

Maine's Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators for All Students

Section 1. Introduction

The Maine Department of Education (Maine DOE) is pleased to submit to the U.S. Department of Education (US DE) the following plan, which has been developed to address the long-term needs for improving equitable access to excellent teachers and leaders in Maine. This plan responds to Education Secretary Arne Duncan's July 7, 2014 letter to SEAs, as augmented with additional guidance published on November 10, 2014. Maine's plan complies with (1) the requirement in Section 1111(b)(8)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) that each state's Title I, Part A plan include information on the specific steps that the SEA will take to ensure that students from low-income families, students of color, and students with special needs are not taught by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers, at higher rates than other children and that the measures the agency will use to evaluate and publicly report the progress of the agency with respect to such steps; and (2) the requirement in ESEA Section 1111(e)(2) that a state's plan be revised by the State Education Agency (SEA) if necessary. Given the unique character of Maine's geography and population density, our plan also includes the specific steps that we will take to ensure that students from isolated-small schools (also often high-poverty schools) are not disproportionately served by inexperienced, out of licensure or unqualified educators.

The Maine DOE understands that a plan for equitable access builds on past conversations and planning. These conversations and plans understandably are influenced by the passage, implementation and evolution of the *No Child Left Behind Act*. It is our conclusion that Maine DOE's 2009 Maine effort to address access to highly qualified and effective educators as a requirement of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, State Fiscal Stabilization Fund assurances did not sufficiently braid state education initiatives to achieve the intended outcome. Achieving coherence is important in a state like Maine. When measured by population, Maine and the Maine DOE are both small. In the past several years the Maine DOE has tried to capitalize on this asset to foster intra-agency collaboration and coherence in support of the Maine DOE strategic framework, *Education Evolving*. In our 2015 plan for equitable access, we have tried to reflect our renewed effort to effectively integrate agency initiatives and collaborate with professional organizations to minimize gaps in access to excellent educators

This plan details our approach to achieving our objective of improving access to excellent educators for our state's most disadvantaged youth. However, Maine is committed to improving student outcomes across the state by expanding access to excellent teaching and leading for *all* students through the implementation of this plan and through the implementation of Maine's performance evaluation and professional growth (PEPG) systems. As such, the plan to provide equitable access to excellent educators is a comprehensive approach to strengthening and maintaining educator effectiveness across the state, with an emphasis on our schools and classrooms in greatest needs. To create this plan, a team of leaders at Maine DOE, led by the

Chief Academic Officer, took the following steps in order to address US DE expectations in developing this plan. Each of these steps is further defined and explained within Maine’s plan

1. **Established a steering team and a work group** at the Maine DOE. Collectively these two teams—which span the agency roles recommended in the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders guide—interpreted the charge of the US DE, developed the work plan, engaged stakeholders, collected data and identified gaps, analyzed root causes, developed draft timelines, sought outside consultation that contributed to Maine’s plan for equitable access to excellent educators, focused the initial data, and drafted the plan for equitable access to excellent educators. The steering committee met monthly through the fall, and the work group held multiple monthly meetings from January through May 2015. See Appendix H for Maine DOE membership and Appendix G for the initial planning activities related to the development of the state plan. .
2. **Identified key stakeholders** critical to conversations about and planning for equitable access to excellent educators. See Appendix A for a list of stakeholders involved in focus groups.
3. **Reviewed data** provided by (US DE) and our own Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) to identify equity gaps. The SLDS team data team provided analytics to identify gaps that arise from data sources available to Maine DOE. The Maine DOE work group and various consultants examined the data over the course of several meetings, narrowed the focus and analysis to the most reliable data, and developed the required definitions to drive the data analysis. See Appendix I for a timeline of related resources and activities.
4. **Conducted root-cause analyses and strategy identification** based on gap data. Four root cause analyses were conducted with external stakeholder groups, two in March and two in April 2015. . See Appendices B, C, D and E for agendas and meeting minutes.
5. **Conducted Maine DOE analysis of stakeholder feedback** to identify and target priority root causes and key strategies and identify significant metrics.
6. **Created a plan** to implement strategies, measure and report progress, and ensure ongoing stakeholder engagement.
7. **Planned for the development of a definition of “excellent educators”** to be added to the list of state definitions used to identify and address gaps in equitable access to excellent educators. The Maine DOE has recently revised rules governing PEPG systems to include authorization of the state to monitor all aspects of educator effectiveness systems statewide. This monitoring will be coordinated with strategies for improving equitable access to excellent educators. The system will be fully implemented in the 2016-17 school year, and we can begin collecting effectiveness data in the spring of 2017.

