartile).

Through stakeholder collaboration Maryland determined that any difference equal to or greater than five percent would be identified as a significant gap and will be addressed in the equity plan. The determination of five percent as significant is an indication of Maryland's commitment to provide equitable access to excellent educators for all students regardless of family income or race.

Maryland has included all of the data mentioned above, but would like to clarify that although LEAs have received all of their data, they are just in the process of studying this data independently. As part of Maryland's plan, all LEAs will be involved in the determination of what the data means to each of their individual systems. Specifically, members of the MSDE Equity Team will meet with identified LEAs to review and analyze data and determine strategies to address any inequities. This collaboration with the LEAs will focus on the factors that impact teaching and learning.

Additional or Expected Improvements in Future Data

Our relatively new Student-Course-Grade-Teacher data collection is collecting far more data that can be used to evaluate teachers, including course specific data with student grade information. Combined with the Teacher Principal Effectiveness data that is now being collected, the evaluation of teachers in the future can be far more robust.

Analysis of the Data from the State Perspective

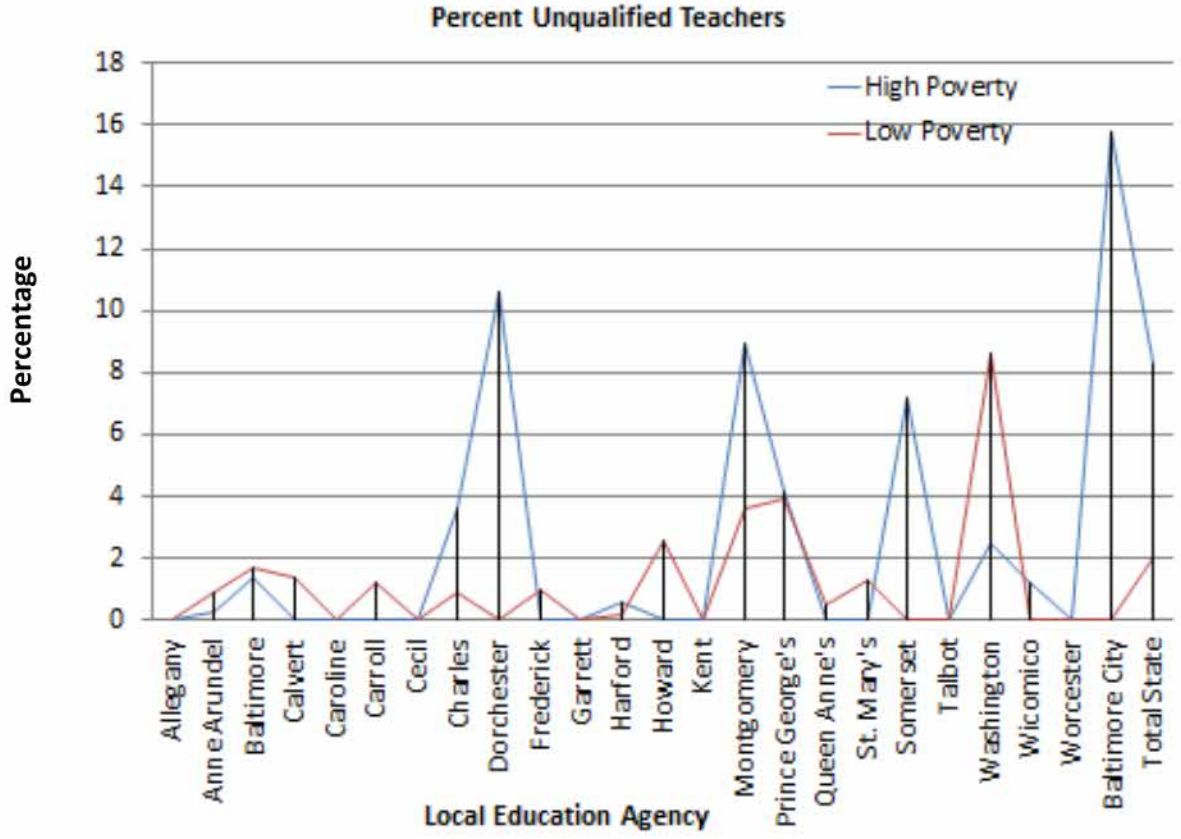
As mentioned above, the data was reviewed in two parts. The first part is from the State perspective. The MSDE Equity team reviewed the data across the State to identify gaps in uncertified, out-of-field, and inexperienced teachers in the highest poverty and highest minority quartile schools. They also reviewed the data for classes not taught by HQT teachers. An analysis of gaps in each category is below, but first it is important to note some successes evident in the data. Specifically:

- Thirteen LEAs, with schools in the highest poverty quartile, did not have any gaps in unqualified teachers (Seven LEAs have no schools in the highest poverty quartile).
- Four LEAs with schools in the highest poverty quartile and the State did not have any gaps in the percent of first year teachers teaching in these schools and three LEAs had no gap when the data was reviewed for first through third year teachers in the highest poverty quartile schools.
- Nine LEAs with schools in the highest poverty quartile and the State displayed no significant gaps in the percent of classes taught by out-of-field teachers.
- Fourteen LEAs with schools in the highest poverty quartile did not have a gap in the percent of classes not taught by an HQT teacher.
- Five LEAs, with schools in the highest minority quartile, did not have any gaps in unqualified teachers (18 LEAs have no schools in the highest minority quartile).
- Two LEAs with schools in the highest minority quartile and the State did not have any gaps in the percent of first year teachers teaching in these schools.
- Three LEAs with schools in the highest minority quartile and the State displayed no significant gaps in the percent of classes taught by out-of-field teachers.

- Three LEAs with schools in the highest minority quartile did not have a gap in the percent of classes not taught by an HQT teacher.

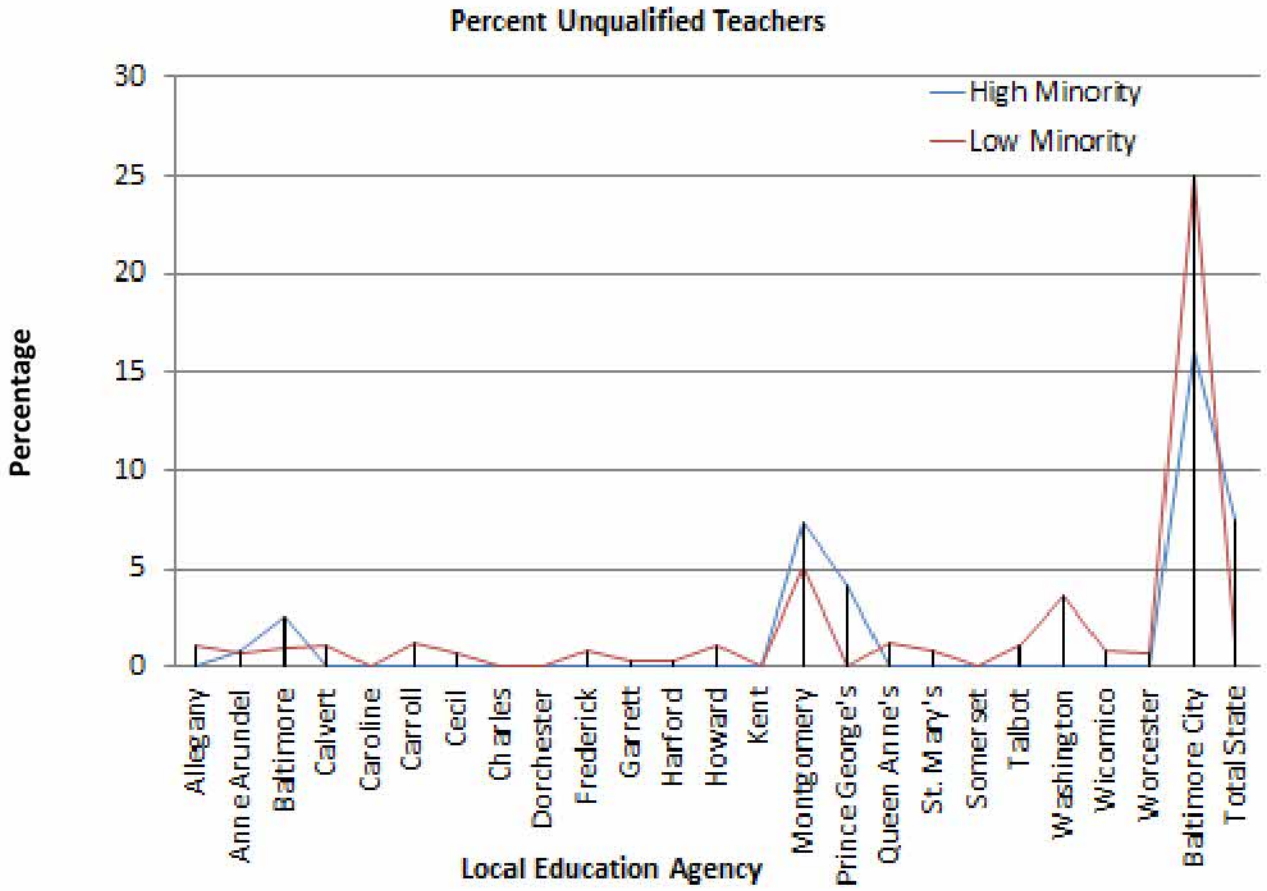
Unqualified Teachers in the Highest v. Lowest Poverty Quartile Schools

The data analysis revealed gaps in each category for specific LEAs. In LEAs with schools in the highest poverty quartile, four LEAs were determined to have gaps in the number of unqualified teachers. The largest gaps are in Dorchester (10.6 percent), Montgomery (5.3 percent), Somerset (7.2 percent), and Baltimore City (15.8 percent). The gap statewide is 6.3 percent.



Unqualified Teachers in the Highest v. Lowest Minority Quartile Schools

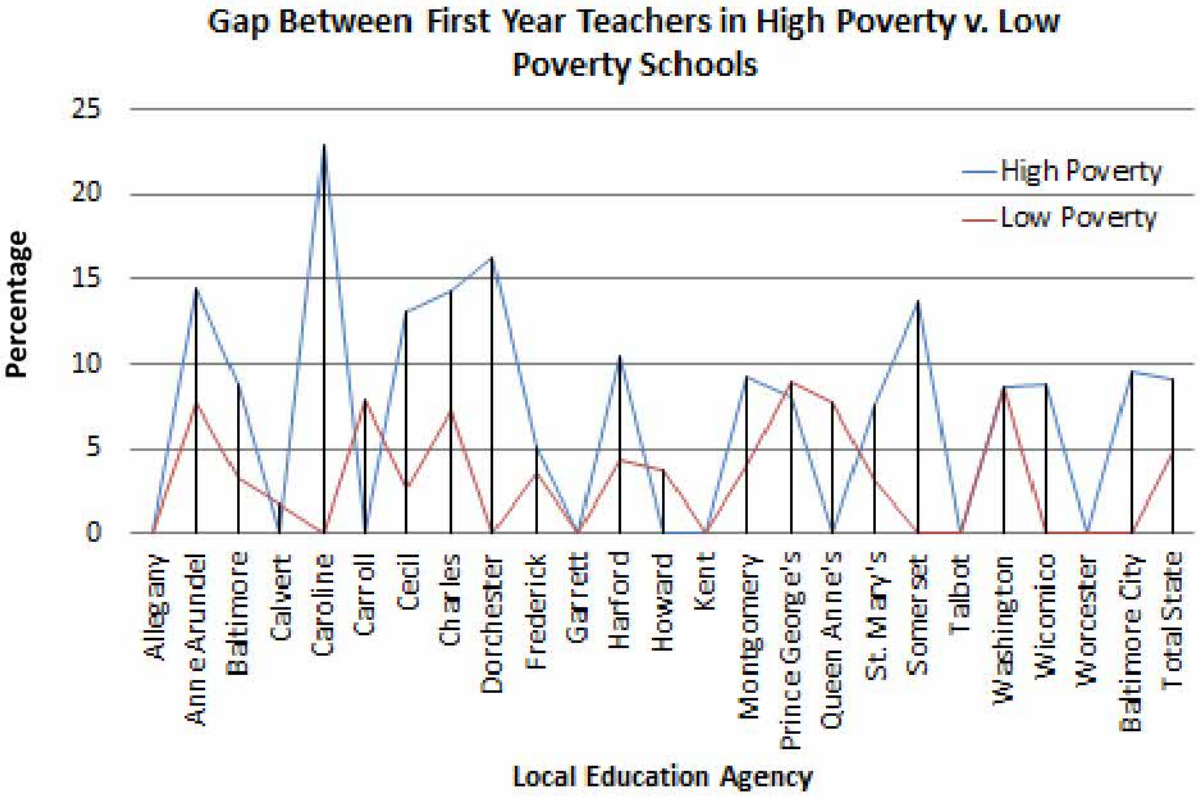
For minority students the gaps were much smaller, no LEA noted a gap in minority students being taught by unqualified teachers. The statewide gap is 6.3 percent thus Maryland will address this at the state level. There is one caveat to this data. Baltimore City is a majority minority school system. The majority of the schools in the LEA are fully minority. In the LEA there is one school that would not be considered a minority majority and is in the lowest minority quartile in the State. This one school has a high percentage of unqualified teachers (25 percent) and that number is masking the also high percentage of high minority quartile schools with unqualified teachers (16.1 percent). Although this data does not identify a gap, Maryland acknowledges that this is a particularly high percentage of students in the highest minority quartile being taught by unqualified teachers and will discuss with the LEA for unqualified teachers in the plan.



Inexperienced Teachers (First Year) in the Highest v. Lowest Poverty Quartile Schools

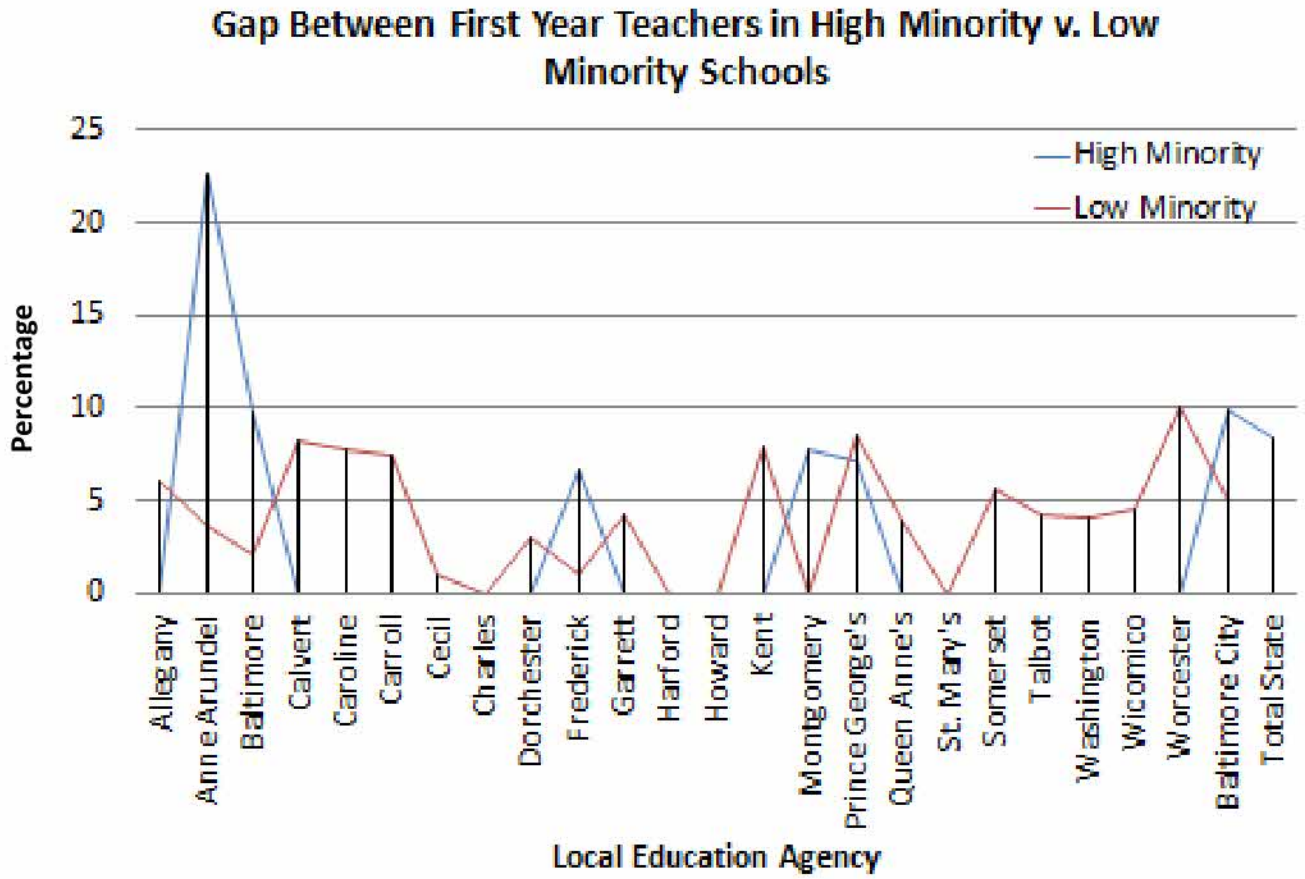
In terms of experience, Maryland looked at teachers in their first year of teaching and those in their first through third year of teaching. As stated in the Frequently Asked Questions document published by USED (April 10, 2015), the Department encourages states to define "inexperienced" educators as those educators who are in their first year of practice because research demonstrates that the greatest increase in educator effectiveness occurs after one year on the job (Question A-2). However, Maryland has traditionally defined inexperienced as teachers in the first through third year of teaching, and therefore both are included in the report.