Section 2: Stakeholder Engagement

We believe the success of Maine’s state plan for teacher and leader equity will depend in large part on the long-term involvement and ownership of other stakeholders, including parents and other community members, teachers and principals (and the organizations representing them),

higher education, the State Board of Education, local school boards and other business and community groups.

Early in the process, the Maine DOE brainstormed a list of potential stakeholder groups including state and district leaders on educator equality, teachers, principals, parents, union leaders, and community and business organizations. Targeted invitations went out to each group and/or individual identified. To ensure that we produced a truly shared plan of action, Maine DOE held four focus groups with stakeholders in spring 2015 as described below. Some of the focus group meetings were designed to bring together very specific stakeholder groups, such as Maine Schools for Excellence, the State Board of Education, and Teacher and Leader Educators from higher education. Others were designed to bring together several stakeholder groups with wider viewpoints, such as Maine Teachers of the Year (Somerset and Oxford Counties), Maine School Management Association, and Teachers and Leaders from isolated-small, high-poverty and high-minority school districts in Maine. See Appendix A for a list of individuals representing each stakeholder group in attendance at the March and April root cause analysis focus groups and Appendix B-D for agendas and outcomes.

Prior to the focus groups, the Maine DOE first published an article in the Maine Commissioner of Education's Weekly Update on January 6, 2015: <http://mainedoenews.net/2015/01/06/maine-to-develop-plan-to-ensure-equitable-access-to-effective-educators/>. The article provided an overview of the work to be accomplished and resulted in independent solicitations for membership our stakeholder focus group meetings.

Focus Groups:

March 11, 2015: This meeting was a full-day session and included stakeholders from business, special education, school and district leadership, and parents. This group was facilitated by Carol Keirstead and Scott Reynolds of the Northeast Comprehensive Center.

March 12, 2015: This day included two half -day meetings with representation, in the first meeting, from rural schools and schools with highly diverse schools; and in the second, state board of education and higher education. The sessions were facilitated by Kathy Dunne and Scott Reynolds of the Northeast Comprehensive Center.

April 1, 2015: This meeting was an afternoon session with districts participating in the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant, the Maine Schools for Excellence. These districts have been implementing incentivized performance evaluation and professional growth models over the last three years. The group included school leaders, teachers and parents from small-isolated schools and high-poverty schools in Maine. The session was facilitated by Ellen Sherratt of the Center for Great Teachers and Leaders.

April 23, 2015: This meeting was a half-day session with representation from Maine State Board of Education, Unity College, Colby College, Husson University, Bowdoin College, University of Maine, Maine Education Association, National Education Association, Maine Schools for Excellence, Maine Teachers of the Year, Maine School Board Association, and Maine School Management Association. The meeting was facilitated by Andrea Reade of the Northeast Comprehensive Center.

As documented in the agendas found in Appendices B-D, stakeholders were directly involved in the root-cause analyses. Stakeholders also collaborated in examining data to identify Maine's

most significant gaps in equitable access to excellent teaching and leading—which, together with our root-cause analyses, informed our theory of action.

Our ongoing plans to engage stakeholders include a full day session in July with the Human Capital Management Systems (HCMS) committee of the TIF schools this July. This group has been meeting for a year to identify and generate strategies for maximizing the potential of teachers and leaders in schools; several HCMS members participated in the March and April focus groups. Their expertise make them an appropriate group to confirm the identified strategies and associated root causes identified in our plan and assist the Maine DOE in further identifying relevant metrics and performance objectives. In addition, early in the fall of 2015 the Maine DOE will share information on aspects of the Equitable Access Plan and collect input from the Educator Effectiveness /Proficiency-Based Advisory Council, the Transformational Leaders Network (associated with the state school improvement efforts), and the Committee of Practice (associated with Title I). This outreach will capitalize on existing groups. The Maine DOE established a strong history of stakeholder engagement during the development of Maine’s performance evaluation and professional growth systems for educator effectiveness at state and local levels and will use networks established through PEPG system development to share information with the larger state community.

The Maine DOE knows that it will also benefit from increased future participation of parent and civil rights groups. The Maine DOE commits to partnering with these stakeholders. Moving forward, the Maine DOE plans to meet annually with these groups to share information and solicit input and assistance in the long-term implementation, monitoring, and improvement of our plan.