Eleven LEAs had significant gaps in the number of first year teachers in the highest poverty quartile schools as opposed to the lowest poverty quartile schools. Those LEAs are as follows: Anne Arundel (6.7 percent), Baltimore County (5.3 percent), Caroline (22.9 percent), Cecil (10.4 percent), Charles (7 percent), Dorchester (16.3 percent), Harford, (6.1 percent), Montgomery (5.1 percent), Somerset (13.6 percent), Wicomico (8.8), and Baltimore City (9.6 percent).



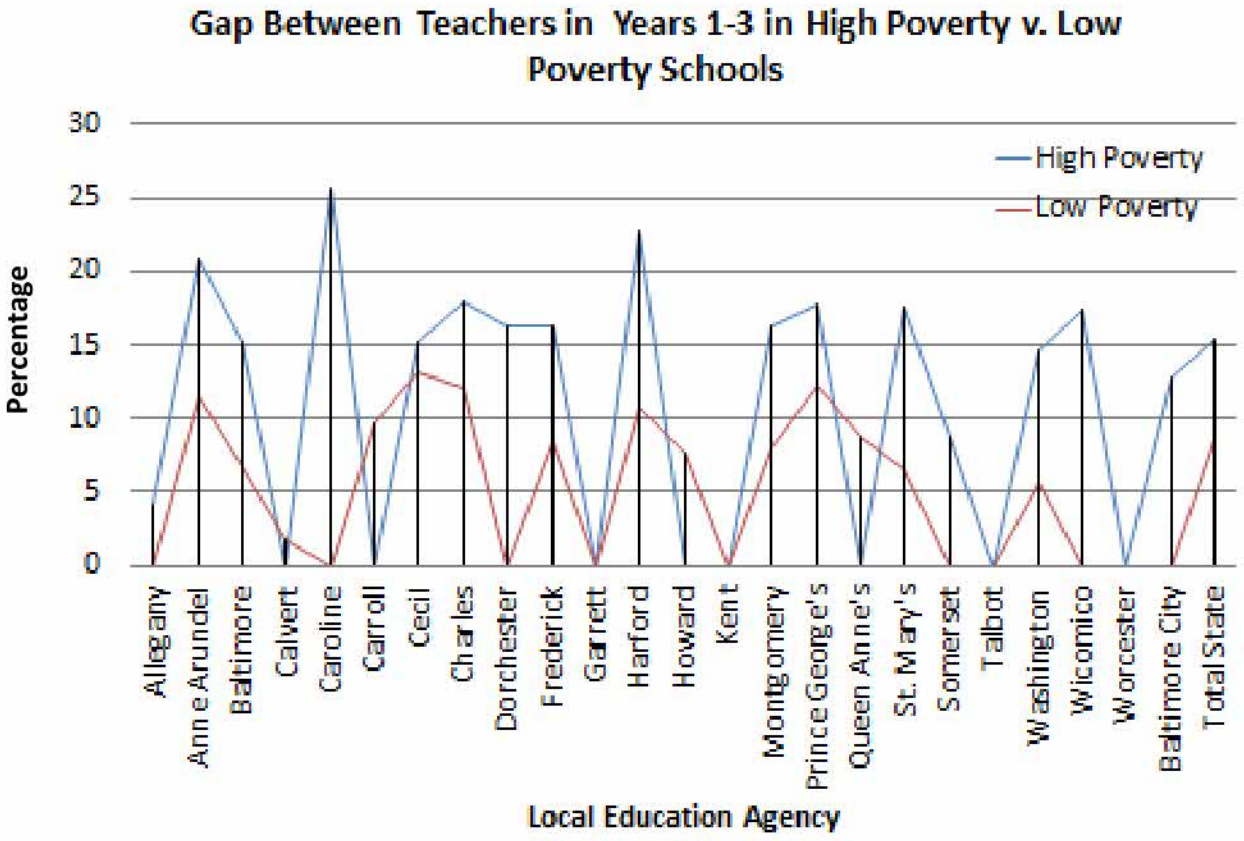
Inexperienced Teachers (First Year) in the Highest v. Lowest Minority Quartile Schools

When analyzing the data for gaps for students in the highest minority quartile schools being taught by first year teachers as opposed to their peers in the lowest quartile minority schools, Maryland found fewer significant gaps. Three LEAs, Anne Arundel (16.5 percent), Baltimore County (6 percent), and Prince George's (7.2 percent) demonstrated gaps.



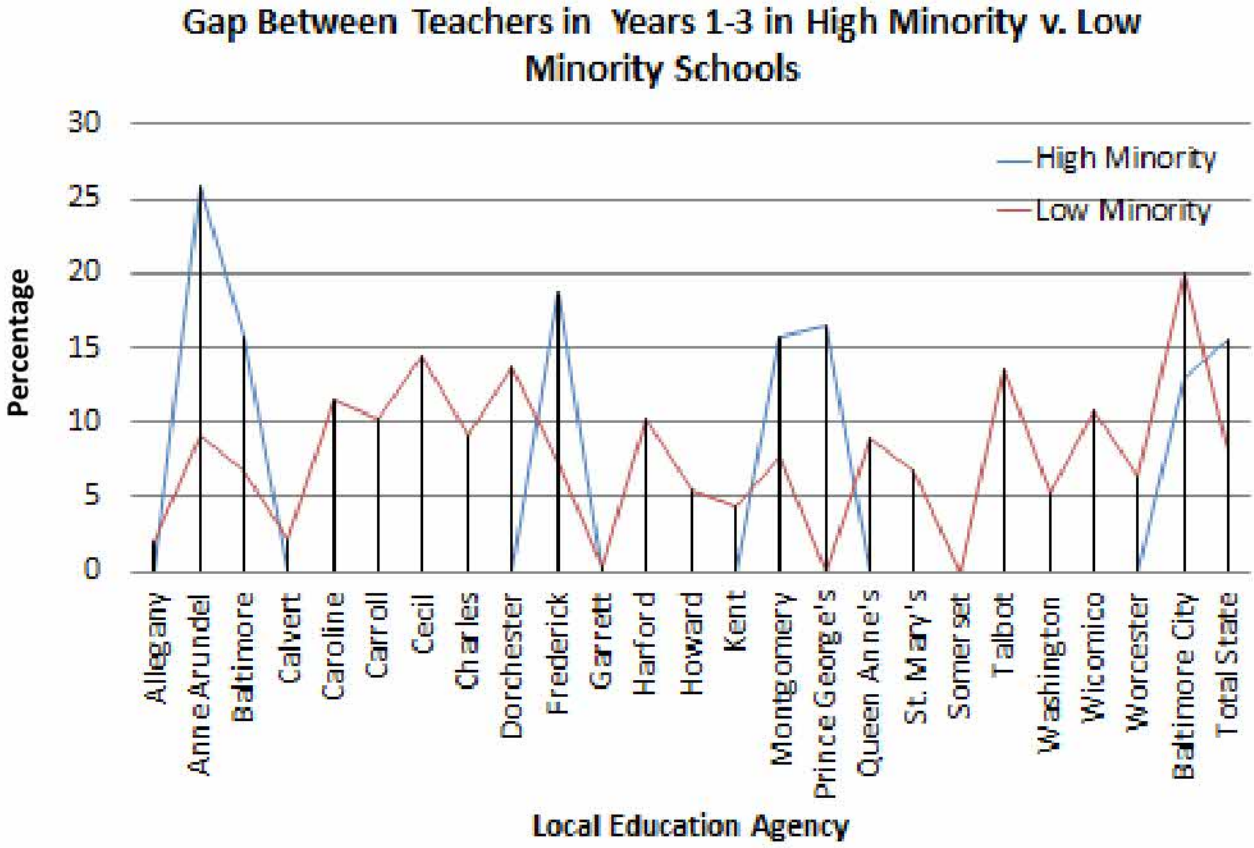
Inexperienced Teachers (First through Third Year) in the Highest v. Lowest Poverty Quartile Schools

As mentioned above, Maryland also analyzed the data to determine gaps between students in the highest poverty quartile schools and highest minority quartile schools being taught by teachers in their first through third year of teaching. The gaps here were significant. Thirteen LEAs and the state (6.8 percent) all have significant gaps in this area for poverty. Those LEAs are as follows: Anne Arundel (9.4 percent), Baltimore County (8.5 percent), Caroline (25.7 percent), Charles (5.9 percent), Dorchester (16.3 percent), Frederick (7.9 percent), Harford, (12.1 percent), Montgomery (8.3 percent), St. Mary's (11.5 percent), Somerset (8.8 percent), Washington (9 percent), Wicomico (17.3 percent), and Baltimore City (12.8 percent).



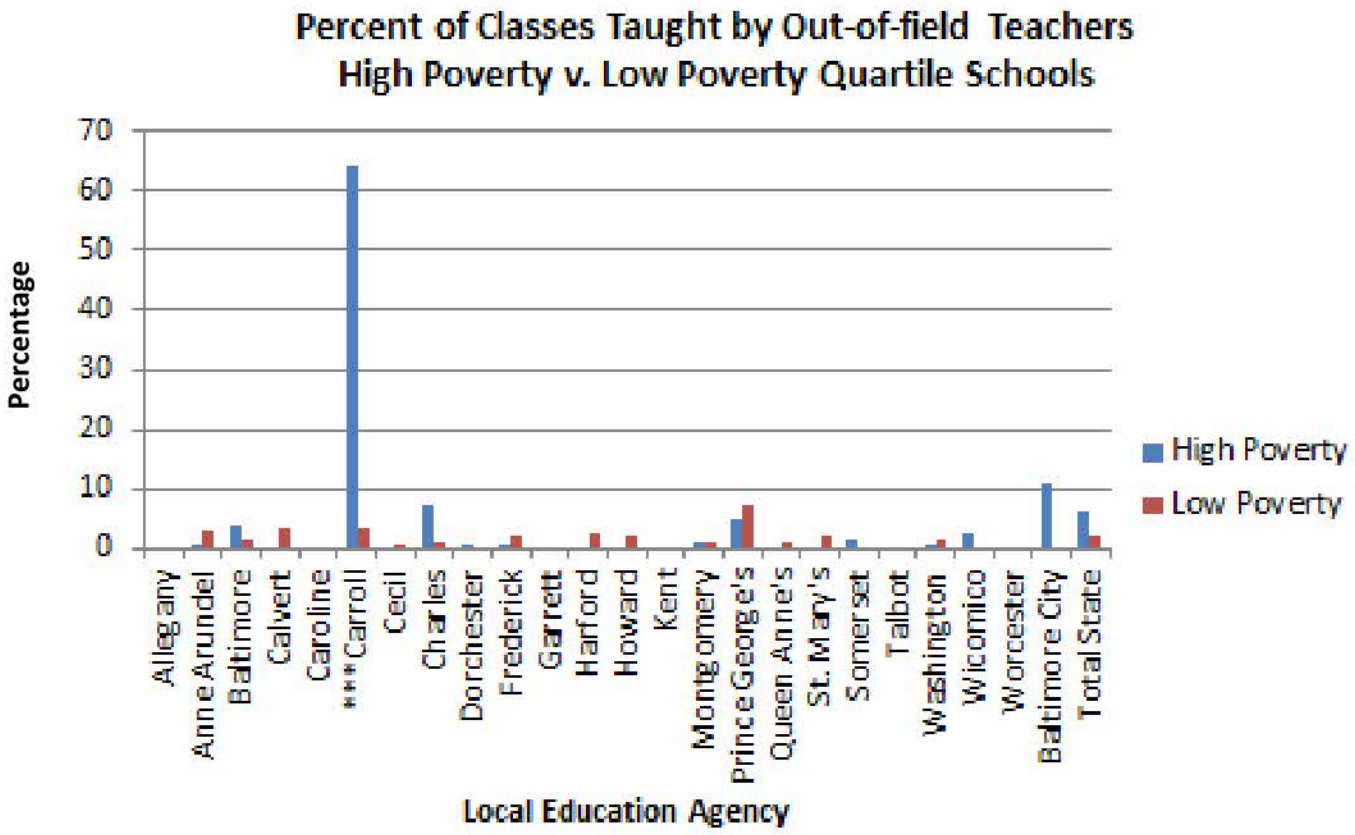
Inexperienced Teachers (First through Third Year) in the Highest v. Lowest Minority Quartile Schools

When the data was analyzed for gaps in the highest v lowest minority quartile schools for teachers in their first through third years, five LEAs and the State (7.4 percent) demonstrated a significant gap. Those LEAs are Anne Arundel (16.7 percent), Baltimore County (9 percent), Frederick (11.4 percent), Montgomery (8.2 percent), and Prince George's (16.4 percent).



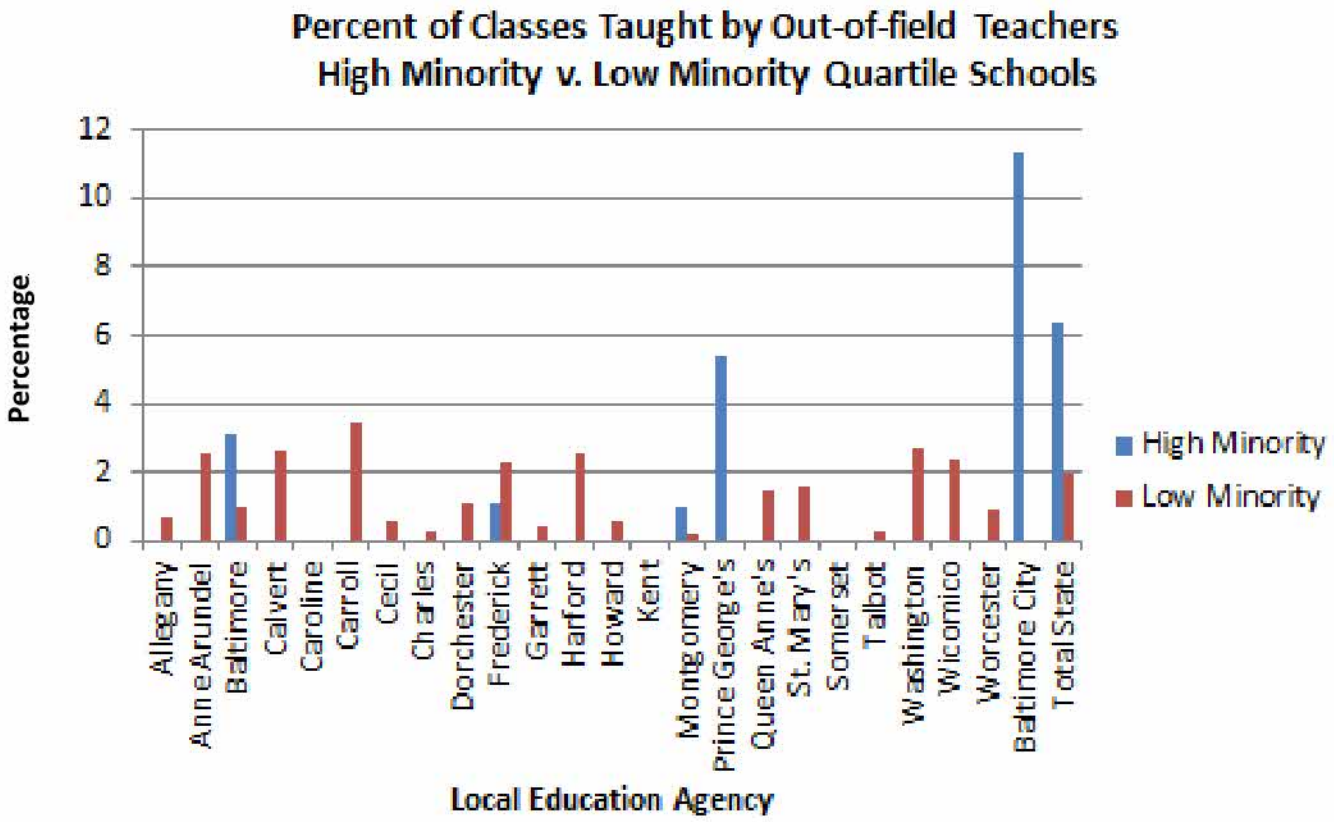
Out-of-Field Teachers in the Highest v. Lowest Poverty Quartile Schools

The data for teachers teaching out-of-field in the highest poverty quartile schools showed three LEAs with significant gaps. Carroll County demonstrated a gap of 60.9 percent. ***There was only one high poverty school in Carroll County, which is an alternative school. The school only had four teachers (3.6 FTE's) and two aides in 2014. It also started with 8 students in 9/30 enrollment and ended with 23 in June Net Roll as there were transfers in during the year. The alternative setting and small teacher population is why teachers were teaching multiple subjects in different fields and is why that number is so high. Charles County had a 6 percent gap and Baltimore City demonstrated a 10.8 percent gap.