To support our broader community of stakeholders interested in staying updated on the progress of the plan but who may not be able to invest significant time in the process, we plan to post regular articles in the Maine Commissioner of Education’s Weekly Update and invite commentary and feedback.

Section 3. Equity Gap Exploration and Analysis

To ensure that our equitable access work is data-driven, Maine has relied on multiple data sources which are outlined in the next section, *Exploration of the Data*. Maine’s plan uses the State definition of Isolated-Small Schools rather than the Federal definition of Rural Schools in keeping with the rural nature of the State. The average district size in Maine is less than 900 students, and there is limited diversity in all but a few districts. This created challenges in providing meaningful data, especially in the area of minority populations. Only 20 schools in 4 districts have a minority percentage exceeding 30%, and 30 schools have 10% or greater English language learners. As a result, a category for high-risk Schools was created that includes small population subgroups.

The focus thus far has been on readily available sources that are considered reliable and well validated. Potential additional data sources, such as attendance, school climate and locally determined teacher assignments to classes, have been identified by our stakeholder groups. These data will be explored and analyzed as the plan is further developed.

Definitions and Metrics

The Maine DOE searched statute and regulation for existing definitions applicable to the development of the plan for equitable access. This search yielded only one established definition. Elementary school is defined in Maine Statute 20-A MRSA §1(10). All other definitions were developed by the Maine DOE working group for the purposes of this plan.

To guide our data analysis Maine will consider equitable access in terms of the following characteristics of teachers:

Teacher. Maine includes the following positions based on collection of LEA staff data: Classroom Teacher, Literacy Specialist and Special Education Teacher.

Unqualified Teachers. Unqualified is defined as a teacher with no certification or no endorsement as a literacy specialist. This definition may warrant reconsideration in the future. During the April 23, 2015 Maine DOE meeting, we made the decision to maintain this definition as is because all root cause analysis by stakeholder groups was based on this definition.

Out-of-Field Teachers. Out-of-field is defined as a teacher with professional certification show has no endorsement for the subject or course he/she is assigned to teach, or are teaching outside his/her certified grade level.

Inexperienced Teachers. Inexperienced is defined as a teacher with only Conditional, Provisional, or Provisional Extended certifications. This definition will identify teachers who has 0-3 years teaching experience in Maine as well as teachers from out-of-state fall prior to obtaining professional certification in Maine. The number of out-of-state teachers is minimal.

Teacher Turnover. Teacher turnover is defined as the three-year average of the number of teachers per school who are not teaching at the same school the next year relative to the number of teachers at the school.

Principal Turnover. Principal turnover is defined as the three-year average of the number of principals per school who are not at the same school the next year relative to the number of principals at the school each year.

Average Teacher Salaries. Data on salaries is based on full-time teachers and does not include benefits.

Maine will consider equitable access in terms of the following characteristics of schools:

Poverty. Students eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL). High poverty schools are defined as schools with 53% or more students receiving FRL.

Minority. Students with a federally defined race other than White. High-minority schools are defined as schools with 7% of the students as a race other than White.

Elementary School: Grade range K-8 or a subset within the range (e.g. K-3, 7-8).

High School: Includes schools with a grade span of 7-12. Maine has schools with grade ranges up to K-12. The high school grade range was expanded from the typical 9-12 to 7-12 to avoid eliminating 13 small combined schools from the equity plan.

Isolated-Small Schools.

Isolated-Small Elementary Schools Qualifications:

K-8 Schools: Fewer than 15 students per grade level; number of school options available fewer than 5; nearest school is more than 8 miles away.

Non K-8 Schools: Fewer than 29 students per grade level; number of school options available fewer than 5; nearest school is more than 8 miles away.

Isolated-Small Secondary Schools Qualifications:

Fewer than 200 students per school; distance from furthest point in the district to nearest high school is at least 18.5 miles; distance between the high school and nearest high school is more than 10 miles.

Island School Qualifications:

Islands operating schools

High-Risk Elementary Schools. A high-risk elementary school is defined as a school that reflects one or more of the following criteria: schools with 20% or more special education or 30% or more minority or 10% or more limited English proficiency (LEP).

High-Risk High Schools. A high-risk high school is defined as a school that reflects one or more of the following criteria: 20% or more special education; 30% or more minority; or 10% or more LEP.

Exploration of the Data

- The report provided by the Office of Civil Rights was reviewed and eliminated because it was deemed to be out of date; incomplete; and, when compared to verified data sources, seemed to be lacking in data quality.
- Certification Data – this was limited as the criteria currently collected by the state do not align with the level of detail suggested by US DE; necessitating additional data collection and clarifications to Maine’s definitions in the future.
- Principal data was limited to the fields shown because the state does not have access to additional information about experience in the position. PEPG data will provide information about principal effectiveness and there is legislation pending to identify strategies to recruit and retain principals.
- Reconsideration of definitions for unqualified, inexperience and out-of-licensure teacher will take place during a review of the certification rules. Legislation is pending to revise the certification regulations beginning in 2016. At that time, the state also intends to formally define an “excellent educator.” The Maine DOE will engage stakeholders in this definition in the 2015-2016 school year.

Data Sources. For this analysis, we used a variety of data sources, which is stored in the longitudinal data warehouse, which maintains data over time without overwriting old data. Maine’s statewide longitudinal data system data warehouse includes data from: the Maine Education Data Management System (MEDMS) data collection, the Educator Credentialing

System, the School Finance and Operation Essential Programs and Services System, and the Infinite Campus State Edition Student Information System.

We initially looked at equity gaps for schools as the unit of analysis for quartiles of high-poverty students and minority students and focused on the three statutory teacher metrics (inexperienced, unqualified, and out-of-field assignments) across schools in the state. We expanded the gap analysis to include isolated-small schools and additional metrics including average teacher salaries and teacher and principal turnover. Because of Maine's low percentage of minority students, we created a High-Risk School category that includes minority, special education and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) schools. To be included in the high risk category a school must meet at least one of the three criteria.

The decision was made to identify gaps separately in high schools and elementary schools because we found differences in the equity gaps for these groups of schools when we analyzed the data.

The following additional definitions and metrics are planned for future analysis:

Excellent Educator. Definition to be added as part of the work plan. No metrics are currently available.

Average Principal Salaries. Data on salaries is based on full-time principals and does not include benefits.

Unqualified Principals. Unqualified is defined as principals with no certification or no endorsement for the position.

Exit Data. Exit data is defined as factors contributing to a teacher or principal leaving a school or the profession.

Multiple-Years Data. Multiple-years data are based on three-year trends.

Starting Salaries. For both teachers and principals.

Gender

Teacher/Student Ratios. Ratios are based on class sizes.

Table 1. Maine Elementary School Equity Gaps in School Year 2013–14

This table shows that teacher and principal turnover is highest in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools AND that students in high-poverty and isolated-small schools are disproportionately served by inexperienced and out-of-field teachers.

Table 1. Maine Elementary School Equity Gaps in School Year 2013–14

Elementary Schools ¹	School Count ¹	Inexperienced Teachers ²	Out of Field Teachers ²	Unqualified Teachers ²	Average Salary ³	Teacher Turnover ³	Principal Turnover ³
All Schools	467	8.6%	3.0%	0.4%	\$49,125	14.6%	15.1%
High-Poverty Quartile (63% or more FRL)	121/467	10.5%	4.5%	0.6%	\$45,389	15.9%	16.8%
Low-Poverty Quartile (37% or less FRL)	116/467	7.5%	3.0%	0.5%	\$54,240	14.0%	14.0%
High-Minority Quartile (8.3% or more)	118/467	9.2%	3.1%	0.4%	\$51,347	15.4%	13.1%
Low-Minority Quartile (3.5% or less)	118/467	9.1%	3.2%	0.4%	\$46,390	14.5%	14.3%
High Risk- Y	172/467	9.4%	3.7%	0.4%	\$53,532	15.4%	16.1%
High Risk - N	295/467	8.2%	2.6%	0.5%	\$49,629	14.2%	14.6%
Isolated-Small Schools - Y	53	15.6%	5.7%	1.4%	\$45,310	19.8%	18.6%
Isolated-Small Schools - N	415	8.3%	2.8%	0.4%	\$49,311	14.0%	14.7%

Table 2. Maine High School Equity Gaps in School Year 2013–14

This table shows that students in high-risk and high-poverty schools experience higher rates of teacher and principal turnover than those in high-poverty and not high-risk schools. Teacher turnover is significantly higher in isolated-small schools but there is little difference in principal turnover. Students in high-poverty, isolated-small schools and high-risk schools are more frequently disproportionately served by inexperienced and out-of-field teachers than students in other settings. Principal turnover is overall higher than teacher turnover in high schools.