Out-of-Field Teachers in the Highest v. Lowest Minority Quartile Schools

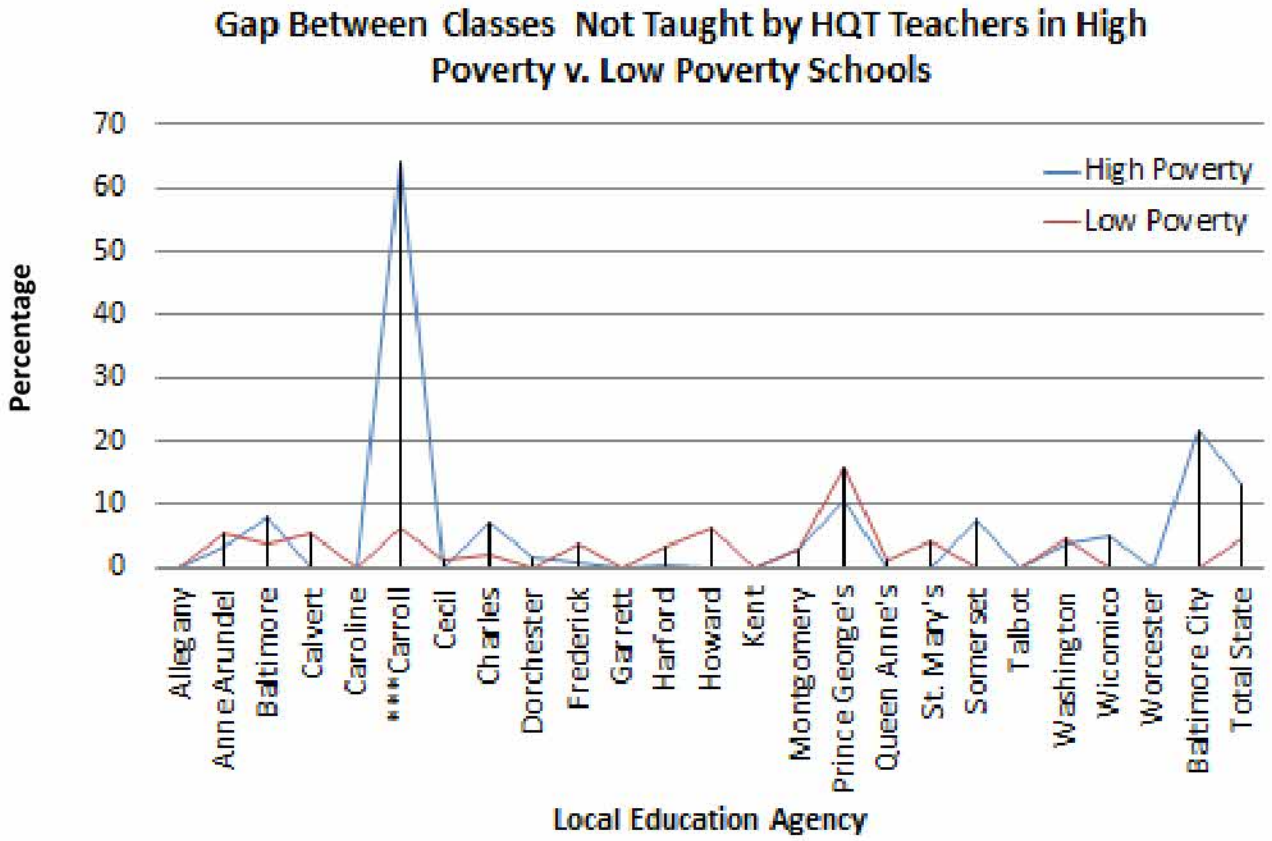
The analysis of out-of-field teachers in the highest minority quartile schools as opposed to the lowest minority quartile schools also displayed only two gaps. Prince George's has a 5.4 percentage point gap and Baltimore City has an 11.3 percentage point gap.



Classes Taught by Not-Highly Qualified Teachers in the Highest v. Lowest Poverty Quartile Schools

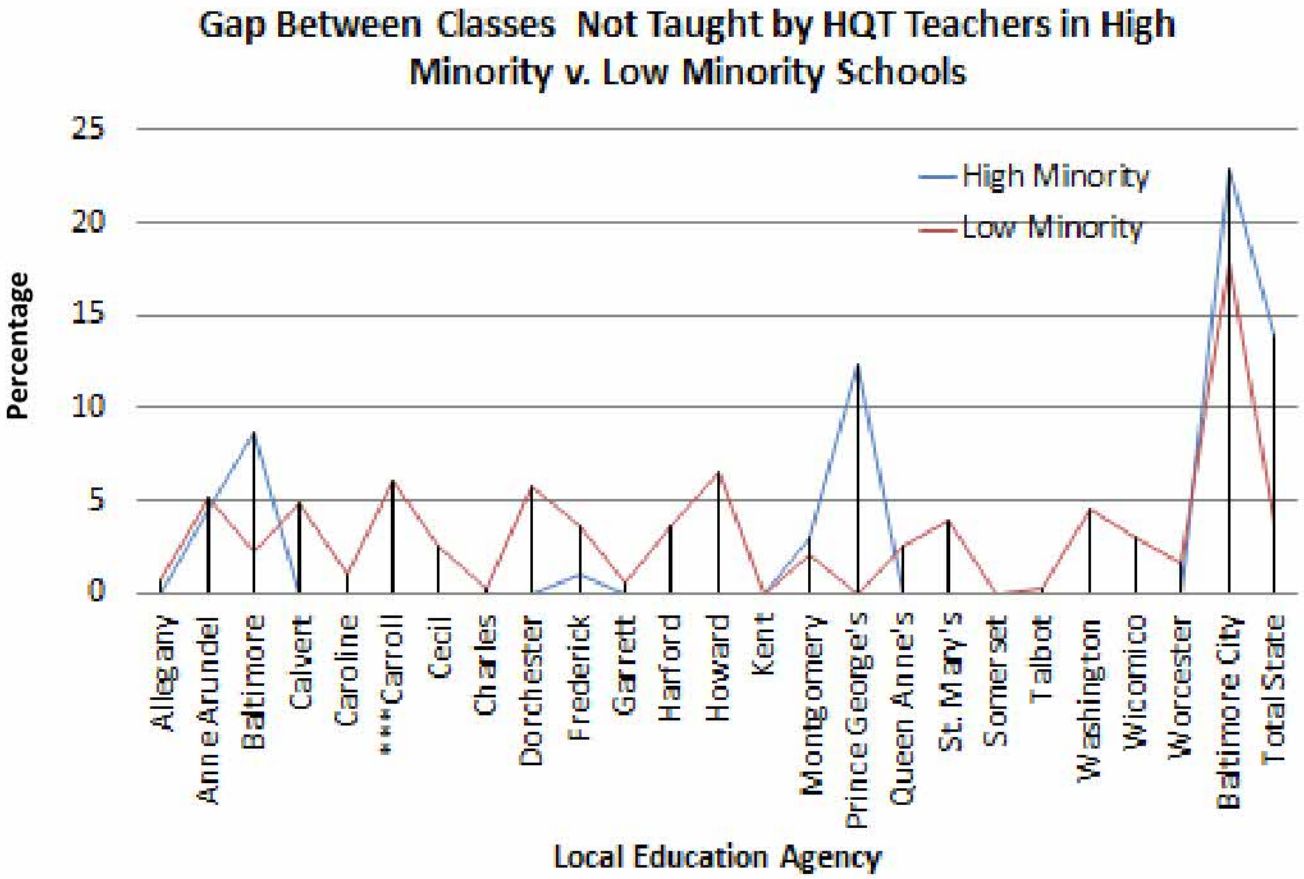
As aforementioned, Maryland has traditionally examined the number of classes in each LEA not taught by teachers who are highly qualified. In order to provide consistency and continuity of data collections, Maryland reviewed this data as part of the access to excellent educators gap identifications.

In the highest poverty quartile schools, three LEAs, Carroll (58.2 percent), Somerset (7.6 percent), Baltimore City (21.8 percent) and the State overall (8.8 percent), demonstrated significant gaps in the percent of classes not being taught by highly qualified teachers. ***There was only one high poverty school in Carroll County, which is an alternative school. The school only had four teachers (3.6 FTE's) and two aides in 2014. It also started with 8 students in 9/30 enrollment and ended with 23 in June Net Roll as there were transfers in during the year. The alternative setting and small teacher population is why teachers were teaching multiple subjects in different fields and is why that number is so high.



Classes Taught by Not-Highly Qualified Teachers in the Highest v. Lowest Minority Quartile Schools

The analysis of classes not taught by highly qualified teachers in the highest minority quartile schools as opposed to the lowest minority quartile revealed gaps in three LEAs and the State. Those LEAs are Baltimore County (6.4 percent), Prince George's (12.3 percent), and Baltimore City (5 percent). The gap statewide is 10.1 percent.



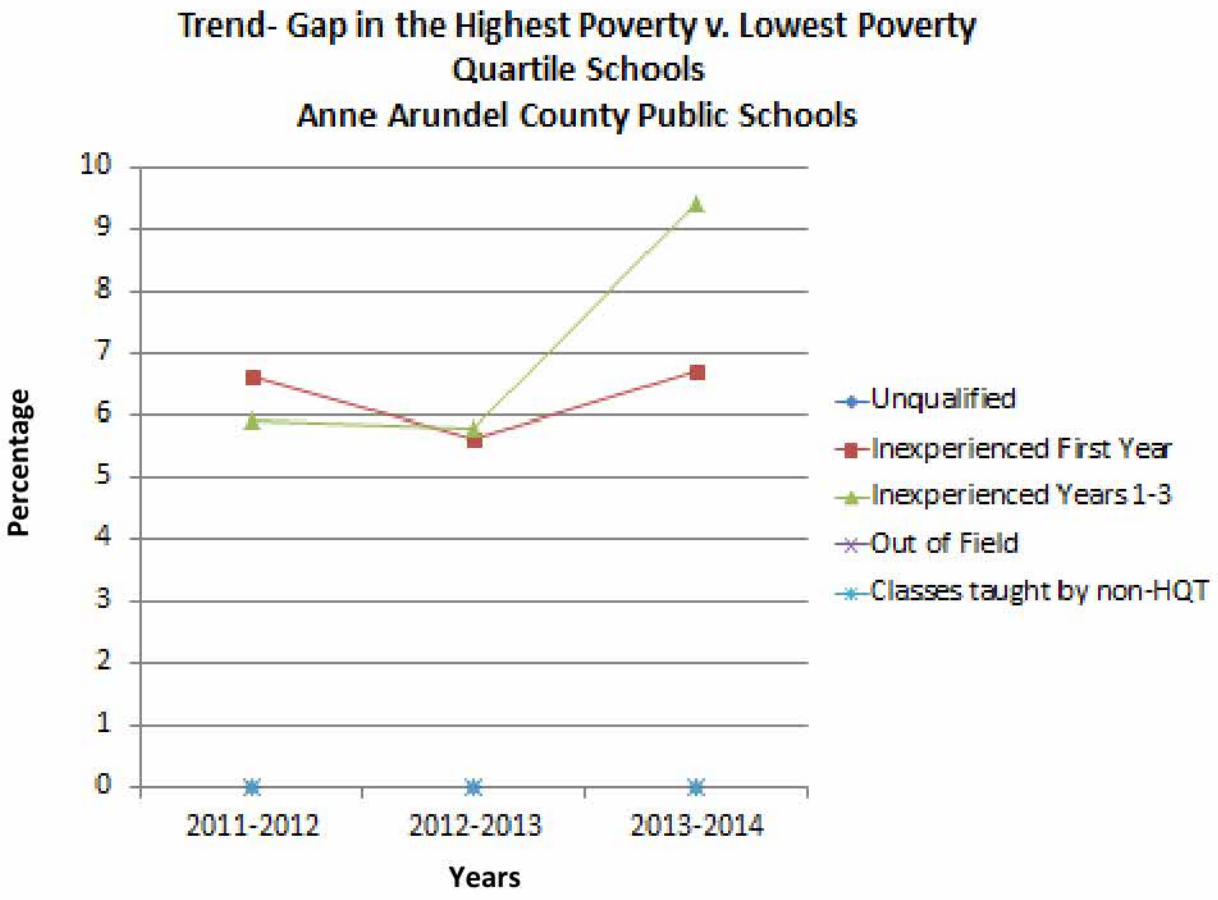
Trend Data for Identified LEAs

After reviewing the most recent data (SY 2013-2014) as described above, Maryland determined that eight LEAs have no gaps based on the measure of more than or equal to five percent in unqualified, inexperienced (first year or one to three years), out-of-field, or the percent of classes not taught by HQT teachers. MSDE staff ran trend data for the six LEAs with multiple gaps greater than or equal to five percent and for the State as a whole for the past three years (2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014) to determine the trend and extent of the gap. The trend analysis by LEA is below. These trends will be reviewed and a deeper analysis will be done with each LEA to confirm and/or review specific root causes and match them with appropriate strategies. MSDE will also capture best practices which will be shared with all LEAs. MSDE has reached out to the six LEAs with meetings scheduled in June and July 2015. Further meetings will be scheduled as needed.

More information will be added to this section as the Equity Team meets with the individual LEAs.

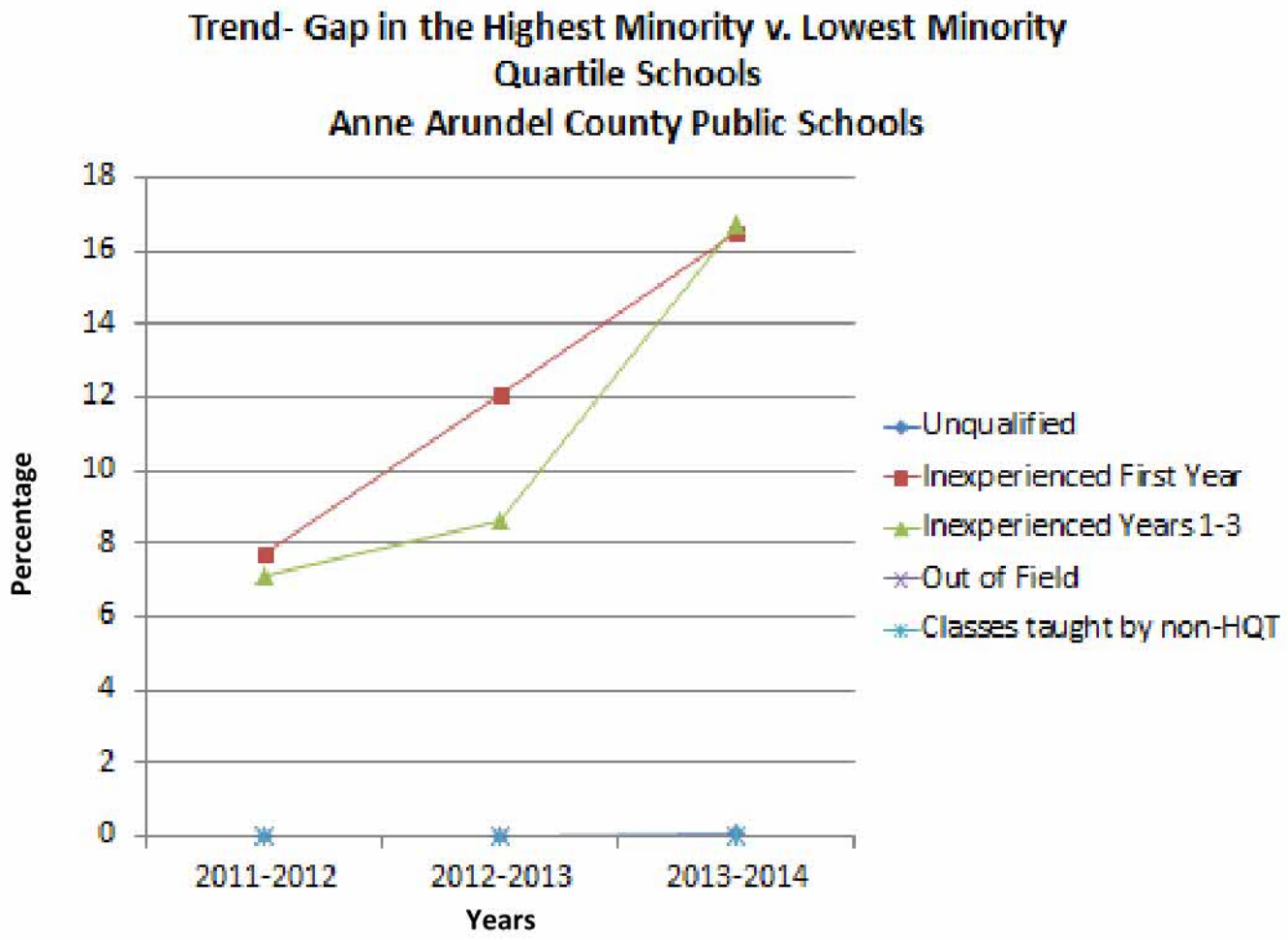
Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS)- Highest v. Lowest Poverty Quartile Schools

Located in the Baltimore Metropolitan Region, Anne Arundel County enrolled 78, 489 students in SY 2013-2014. As detailed in the graph below, the trend analysis in the highest poverty v lowest poverty quartile schools revealed gaps in the number of inexperienced teachers in both the first year and the first through third year of teaching in the highest poverty quartile schools.



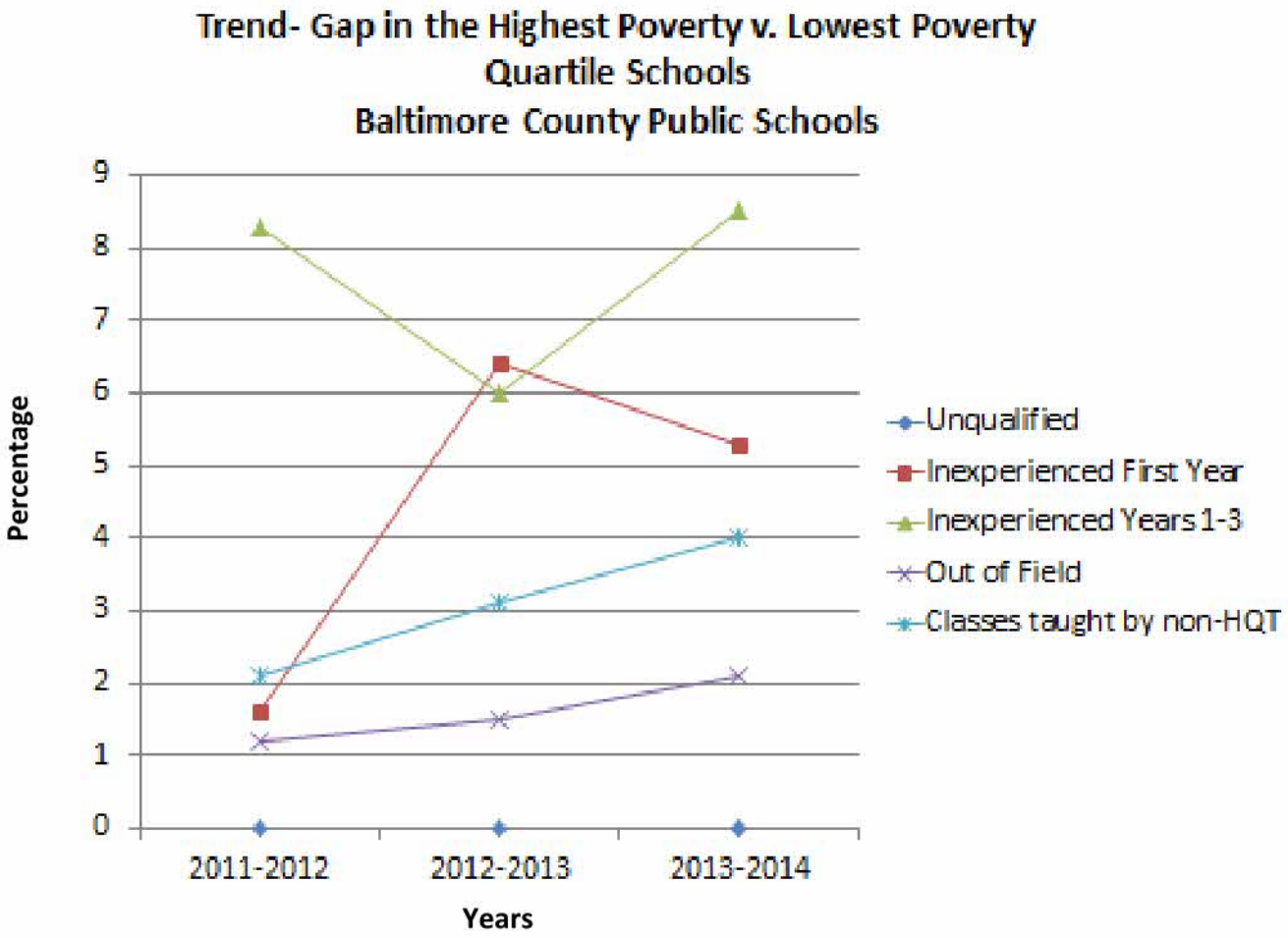
Anne Arundel County Public Schools - Highest v. Lowest Minority Quartile Schools

A review of the data in the highest minority v lowest minority quartile schools in Anne Arundel County revealed similar gaps. The gap between teachers with both more than one year of experience and one to three years of experience is growing larger. Students in the highest minority quartile schools are much more likely to have an inexperienced teacher.



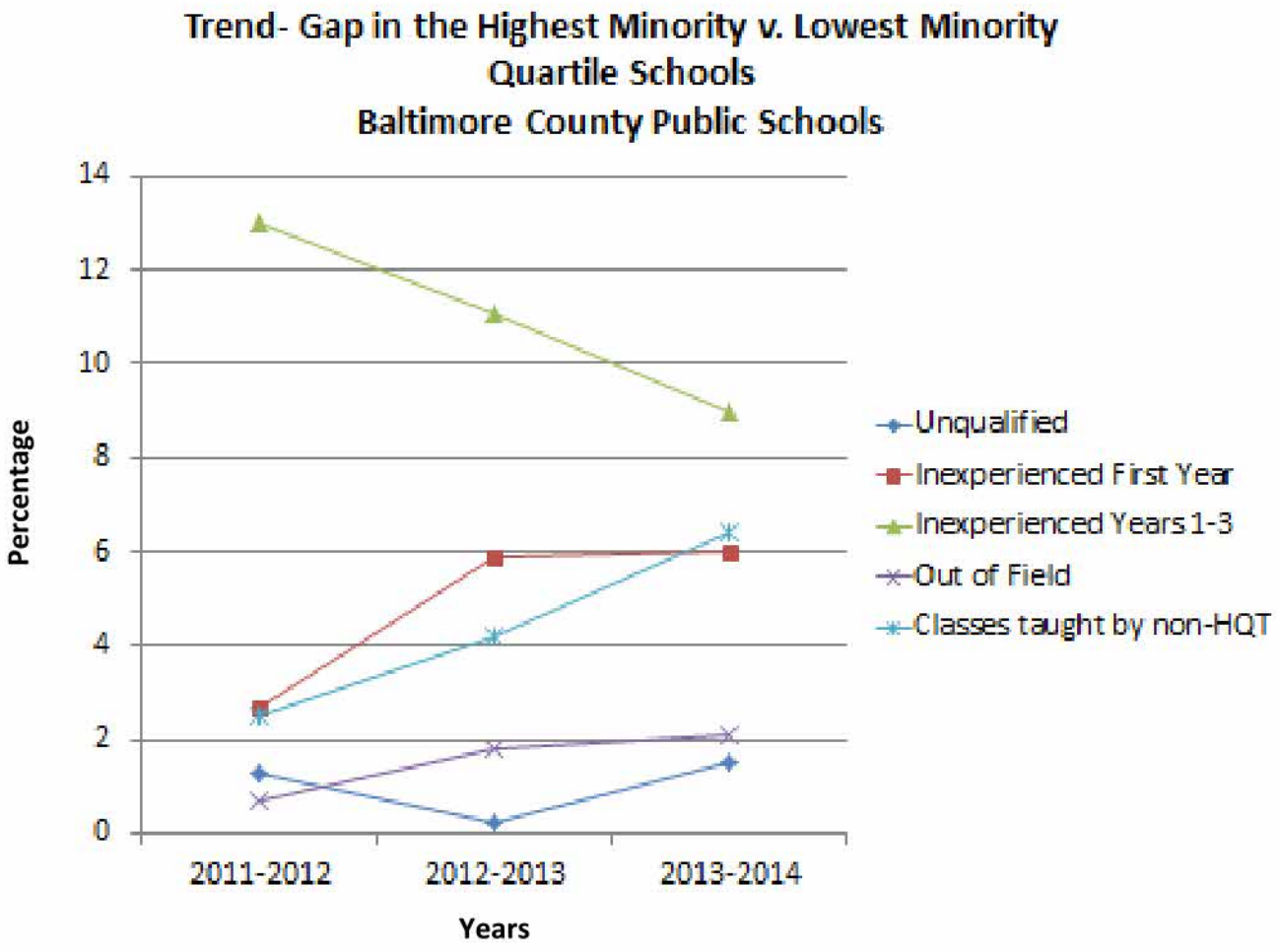
Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS)- Highest v. Lowest Poverty Quartile Schools

Baltimore County is also part of the Baltimore Metropolitan Region. The county enrolled 108,191 students in school year 2013-2014. A review of the data showed gaps in inexperienced, both first and first through third year teachers and the number of classes taught by a not highly qualified teacher between the highest poverty v. lowest poverty quartile schools.



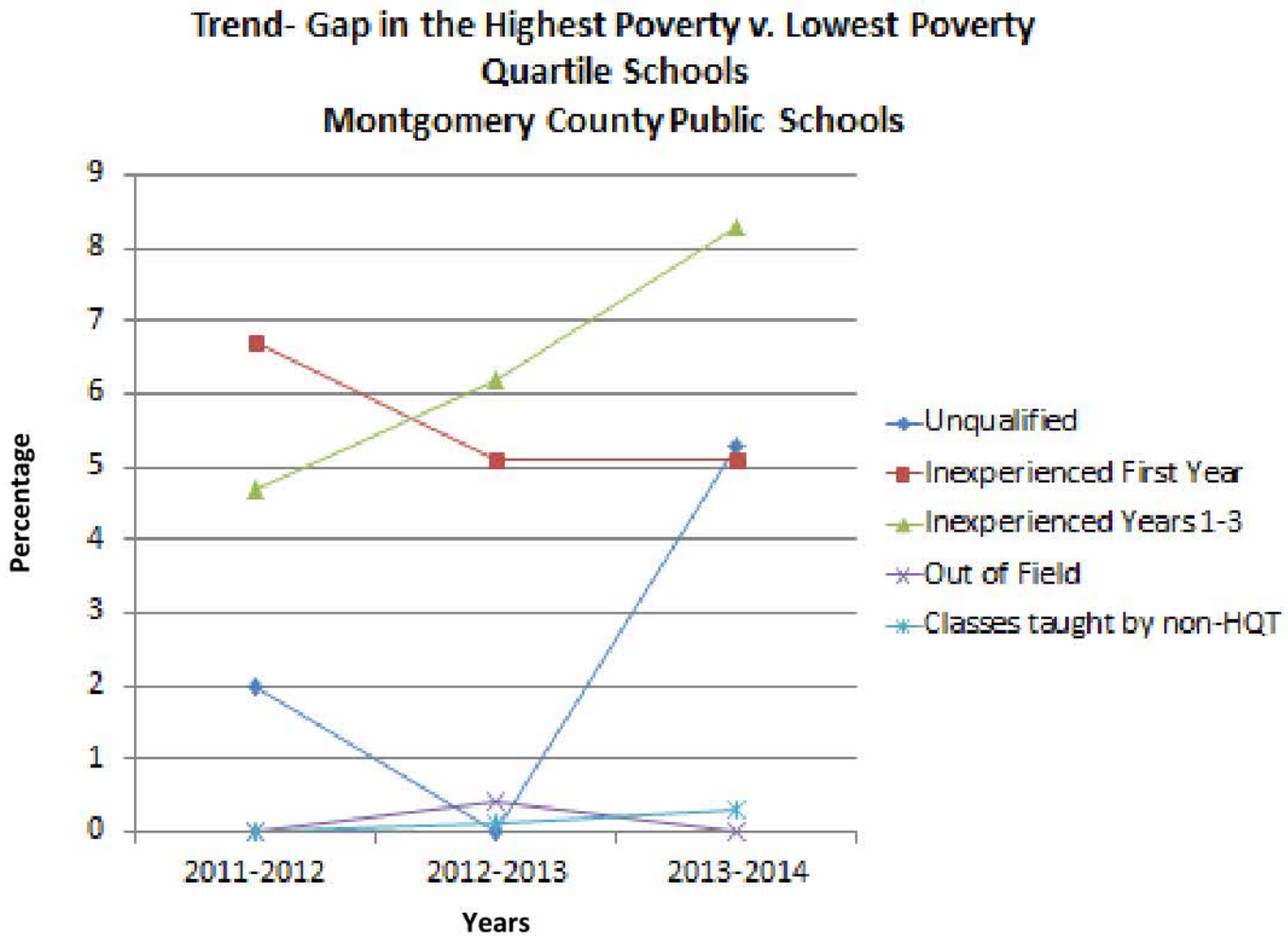
Baltimore County Public Schools - Highest v. Lowest Minority Quartile Schools

The review of the data in the highest and lowest minority quartile schools revealed gaps in inexperienced teachers and in the number of classes taught by not highly qualified teachers.



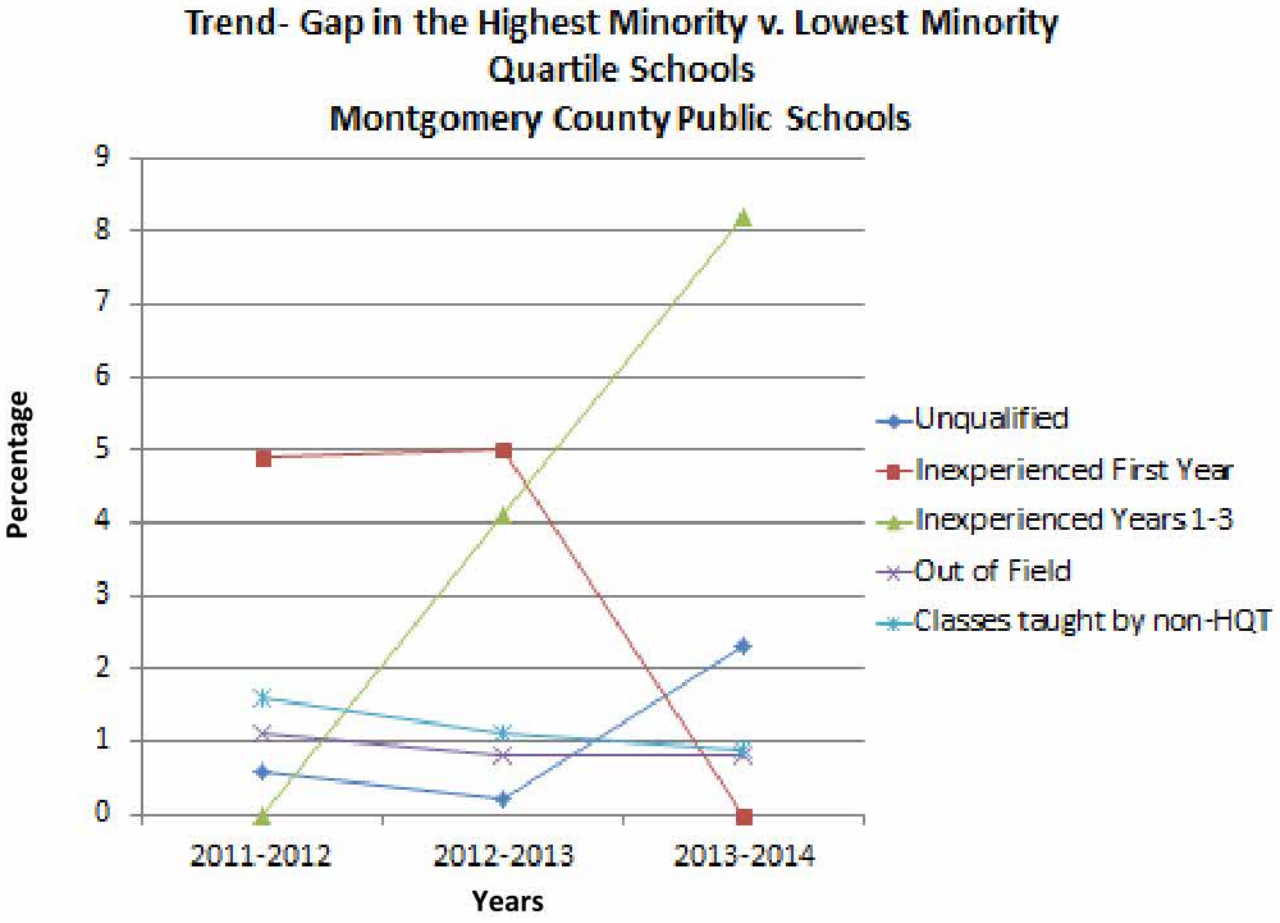
Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) - Highest v. Lowest Poverty Quartile Schools

Montgomery County is one of the two LEAs that belong to the National Capital Region. Enrolling 151,295 students in SY 2013-2014, Montgomery County is rapidly changing in demographics. The trend analysis of gaps between the highest and lowest poverty quartile schools revealed ongoing gaps in inexperienced teachers in both the first year and the first through third year and a growing gap in the number of unqualified teachers.



Montgomery County Public Schools - Highest v. Lowest Minority Quartile Schools

A review of the data in the highest and lowest minority quartile schools revealed a gap in first through third year teachers with them being more likely to be in the high minority quartile schools.



The MSDE team, which included the Chief Performance Officer and members of the Divisions of Academic Policy and Innovation, Educator Effectiveness, and Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability met with the MCPS team on June 17, 2015. The MCPS team included the Chief Operating Officer (COO) and members of the Office of Human Resources and Development. MSDE and MCPS examined MCPS' data to further analyze what the specific root causes relative to this LEA might be. The review of data also included a follow up webinar on June 23, 2015 to further delve into the unqualified teacher data.

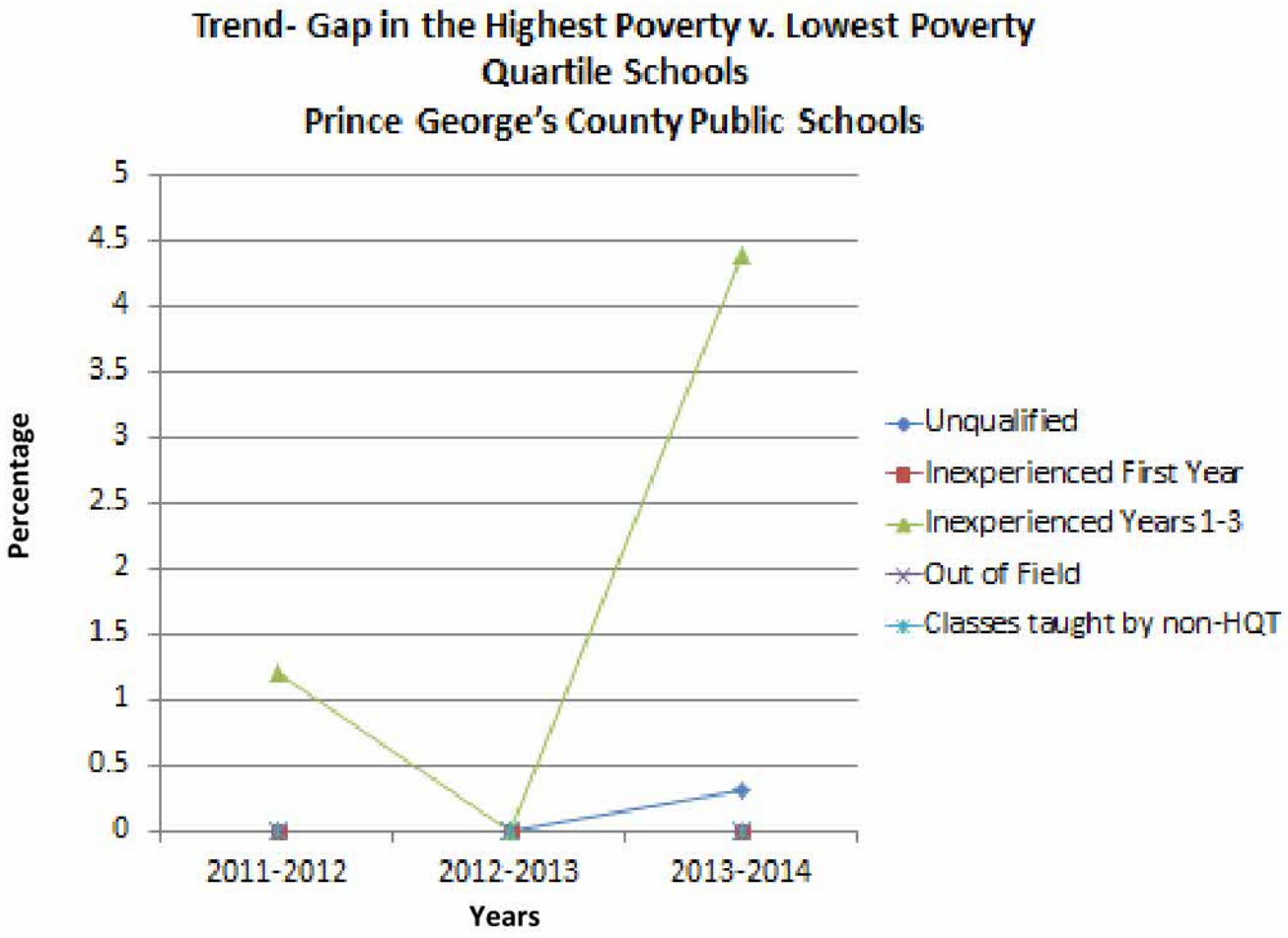
This analysis led to a collaborative discussion on MCPS specific strategies and how MSDE could support that work further. The COO shared MCPS' new Career Lattice Program (also known as the Lead Teacher Program) which was developed in conjunction with the Montgomery County

Education Association (MCEA). The program provides teachers "with opportunities to make a difference in student achievement beyond the classroom as well as an incentive to work in high-needs schools." (MCPS Memo to MCPS Board of Education, 8-28-14) Teachers who apply to this program are vetted through a rigorous process aligned with National Board Certification by a committee that is comprised of vice presidents of the teacher and principal associations. Teachers remain in the classroom, but are given leadership status, increased responsibility, and a stipend. Lead teachers also may submit a school improvement project proposal to support the improvement of the overall school.

MSDE will continue to work with MCPS on the progress of the current strategies and continue reflecting on the data and future strategies.

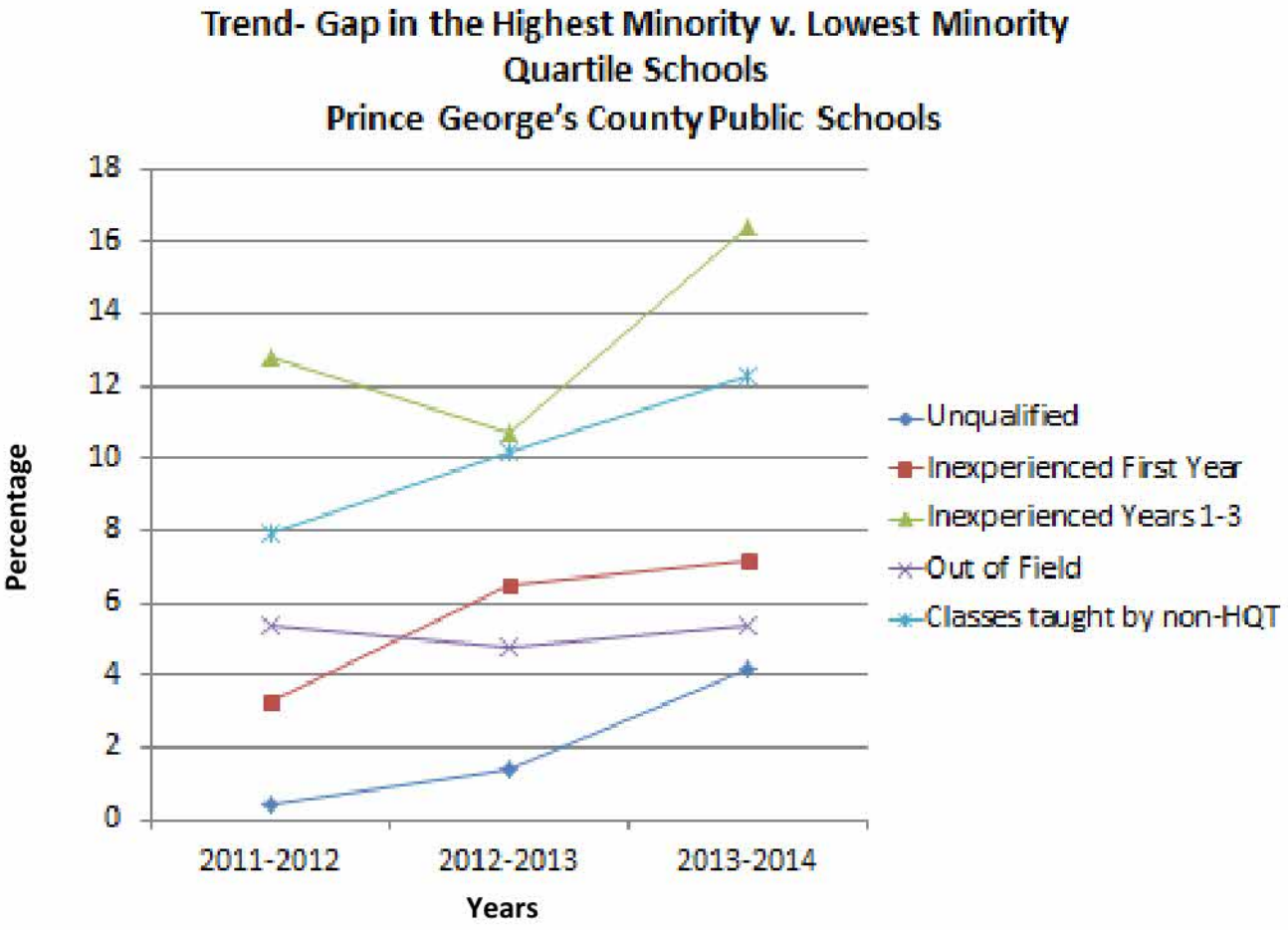
Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) - Highest v. Lowest Poverty Quartile Schools

Prince George's County is the second LEA in the National Capital Region and enrolled 125,136 students in school year 2013-2014. Prince George's County does not have many schools in the lowest poverty quartile, still the analysis revealed a large number of inexperienced teachers in their first year or first through third years, and a large number of classes not taught by HQ teachers in the highest poverty quartile schools. The data also shows a large gap in inexperienced first through third year teachers in the highest poverty quartile schools as opposed to the lowest poverty quartile schools.



Prince George's County Public Schools - Highest v. Lowest Minority Quartile Schools

PGCPS does not have any schools in the lowest minority quartile. Therefore, true gaps could not be defined. However, large percentages of teachers in the highest minority quartile schools were inexperienced, teaching out of field, or not highly qualified. Teachers were more likely to be inexperienced and teaching out of field in the highest minority quartile schools. Additionally, children were more likely to have a class taught by a not highly qualified teacher in a high minority quartile school.



On June 29, 2015, members of the MSDE equity team met with representatives of PGCPS. The MSDE team included the Chief Performance Officer and members of the Divisions of Academic Policy and Innovation and Educator Effectiveness. The PGCPS team included members of the Office of the Deputy Superintendent including the Office of Human Resources, Office of Employee Performance and Evaluation, Office of Human Resources Operations and Staffing, which includes Certification, and the Office of State and Federal Programs which includes Title I and Title II, Part A.

After a general overview of the State plan and the steps for moving forward, MSDE and PGCPS reviewed PGCPS' data to further analyze what the specific root causes relative to this LEA might be.

PGCPS shared what they believed to be some of the root causes of their data which included the need to go outside the State to find enough teachers, some of whom need additional requirements to be certified in Maryland, difficulty with candidates in the residence teachers program passing the new PRAXIS Core exam which is aligned with the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards, and retention concerns. The MSDE team listened to these concerns and agreed to explore providing professional development around the PRAXIS Core exam and other suggestions made by the PGCPS team. MSDE requested that PGCPS share their best practices around certification and retention.

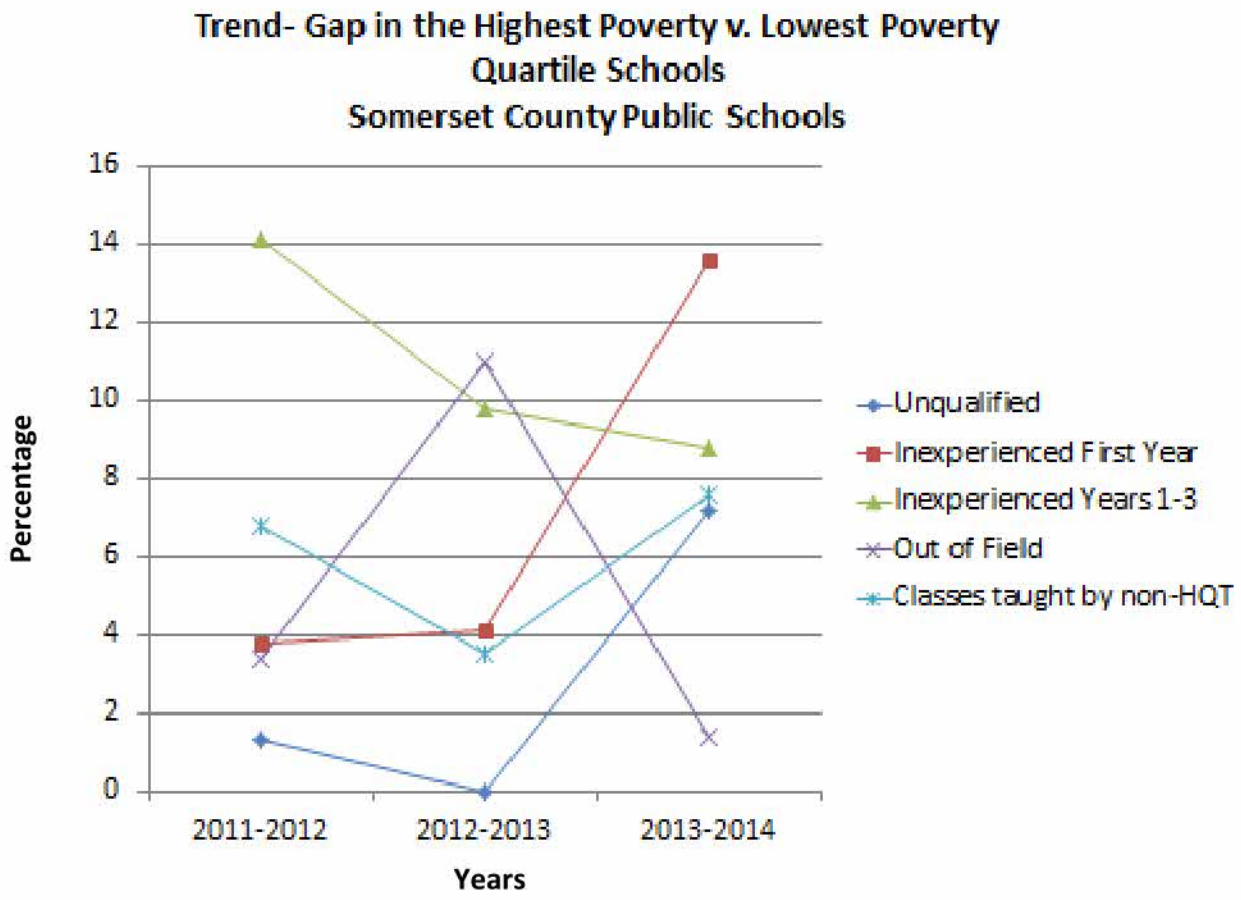
PGCPS representatives shared that they have implemented the policy of only allowing HQ teachers to teach in Title I schools. They are also working on a strategic plan that involved looking at data around teacher quality. Part of this plan is to require a full review of candidates' records and certifications expediently upon hiring.

MSDE will continue to work with PGCPS and support them through professional development opportunities, technical assistance, further data analysis, and a network of best practices.

Somerset County Public Schools (SCPS)- Highest v. Lowest Poverty Quartile Schools

Somerset County, a smaller county, enrolling only 2,945 students in school year 2013-2014, is located in the Lower Shore Region.

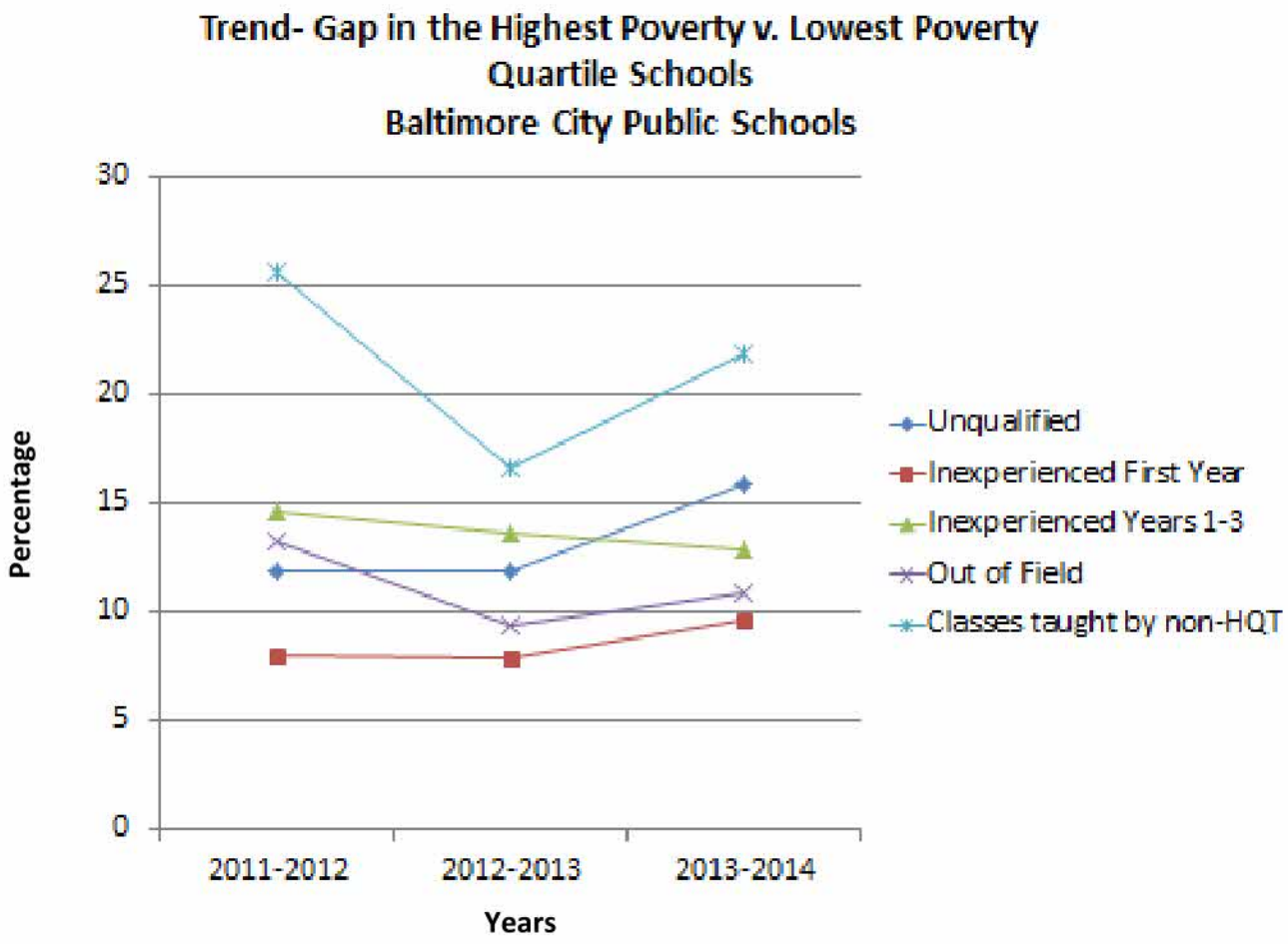
The analysis of teachers in the highest poverty and lowest poverty quartile schools revealed gaps in inexperienced teachers, teachers teaching out of field, and the number of classes taught by not highly qualified teachers.



Somerset County did not have any schools in either the highest or lowest minority quartile and so therefore no trend analysis was done.

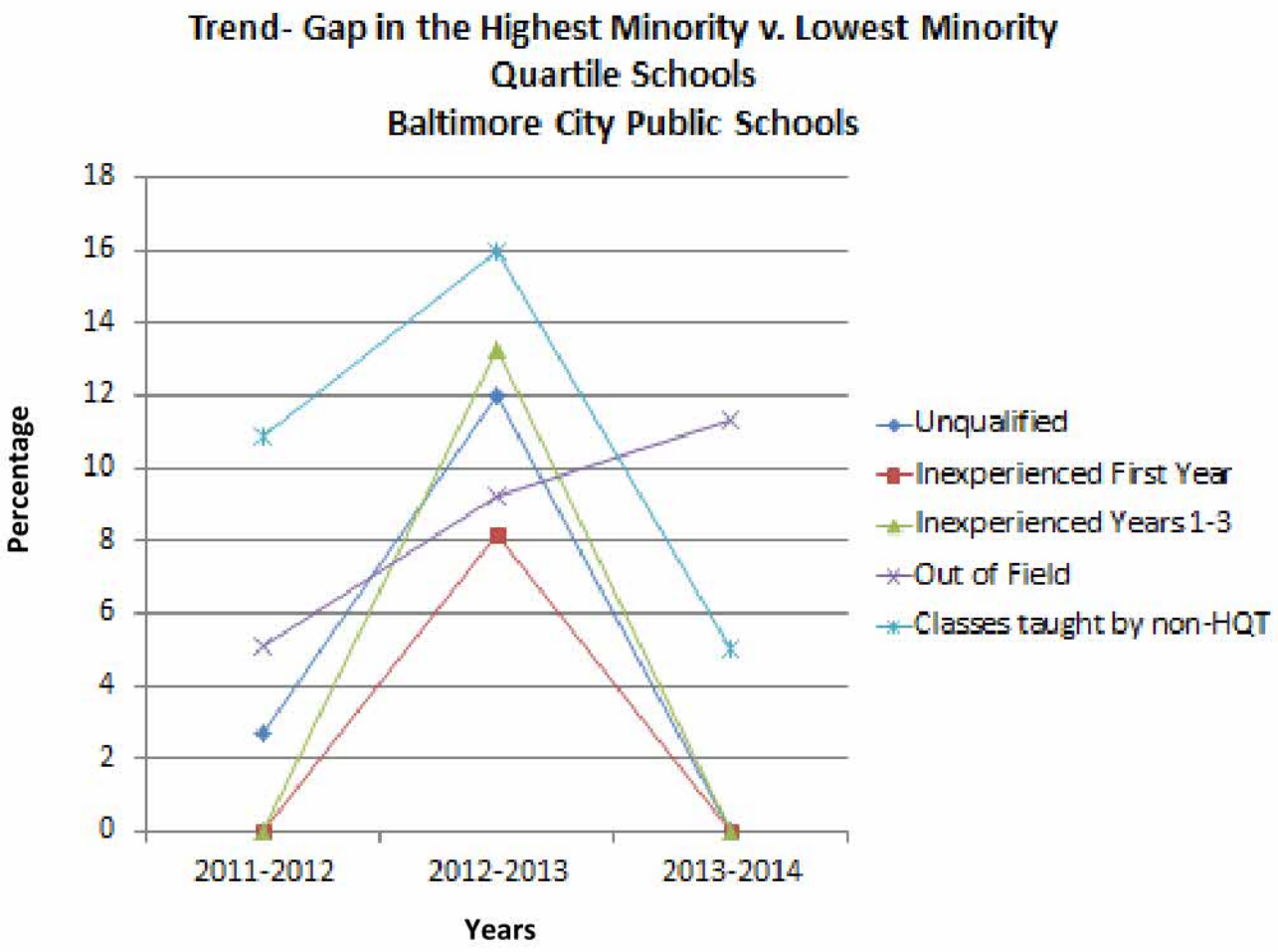
Baltimore City Public Schools (City Schools)- Highest v. Lowest Poverty Quartile Schools

Baltimore City Public Schools is located in the Baltimore Metropolitan Region. With an enrollment of 84, 730 students in school year 2013-2014, Baltimore City Public Schools is the only LEA that is in a city and not in a county. The trend analysis for Baltimore City identified gaps in every area: unqualified, inexperienced, out of field teachers and the number of classes taught by not highly qualified teachers in the highest poverty quartile schools.



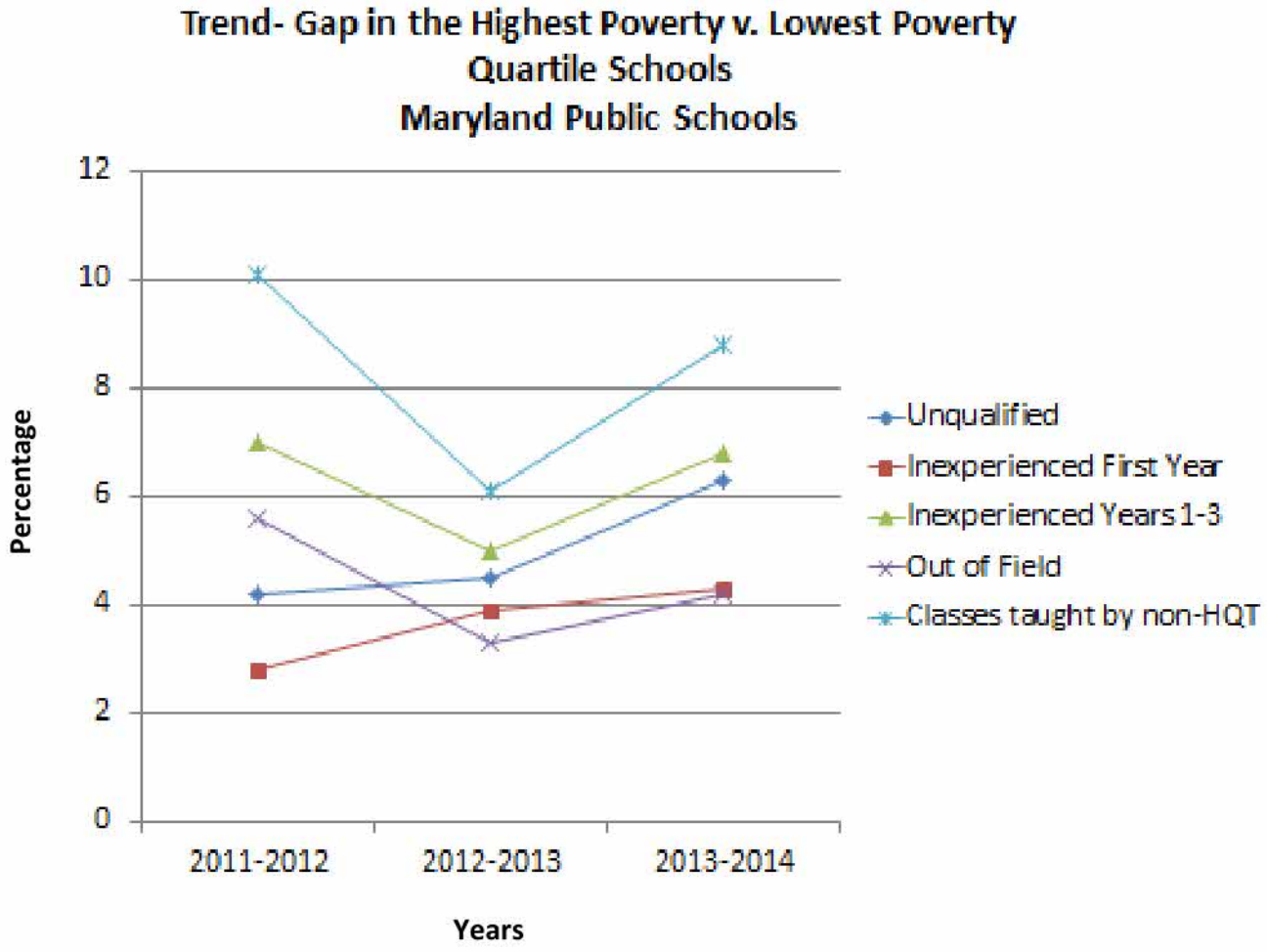
Baltimore City- Highest v. Lowest Minority Quartile Schools

Most of the schools in Baltimore City are majority minority. There is one school that is not but the school has inequity issues with regards to inexperienced, uncertified, and out-of-field teachers. This one school's inequity masks the problem of inexperienced, uncertified, out of field teachers, and classes taught by not highly qualified teachers in the highest minority quartile schools. MSDE and Baltimore City are aware of the high number of these teachers in all of these schools and will be partnering closely to address this issue.



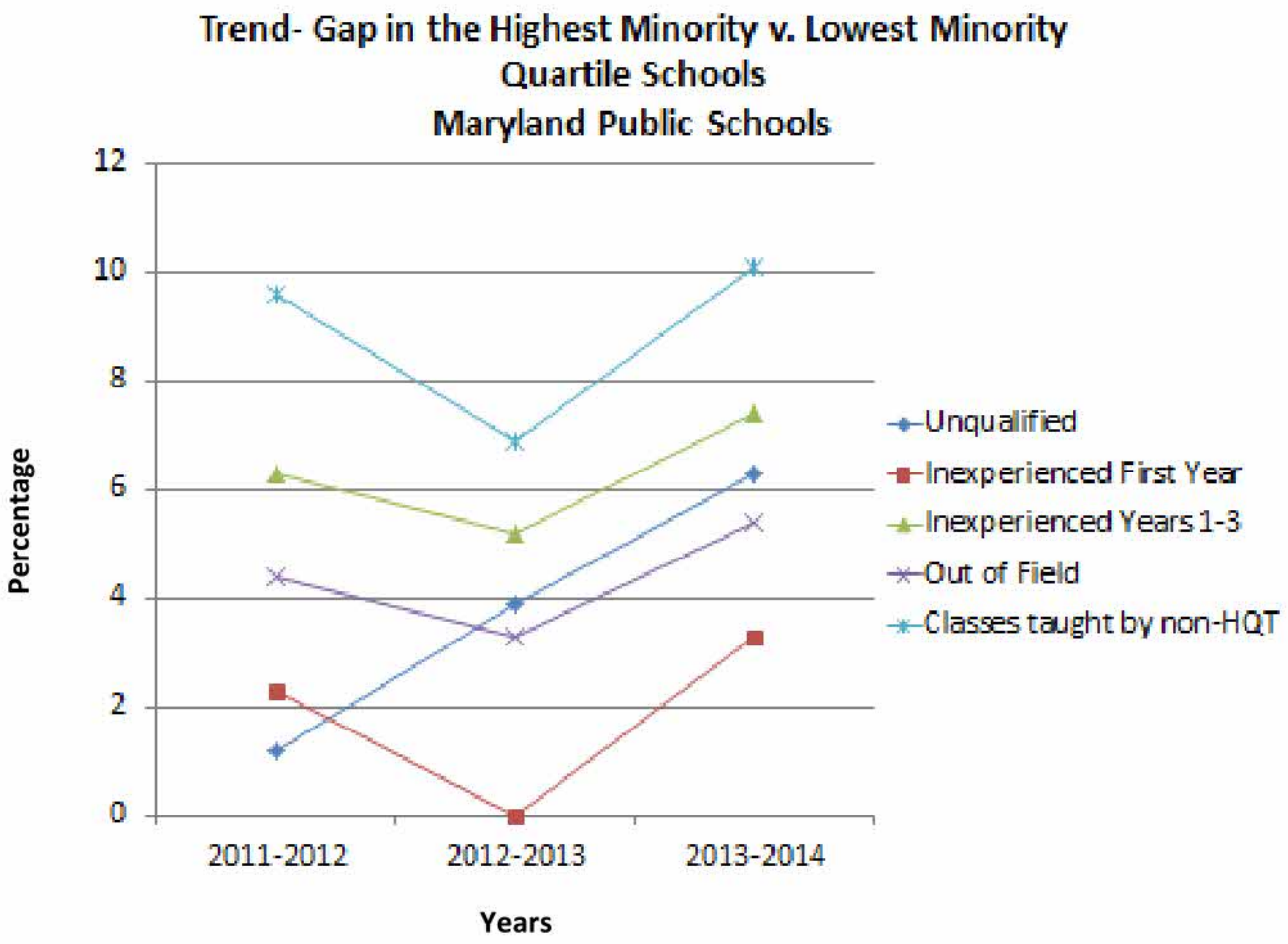
State of Maryland- Highest v. Lowest Poverty Quartile Schools

When analyzing the data at the State level and using the 5 percent significance factor, gaps remain about the inexperienced and unqualified teachers and the number of classes taught by not highly qualified teachers in the highest poverty quartile schools.



State of Maryland- Highest v. Lowest Minority Quartile Schools

The trends were less pervasive at the State level when examining the gaps in the highest and lowest minority quartile schools. Still, Maryland will address the gaps in the number of classes not taught by highly qualified teachers and the continuing concerns about inexperienced teachers in the highest minority schools. There is also a growing concern over the number of teachers teaching out of field and unqualified teachers in the highest minority quartile schools.



Overall Maryland recognizes that the most significant gaps in each area must be addressed. The next section explains Maryland's plan for eliminating gaps in the equitable access to excellent educators for all students.

Section IV: Strategies for Eliminating Equity Gaps

Theory of Action and Core Principles

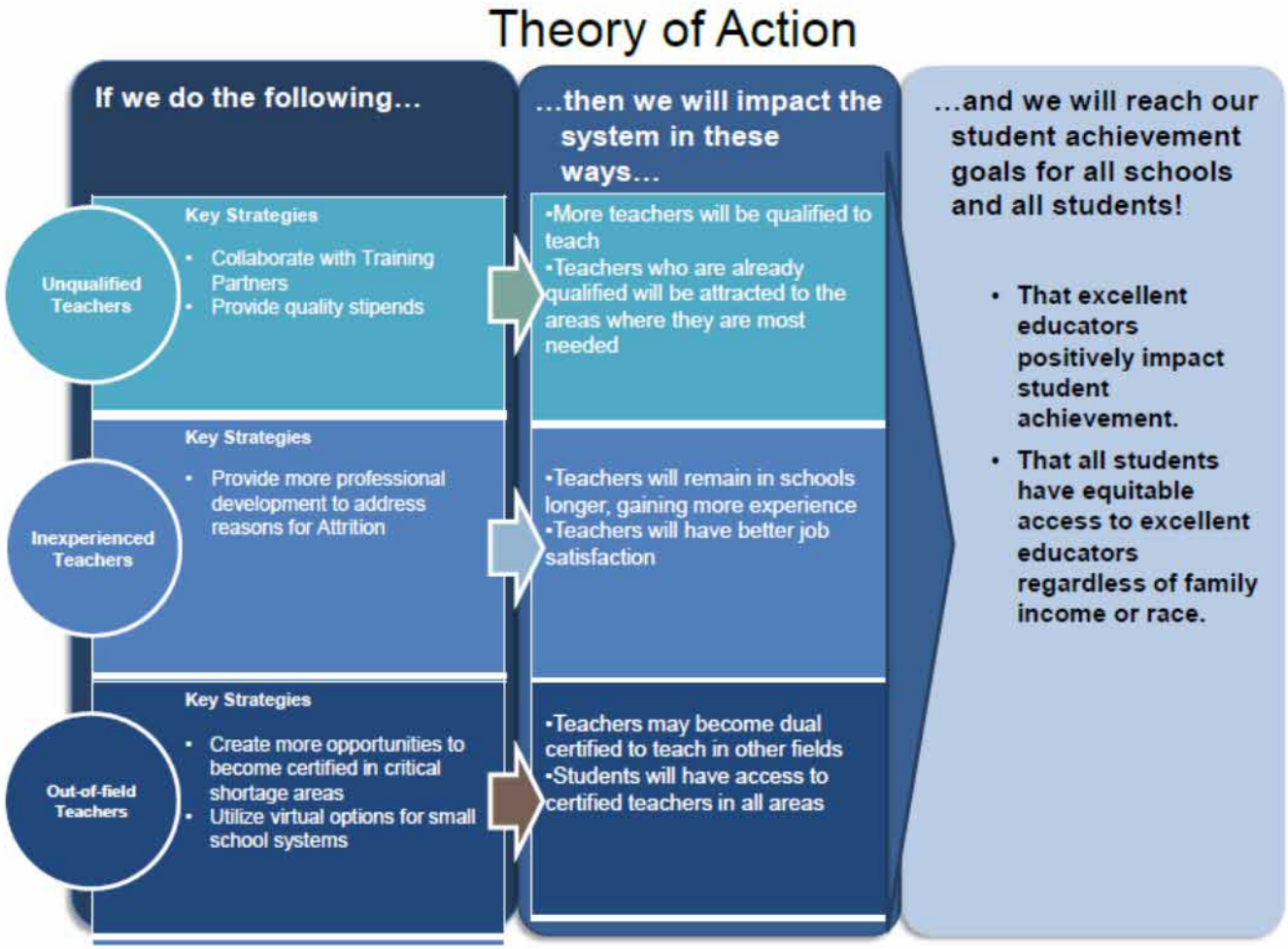
Even in its position of consistently being ranked among the top in the nation by Education Week for state level efforts to improve public education and the College Board's number one ranking in Advanced Placement performance, (as mentioned earlier in this plan) Maryland has areas of improvement and seeks ways to improve those areas. MSDE's core values of commitment to every student include the belief that all students can and must learn, the certainty that schools must help students grow, and the conviction that the educator evaluation system must be equitable and provide targeted support to all teachers. The core values are achieved through data-driven accountability systems, high standards of excellence from teachers and principals, and dynamic collaboration between LEAs and MSDE. Maryland is committed to ensuring equal educational opportunity for all students which means ensuring schools have the resources they need to provide meaningful opportunities for all students to succeed, regardless of family income or race.

Maryland's ambitious mission is to provide every student with a world-class education that ensures post-graduation college- and career-readiness. Every student must be prepared to graduate from a Maryland public school with the content knowledge and learning skills to be successful in the future, whether post-secondary education, job training, or an immediate career.

Maryland's excellence in education is made possible by seamless and supportive partnerships connecting the 24 LEAs with MSDE. Maryland continually challenges its education system to be "world class" by providing strong State education policy, programs, and leadership. Annual reports by every school system on student achievement are scrutinized within the framework of State and federal standards. As part of the Master Plan, LEAs are required to include strategies and methodologies for further improvement, which must be approved by the Maryland State Board of Education.

Maryland's dedication to accountability, support for educators, spirit of collaboration, and insistence of excellence for all students were fundamental in helping Maryland win Race to the Top, gain approval of its ESEA Flexibility Plan and Renewal, and will continue to guide Maryland in preparing world-class students.

The diagram below illustrates Maryland's Theory of Action for Ensuring Equitable access to Excellent Educators:



Root Cause Analysis

A root cause is a factor that causes a gap, is seen as the most important reason for the gap, and needs to be permanently eliminated. In reviewing the data, Maryland acknowledges that a gap exists in all categories analyzed at the state level and/or in at least one LEA. Maryland looked at root causes of the categories of each of the gaps with the understanding that sometimes a singular root cause was evident for multiple categories.

Master Plan Root Cause Analysis

Since its inception in 2003, the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Program has served as a vital component of Maryland's accountability framework. Bridge to Excellence requires each local school system to develop a Master Plan, which outlines strategies for improving student achievement and eliminating achievement gaps. Each year the plan is updated, submitted to MSDE, and reviewed by a team of experts – both State and local – to determine if sufficient progress is being made.

Initiated in 2006 with Maryland's first HQT (Equity) Plan, the Highly Qualified Staff section in the Master Plan contains indicators that enable the State to assess and address teacher equity. The following data points and criteria are included in the Master Plan. Moreover, if a local school system does not meet the HQT criteria, they must provide an explanation which includes a description of the specific challenges and strategies for improvement with a plan of how they will meet the HQT criteria in the future (see table below). Adding this component to the Master Plan was one of the strategies developed for the 2006 HQT Plan.

Reported Data	Criteria	Analyzing Prompts (to be answered if criteria are not met)
1. Percentage of Core Academic Classes Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers	The percentage of Core Academic Classes (CAS) taught by Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT) is 97 percent or higher.	• Describe where challenges are evident • Identify practices, programs, or strategies and corresponding resource allocations to ensure sufficient progress in placing HQT in CAS.
2. Percentage of Core Academic Subjects Classes Taught by Highly Qualified Teacher in Title I Schools.	The percentage of CAS in Title I schools is 100 percent HQT.	• Describe where challenges are evident. • Describe the strategies used to ensure all CAS in Title I schools are taught by HQT.
3. Number of Classes Not Taught by Highly Qualified (NHQ) Teachers by Reason.	The ***combined*** percentage total of NHQT ***across all reasons*** is less than 10 percent.	• Describe where challenges are evident. • Identify the practices, programs, or strategies and the corresponding resource allocations to ensure sufficient progress in targeted areas of NHQT.

4. Core Academic Classes taught by Highly Qualified Teachers in both ***Elementary and Secondary Schools*** High Poverty and Low Poverty Schools.	The percentage of CAS taught by HQT in **high-poverty** is equal to or greater than the percentage of HQT CAS in **low-poverty** schools. (Explanation: Data represents an equal distribution of HQT staff between high and low poverty).	1. Describe where challenges are evident. 2. Describe the changes or adjustments to ensure an equal distribution of HQT staff in both High and Low poverty schools.
5. Core Academic Classes taught by Highly Qualified Teachers in both ***Elementary and Secondary*** High Poverty and Low Poverty Schools By Level and Experience.	The percentage of ***inexperienced HQT*** in CAS in **high-poverty** schools is not greater than the percentage of ***experienced HQT*** in CAS in **low- poverty** schools.	1. Describe where challenges are evident. 2. Identify the changes or adjustments to ensure low-income and minority students are not taught at higher rates than other students by unqualified, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers. What evidence does the school system have that strategies are in place are having the intended effect?
6. Attrition Rates.	***Total overall attrition*** is less than 10 percent	1. Identify the practices, programs, or strategies and the corresponding resource allocations to address the overall retention of staff. What evidence does the school system have that the strategies in place are having the intended effect?
7. Percentage of Qualified Paraprofessionals Working in Title I Schools.	Percentage of ***qualified*** paraprofessionals in Title I schools is 100 percent	1. Describe the strategies used to ensure all paraprofessionals working in Title I schools will be qualified.

Examples of an analysis of the root cause data provided by local school systems, particularly for instances where the number of classes not taught by highly qualified teachers (data point #3 in the table) shows the following:

- Most of the teachers not meeting this criteria have not met test and/or coursework requirements (Calvert County);
- Of the 82 incidents of a class taught by a Not Highly Qualified Teacher (NHQT), over 31 percent were because of invalid certification for the subject being taught (e.g. high schools are small so science teachers who hold certification in one area of science may not be certified in other areas of science making them NHQT for the other area they are teaching). Another roughly 45 percent were due to missing certification information (e.g. long-term substitutes that may not hold certificates in Maryland but may be certified in other states for the classes they are teaching. (Cecil County)
- Changes in instructional program. In one LEA, all middle schools moved from a four to a seven period day. This resulted in some teachers being assigned to a class period out of area. (Frederick County)
- Some LEAs cited a scarcity in teaching candidates in critical shortage areas. Many teachers who are hired have completed their most recent degree and certification requirements outside of Maryland. Specific criteria that must be satisfied to achieve highly qualified designation vary from state to state; therefore, teachers who may have been designated highly qualified in another state may not have that same designation in Maryland. Maryland does not accept highly qualified designations from other states. (Howard County, Wicomico County, Washington County).

Ongoing review and analysis of Master Plan data will reveal gaps such as those listed above and enable MSDE to provide technical assistance, guidance, and appropriate resources to address these gaps. As mentioned earlier, Local Master Plans are reviewed annually by MSDE and local experts. Opportunities to review that data and provide technical assistance and support exist throughout the year between review cycles.

Equity Committee Root Cause Analysis

The internal equity group reviewed the data and looked at each area of gap (unqualified, inexperienced, out-of-field, and classes not taught by HQT) and then examined from the State perspective why those gaps exist. It is clear that these gaps exist in different LEAs sometimes for the same reasons and sometimes for different reasons. For example, Baltimore City and Somerset County both showed a gap in experienced teachers in the highest poverty quartile. The internal equity group believes that the root cause for the gap in Baltimore City is a lack of well trained teachers for the high needs of the urban schools, whereas in Somerset County the root cause may be linked to geographical location. Further in-depth analysis of this will be made at the LEA level.

Each strategy in the next section responds to at least one specific root cause and in some cases multiple root causes. Maryland plans to conduct a more thorough investigation into root causes with identified individual LEAs in the summer 2015, and then throughout the 2015-2016 school year.

- Insufficient supply of well-prepared teachers-Maryland is an import State and does not produce enough teachers to satisfy the needs of the State. Therefore, teachers come from or are recruited from other states. This affects retention because often those teachers choose to return to their home state after a number of years. In addition, while Maryland teachers prepared in Maryland meet extraordinarily rigorous standards, those prepared in other states may need additional professional learning in order to meet the challenges of the College and Career-Ready Standards and the PARCC assessments. This directly impacts Maryland's gaps in inexperienced teaching.
- Geographic location- Some of Maryland's LEAs are in smaller, less populated regions. This leads to questions about quality of life, differences in cultural opportunities and expression, and median teachers' salaries. These issues particularly affect the numbers of unqualified teachers in some of our smaller LEAs (Dorchester and Somerset).
- Flexible Retirement- Maryland's teacher retirement plan allows teachers to move across LEAs and still maintain their retirement plan. Teachers may begin their career in one

LEA, become a member of the state retirement system, and then move to another LEA with more competitive salaries without a break in retirement benefits since all Maryland teachers' pay into the same plan. What in one scenario can be an incentive for teachers to stay in the profession and better their own personal circumstances, in another scenario can add to the number of unqualified teachers in LEAs which may not have the ability to offer the higher salaries.

- Teacher Attrition- Looking at school years 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014 the average percent of teachers who leave within the first year of teaching is over 4 percent of new hires. Further, although 2013-2014 data shows a decline in attrition over the first five years of teaching, the State average over the past three years still indicates that about 34 percent leave teaching within the first five years (actually lower than the national average but still unacceptable), adding to that problem of a large segment of teachers being relatively inexperienced. Research does indicate that there is a correlation between the experience of a teacher and effective teaching that leads to strong student learning. Maryland Attrition data is contained in Attachment II. Total teachers include both active and separated teachers in 2012-2013. Stayers include teachers that taught in the same school in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. Movers include teachers that moved to another LEA or to another school within the same LEA. Leavers include teachers that were in the 2012-2013 file but not in the 2013-2014 file. At the State level, Maryland notes that in the area of the highest minority quartile schools there are the following gaps: stayers 12.9 percent, movers 6.2 percent, and leavers 6.8 percent. At the State level, in the area of the highest poverty quartile schools, Maryland notes the following gaps: stayers 12.2 percent, movers 6.2 percent and leavers 6 percent.
- Rapid Turnover- The State has particular concern with the number of newly hired teachers who leave within the first year of teaching, mentioned above. The practice of "stacking" large numbers of first-year and alternatively-prepared teachers in high-needs and challenging schools could be impacting these increasing numbers over the last four years. In 2010-2011, 3.8 percent of new hires left within the first year of teaching, 3.9

percent in 2011-2012, 4 percent in 2012-2013, and 5 percent in 2013-2014. Alternatively prepared teachers, such as those from any of the 14 approved alternative programs in Maryland, including Teach for America (TFA) and others, cannot take full advantage of the mentoring and supports that are in place for them when too many are placed in one school, negating the advantaged support they often have. With increased ability to track programs from which newly-hired teachers are prepared in relation to where they are placed, the State may not be able to suggest cause and effect, but can draw more strongly-supported correlation to explain this phenomenon. Since the 5 percent reflected in 2013-2014 data translates to 3,208 teachers in Maryland Public Schools who left within their first year, if they left in large numbers from schools with high percentages of poor and minority children, those children can least afford the turnover. (Eppley [2009] and Keller [2007] report that, in core academic classes nationwide, teachers with neither certification nor a major in the subject, teach in high poverty schools at double the rate of low poverty schools).

- Shortage Areas- Teacher shortage areas persist both in specific content areas and geographically sometimes requiring out-of-field teachers to cover necessary instructional needs. In smaller school systems and in some schools, only one class of a particularly focused area of instruction is required by student enrollment, so the hiring of a certified teacher in that area is not cost-possible so the class may be one taught out-of-field.
- Competition with Business- There is much competition for graduates and others with specific talents and educational credentials into other jobs which often pay higher salaries. This is especially true of what is currently identified as minority candidates.
- Allocation of Resources- Urban-suburban issues are different than rural issues in terms of how schools choose to allocate their hiring resources, forcing some classes to be taught by non-HQT. Highly stressed urban local school systems often have competing priorities of compliance which force decisions which may impact the number of classes taught by non-HQT staff. Rural areas suffer here, again, due to choices made by individuals who might be recruited to teach there.

- Institutional Causes- related to lack of preparation to teach in challenging conditions leading to schools with high turnover rates and lack of teacher experience.
- Teacher Preference- Some teachers are concerned about adverse working conditions- school location, teacher workload, lack of parental involvement, student conduct, and school safety.
- Environmental Cause- Lack of Effective school leadership leads to issues related to culture and climate in the lowest performing schools. The implementation of multiple strategies can also lead to implementation fatigue.

In order to address these root causes, the internal MSDE committee initially worked across the Department to identify and develop strategies, both current and new, related to each area of equitable access. This draft was shared with the individual advisories, local superintendents, and the State Board, as described previously. The plan was then revised and updated based on this feedback. Additionally, Maryland will gather these strategies for individual LEAs as the root cause analysis is completed at the LEA level.

Statewide Strategies

The Equity Committee, having reviewed the data and conducted a root cause analysis, identified statewide strategies to address the equity issue in Maryland Public Schools. As noted earlier, Part II will include LEA level strategies as MSDE and the LEAs collaborate to identify the individualized root causes and appropriate strategies.

The table below is a strategic plan at the State level from the State perspective in how the State can work with all LEAs to begin addressing equity issues immediately.

Maryland's Strategies

Strategies	Current/ New Practice	Root Cause addressed through strategy	Responsible parties (Be specific where possible)	Resources Required	Timeline
1. Investigate and determine recommendations for revision to the teacher quality stipends for teachers who hold an Advanced Professional Certificate and National Board Certification	Current	Unqualified Teachers Inexperienced Teachers • Teacher Preference • Competition with Business	Division of Educator Effectiveness (DEE), Division of Academic Policy and Innovation (DAPI), and the Office of the Deputy Superintendent for Finance	Current Staff	Annually
2. Collaborate with training partners, i.e., Teach for America (TFA), The New Teacher Project (TNTP), and Urban Teacher Center (UTC). The Lower Eastern Shore counties are currently working with a national, state-approved alternative provider to establish a coalition of counties to bring alternative programs in to assist in placing qualified teachers in hard-to-staff positions.	Current	Unqualified • Geographic locations • Critical Shortage Areas	DEE	Current Staff	MSDE expects an initial MOU to be written in Fall 2016.
3. Encourage online and digital preparation programs in partnership with rural counties both on the Shore and in the western part of the state.	New	Unqualified • Geographic locations • Critical	DEE	Current Staff	Initial contacts planned for spring 2016

		Shortage Areas			
4. Continue the partnership between MSDE and 10 IHE's to implement the Teach For Maryland Consortium. RTTT funded *Preparing Educators for High Poverty/Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Schools: A Manual for Teacher Educators, Teachers, and Principals* which was researched, written and component piloted over a period of four years in collaboration with PreK-12 and IHE preparation stakeholders. Tenets of the manual, dealing specifically with the issues of poverty and inequity, will be required inclusions in the State Program Approval process for educator preparation programs. The manual can be found at http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/certification/progapproval/docs/PreparingEducatorsHighPovertyCulturallyLinguisticallyDiverseSchoolsManualTeacherEducatorsTeachersPrincipals.pdf	Current	Inexperienced • Attrition • Teacher Preference • Environmental Causes • Institutional Causes	DEE	Current staff	IHEs are expected to assimilate components into programs beginning immediately. 15/16 plan integration; 16/17 begin collecting data from integrated curriculum; 17/18 report data to MSDE DEE.
5. Collaboratively engage in a process that uses observation and exit data from departing teachers to further refine elements of disposition to be considered when admitting a potential teacher into an educator preparation program in order to produce better teachers more likely to stay in teaching ten or more years.	New	Inexperienced • Attrition • Teacher Preference • Environmental Causes • Institutional Causes	DEE Educator preparation programs LEAs	Current staff	Ongoing
6. Broaden and deepen their local school	Current	Inexperienced	DEE	Current staff	Ongoing

system partnerships to ensure that teacher candidates have authentic experiences with populations of all diversities in order to prepare adequately to serve well the critical needs of the students who most need them.		• Attrition • Teacher Preference • Environmental Causes • Institutional Causes	Educator preparation programs		
7. Analyze preliminary one-year Principal Teacher evaluation data linked to teacher preparation programs to initiate technical assistance to programs to assure their improvement and the performance of their program completers	New	Inexperienced • Attrition • Teacher Preference • Environmental Causes • Institutional Causes	DEE	Current staff	Ongoing
8. Continue to facilitate ongoing conversations with teacher associations and local school systems to address seniority issues that force the placement of the least experienced teacher in the lowest salaried, and often most difficult, teaching situations.	Current	Inexperienced Out-of-field • Insufficient Supply • Teacher Preference • Shortage Areas	DEE Teacher Associations LEAs	Current staff	Ongoing
9. Expand the options and then encourage local school systems to utilize the specialized certifications offered to highly skilled professionals in the work force who may elect to teach one or two classes in a high school in order to allow them to teach those classes that were formerly taught out of field.	New	Out-of-field • Insufficient Supply • Teacher Preference • Shortage Areas	DEE LEAs	Current staff	Ongoing
10. Explore with local school system partners	New	Inexperienced	DEE	Current staff	Ongoing

and education preparation providers, both traditional and alternative, ways in which practicing teachers can enhance their practice and their abilities to teach effectively and meet requirements in more than one area through additional certifications and professional development.		Out-of-field Unqualified • Insufficient Supply • Teacher Preference • Shortage Areas	LEAs		
11. Increase minority hires by certification area and percentage of classes taught by HQTs	Current	Inexperienced Out-of-field • Critical shortage areas	DEE Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability (DCAA)	Current staff	Annually
12. Maryland Education Recruitment Consortium (MERC) annual recruitment fair in Baltimore sponsored by MSDE and LEA.s	Current	Inexperienced Out-of-field • Critical shortage areas	DEE	Current staff	Annually in the Spring
13. Continue to establish cohorts for classroom teachers to take courses and complete English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Special Education endorsement; explore stipends for courses.	Current/ New	Inexperienced Teachers • Critical Shortage areas	DCAA Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services (DSEEIS) DEE	Current Staff Evaluation of Effectiveness: LEAs who participated in RTTT cohort project showed improvement in meeting English proficiency	Fall 2015 LEA needs assessment Jan 2016 meet with IHE to plan and establish cohorts

				goals. MSDE will analyze data for teacher retention and staffing patterns of school who participate in cohorts	
14. Add question and analyze responses to Title III monitoring to gather information about training of teachers in HM HP schools to work with ELLs and Special Education Students.	Current/ New	Unqualified teachers (Will also help LEAs identify individual root causes) • Critical Shortage Areas	DCAA DSEEIS DEE	Current Staff Monitoring: Determine state-wide PD activities based upon needs identified during monitoring	Summer 2015 add new question SY 15-16 analyze and compile data
15. Add question and analyze responses to Title IIA monitoring regarding the use of funds to address teacher effectiveness in HP/HM schools.	New	Unqualified teachers (Will also help LEAs identify individual root causes) • Critical Shortage Areas	DCAA	Current Staff Monitoring/Evaluating: Fall /Winter 2015-16 review LEA feedback on Master Plan Spring 2016 review at Title IIA monitoring	Summer 2015 add new question SY 15-16 analyze and compile data

				visits. Summer 2016 Analyze feedback and data. Determine state-wide PD activities based upon needs identified during monitoring	
16. Add expectation to Title IIB(MSP) grant partnerships requiring them to address educator equity issues in HP/HM partnerships	New	Out-of-field teachers • Critical shortage areas (Specifically STEM • Attrition	DCAA	Current Staff Monitoring: Grant proposals will be evaluated and accepted based upon a rubric that rewards applications which address educator equity issues.	Summer 2015 revise Title IIB grant application
17. Launching a professional learning program to recognize teachers and award credit for individualized professional development plans aligned to their needs	New	Inexperienced Teachers • Teacher Attrition • Teacher	DCAA	Current Staff MSDE will gather professional learning data	Piloting in spring 2015 Revise program based upon

		Preference		on teachers in HM/HP areas. Principals will have the ability to monitor the PD data of the teachers in their schools and make recommendations on PD that is needed by specific teachers and alignment to school goals.	pilot and add CPD credit to program SY 2015-16 Implement state-wide
18. Establish procedure to offer principals of Priority schools first access to highly qualified teachers in the candidate pool. SEA will include this requirement in grant applications to low performing schools with high poverty or high rates of minority students.	Current	Inexperienced Out of Field Classes Taught by NHQT • Institutional Causes • Insufficient supply of well-prepared teachers • Geographic Location • Teacher	Division of School, Family, and Student Support (DOSFSS)- Title I	Current School Improvement Grant (SIG) Leads	Annually as Intervention plans are revised and during the monitoring cycle of Priority schools.

		Preference			
19. Utilize implementation science process to better ensure best practices are implemented with fidelity in Priority and Focus Schools. SEA will include this requirement in grant applications to low performing schools with high poverty or high rates of minority students.	New (subject to funding)	Inexperienced Teachers Out of Field • Institutional Causes • Lack of Effective School Leadership	DOSFSS- Title I	Current SIG Leads	Annual Convening
20. Participate in scale-up activities as part of Maryland's Multiple Systems of Support to improve student achievement, school culture and climate (LEAs with Priority Schools). SEA will include this requirement in grant applications to low performing schools with high poverty or high rates of minority students.	New	Inexperienced Teachers Out of Field • Environmental Causes	DOSFSS-Student Services and Strategic Planning	Current Staff Title I	Scale-up beginning SY 2015-2016
21. Require neediest schools to participate in multi-systems of support training (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)).	Current	Inexperienced Teachers Out of Field Classes Taught by NHQT Unqualified • Environmental Causes	DOSFSS DSEIIS Sheppard Pratt Health System Johns Hopkins University	MSDE Staff Local Staff (administrators, teachers, coaches, student services staff, central office) Grant funding	Ongoing and as needed
22. Coordinate Student Services to address Environmental Causes in low performing schools with high minority and high poverty.	Current	Inexperienced Teachers Out of Field	MSDE staff (Breakthrough Center)	Local Staff (administrators, teachers,	Ongoing and As needed

SEA will include this requirement in Title I grant applications to low performing schools with high poverty or high rates of minority students.		Unqualified • Environmental Causes	DOSFSS- Title I	coaches, student services staff, central office)	

Section V: Ongoing Monitoring and Support

As part of its commitment to educating all students and as part of its ESEA Flexibility Renewal Application, Maryland intends to monitor the equitable access of excellent educators in conjunction with its ongoing monitoring and support of all LEAs. The explanation below is also a part of Maryland's ESEA Flexibility Renewal Application that was submitted to USDE in March 2015.

Maryland has distinguished itself with its overall monitoring of performance and standard attainment for all 24 LEAs. Since 2003, the Maryland General Assembly has required all 24 LEAs to submit a Master Plan detailing strategies for meeting ESEA and Maryland education goals. Data for each standard or program is tracked and each year, in an Update to the Master Plan, each LEA must describe its progress to date. If the data indicates success, an explanation for what the LEA believes has worked is included. If the LEA is not making adequate progress on any standard, it must detail what steps will be taken to correct the course. The Master Plan guidance documents, officially called the Bridge to Excellence Guidance Document Part I, can be found at http://docushare.msde.state.md.us/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-147467/BTE%20RTTT%20Guidance%202011_6_20_11.docx . The Guidance Part 2 (Federal Grant Applications and Other State Reporting Requirements) can be found at http://docushare.msde.state.md.us/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-146666/BTE%20Guidance%20Part%202%20FINAL_6-20-11.docx

The existence of the Master Plan offers an ideal vehicle for reflecting progress by LEAs to ensure equitable access to excellent educators. The Master Plan already includes fiscal reporting, reporting on the number of HQT teachers, and will be modified to include monitoring of equitable access.

Additionally, Maryland provides support to individual LEAs through the Breakthrough Center, Maryland's Statewide System of Support. The Breakthrough Center provides efficient, targeted, and impactful services and support to Maryland's underperforming schools, with the goal of building capacity of LEAs and schools to turn around patterns of chronic underperformance.

The Breakthrough Center will continue its commitment toward and success in providing integrated and impactful support that builds capacity and trusting relationships. Maryland will work to continue to build upon the already established close, constructive relationship with its LEAs. Based on identified needs of LEAs and schools, the Breakthrough Center will continue to collaborate with various Divisions to provide targeted and integrated support services in leadership development, instruction, school climate and culture, and family and community engagement. This support is often provided at the LEA level and is a strategy for building the capacity of the LEA but will also aid in providing support for improving the equitable access to excellent educators. By providing support at the central office level, these staff can work directly with schools through customized programs and professional development offerings that build organizational, leadership, and instructional capacity.

Below is a more detailed table that explains specific monitoring and support strategies, responsible parties, the frequency of the monitoring and support, the reporting requirements, and the specific performance metrics. As Maryland continues to enhance this plan, the support and monitoring strategies will be enriched to provide more detailed and individualized levels of support.

Mechanisms	Responsible Parties	Frequency	Reporting Requirements	Performance Metrics (Long and short term)
1. Monitor and improve the percent of HQT in each LEA through the Master Plan	DSSFS, DEE	Annually	HQT teacher data from LEAs DEE DOSFSS	Percentage of HQTs and specific strategies unique to each LEA to increase number of HQT's
2. Utilize Staffing Report to monitor and improve the percentage of HQT in each LEA	DEE	Bi-Annually	Data collected via Dashboards	Identification of critical shortage content areas, Maryland jurisdictions projected to have a shortage of certified teachers, minority group teacher shortages, and shortages of non-classroom professional positions
3. Complete and produce the Maryland Staffing Report	DEE	Bi-Annually	Report submitted to the State Board of Education	• #/% of teachers teaching on conditional certification • #/% of teachers in their first year of teaching • #/% of teachers in their 5th, 10th, 20th, 30th year of teaching • # of new hires with previous teaching experience • # of teaching positions vacant on the 1st day of school • Percent of teachers with effective and highly effective ratings • Percent of teachers with ineffective ratings
4. Identify comprehensive needs schools through the state accountability measure	DSSFS, DEE Determine who identifies comprehensive	Annually	Maryland Accountability System	Schools that fall in the lowest levels of Maryland's Accountability System

	needs schools			
5. Analyze Title II report	DEE	Annually	Racial, ethnic and gender demographics of teacher candidates and completers to ensure continued focus on providing a diverse population of teachers	
6. Monitor Master Plan corrective action submissions.	Agency wide	Annually	TBD	Monitoring process needs to be established
7. Report and analyze State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicators	DSE/EIS, LEA	Annually	Reported Annually in February	Disproportionality: SPP #9. Percent of LSS with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups that is the result of inappropriate identification.
8. Report and analyze State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicators	DSE/EIS, LEA	Annually	Reported Annually in February	Disproportionality/Category: SPP #10. Percent of LEA with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification.
9. Annually monitor Title I Priority Schools and Focus Schools. The primary function of the onsite monitoring visits is to review and analyze all facets of a school's approved implementation model and/or strategies and to collaborate with leadership, staff and other	Title I Office, DOSFSS	Title I Priority Schools will be monitored on site three times per year. September-October: MSDE will meet with each Priority School principal	Priority and Focus schools reporting requirements are established through their grant applications and will be revised as needed. Reports are submitted quarterly or bi-annually to MSDE.	• Number of minutes within the school year • Number and percentage of students completing advanced coursework, early college high schools, and dual enrollment classes • Distribution of teachers by performance level on LEA's teacher evaluation system • Teacher attendance rate

stakeholders pertinent to goal attainment. Goal: Each school implementing an approved turnaround model will complete a comprehensive needs assessment that includes the review of existing staff, new staff, and principal qualifications. Each LEA will retain only those staff/leadership personnel who are determined to be effective and have demonstrated the ability to be successful in supporting the turnaround effort.		and conduct an initial interview and school walk-through. January-February: MSDE will conduct an onsite visit at each identified Priority School to monitor and review documentation that substantiates the school's implementation of its approved intervention model. This visit will include an interview with key school stakeholders and a school walkthrough. March-May: MSDE will conduct an onsite visit at each identified Priority Schools to monitor the impact of the intervention model on teaching and learning	Priority Schools are required to submit reports quarterly and Focus Schools are required to complete self-assessments annually.	• Principal attendance rate • Student scale scores on State assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics, by grade, for the "all students" group and by subgroup, for each achievement quartile, and for each subgroup.

		based on 4 domains: Instructional planning; instructional delivery; teacher-student engagement; and classroom management. This visit will include interviews with the school leadership team. Focus Schools will be monitored at the LEA level annually.		
10. Meet with LEA Central Support Team (CST) Goal: The CST meets monthly with MSDE to provide updates and discuss strategies to eliminate barriers during implementation of strategies or turnaround models in Priority and Focus Schools.	Title I Office, DOSFSS	Title I will conduct monthly meetings with LEAs that have Priority Schools. The LEA will convene a Central Support Team (CST) to oversee the implementation of the select models and strategies that the LEA will	Successes, barriers and data for each school is discussed in order to collaboratively resolve issues that may arise.	The LEA and the Priority Schools will set expectations for student performance. The LEA and school will compile and analyze data on a quarterly basis. Quarterly data will be discussed during TEST, CST and school team meetings each quarter. Data sets will vary by schools, because each school determines its own priorities based on its comprehensive needs assessment.

		implement in their Priority Schools. The team will coordinate support, as well as, monitor and assess progress of each Priority School. The CST is charged with the coordination of differentiated support for principals, teachers and staff in each Priority School. The CST will meet monthly with MSDE's Title I Office and representation from Maryland's Breakthrough Center to discuss progress, data and other coordinated and differentiated support provided by the LEA and MSDE. Over-site and management structures of support to Priority Schools must be		

		approved by MSDE.		
Meet regularly with LEA Executive Support Team Goal: The LEA will create an organizational structure designed to support all Priority Schools. Team will oversee the implementation of the selected models in Priority schools.	Title I Office, DOSFSS	Title I staff will meet at least three times with LEA Executive Support Team annually. . The Turnaround Executive Support Team will oversee the implementation of the selected models in Priority schools and will have decision-making authority to oversee budget, staffing, policy modifications, partnerships, and data that drive the full implementation of the reform models to ensure greater student achievement in each of its Priority Schools. The TEST will ensure schools are	Policies and practices within the LEA that affect implementation of plans is discussed in an effort to remove barriers.	The LEA and the Priority Schools will set expectations for student performance. The LEA and school will compile and analyze data on a quarterly basis. Quarterly data will be discussed during Turnaround Executive Support Team (TEST), CST and school team meetings each quarter. Data sets will vary by schools, because each school determines its own priorities based on its comprehensive needs assessment.

		receiving differentiated technical assistance in the areas where the schools' performance results in the Core Value areas of achievement, growth, school and college and career readiness are deficient.		
11. Monitor and collect data from eleven college/university teacher preparation programs who continue to pilot the manual described above (*Preparing Educators for High Poverty/Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Schools: A Manual for Teacher Educators, Teachers, and Principals)* and expand use to all preparation programs	DEE, Program Approval	Beginning fall 2015, establish IHE working committee to formulate integration model and means of assessing proficiency	Developed integration models for use of manual in programs; Assessment models	Yet to be developed assessment tools of candidate assimilation of Components (1) Knowing Students; (2) Understanding Oneself in the Context of Poverty/Cultural and Linguistic Diversity; and, (3)Teaching in the Context of Poverty/Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Section VI: Conclusion

Maryland remains committed to providing a world-class education to all students, regardless of family income or race. The State acknowledges that the teacher is the greatest resource within a classroom and that is it imperative that all students have access to excellent educators. Maryland will continue to analyze and update the data and Maryland's plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators as new data becomes available. The internal committee will continue to collaborate, work with stakeholders, and work closely with individual LEAs to address the underlying root causes of specific gaps in specific locations. However, as this work is underway, Maryland will provide support to all LEAs around the statewide root causes identified in the plan.

The plan provides multiple strategies to incentivize, reward, support, and work with teachers to address why they may be unqualified, inexperienced, or teaching out-of-field. As the new strategies are employed, Maryland will use the ongoing monitoring and support to provide a feedback loop to determine the effectiveness of each strategy. The State recognizes that this is a living, breathing plan that will evolve as demographics, information, and environments change.