Table 2. Maine High School Equity Gaps in School Year 2013–14

High Schools ¹	School Count ¹	Inexperienced Teachers ²	Out of Field Teachers ²	Unqualified Teachers ²	Average Salary ³	Teacher Turnover ³	Principal Turnover ³
All Schools	120	8.4%	4.8%	1.8%	\$50,522	11.4%	16.9%
High-Poverty Quartile (53% or more FRL)	31/120	9.5%	6.0%	2.3%	\$48,767	12.3%	14.7%
Low-Poverty Quartile (30% or less FRL)	31/120	7.1%	4.2%	3.8%	\$55,177	11.1%	14.0%
High-Minority Quartile (7.0% or more)	30/120	8.1%	4.8%	2.2%	\$52,998	11.2%	20.3%
Low-Minority Quartile (4.0% or less)	32/120	8.9%	3.6%	0.7%	\$48,294	10.9%	21.6%
High Risk - Y	42/120	8.7%	5.9%	2.1%	\$49,790	14.4%	17.1%
High Risk - N	78/120	8.3%	4.4%	1.7%	\$50,803	9.9%	16.7%
Isolated-Small Schools - Y	8	15.5%	7.2%	1.0%	\$42,204	17.3%	16.7%
Isolated-Small Schools - N	112	8.2%	4.8%	1.8%	\$50,716	11.0%	16.9%

¹ Sources: MEDMS Infrastructure and Infinite Campus State Edition

² Sources: MEDMS Staff System and Educator Credentialing System

³ Source: MEDMS Staff System

Equity Gap Analysis

Maine’s analysis included all three required subgroups (inexperienced, out-of –license and not qualified) as well as salary and turnover. We examined high-poverty, high- minority, isolated-small and high-risk schools. In general, the gaps in educator equity in Maine are not large but are most significant in isolated-small schools where the largest gap is in inexperienced teachers, at 7.3% for both the elementary and high schools.

To better understand the significance of the gaps, in addition to the percentage differences for each metric for each subgroup, we also looked at the ratio of the percentages. This helps identify differences when the gaps are reversed. For example, the high-minority schools are primarily concentrated in the larger districts, where average teacher salaries are higher, while the low-minority schools are typically in very small districts and less well funded.

Table 3. Percentage Difference and Ratio of Percentages for Three Statutory Teacher Metrics Across Elementary Schools in the State

This table summarizes the percentage differences and percent ratios for the three equity gaps in the ESEA statute for all four subgroups in elementary schools. Table 3 shows that students from high-poverty and isolated-small schools are disproportionately served by inexperienced and out of field teachers. Additionally, the percentage difference and percentage ratio for the gaps are largest for inexperienced teachers in isolated-small schools. The unqualified teachers were not addressed because the n size was so small.

Table 3. Percentage Difference and Ratio of Percentages for Three Statutory Teacher Metrics Across Elementary Schools in the State

School Type	Inexperienced Teachers		Unqualified Teachers		Out-of-Field Teachers	
	Percentage Point Difference	Percent Ratio	Percentage Point Difference	Percent Ratio	Percentage Point Difference	Percent Ratio
Low vs. High Income Schools	3.0%	1.4 times as large	0.1%	1.2 times as large	1.5%	1.5 times as large
High vs. Low Minority Schools	0.1%	1.0 times as large	0%	0 times as large	0.1%	1.0 times smaller
Isolated vs. Non-Isolated-Small Schools	7.3%	1.9 times as large	1.0%	3.5 times as large	2.9%	2.0 times as large
High vs. Low Risk Schools	1.2%	1.1 times as large	0.1%	1.3 times smaller	1.1%	1.4 times as large

Table 4. Percentage Difference and Ratio of Percentages for Additional Metrics Across Elementary Schools in the State

This table summarizes the percentage differences and percent ratios for three additional equity gaps for all four subgroups in elementary schools. Table 4, shows that the percentage difference and percentage ratio are largest for teacher and principal turnover in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools and the greatest gap is in isolated-small schools. While average teacher salaries are generally lower in high poverty, isolated-small schools and high riskschools the gap is significantly higher in the isolated-small schools. Average teacher salaries are higher in the high-minority schools due to the larger size and less rural nature of the high-minority schools.

Table 4. Percentage Difference and Ratio of Percentages for Additional Metrics Across Elementary Schools in the State

School Type	Average Salary		Teacher Turnover		Principal Turnover	
	<i>Dollars Difference</i>	<i>Dollars Ratio</i>	<i>Percentage Point Difference</i>	<i>Percent Ratio</i>	<i>Percentage Point Difference</i>	<i>Percent Ratio</i>
Low vs. High Income Schools	\$8,851	1.2 times as smaller	1.9%	1.1 times as large	2.8%	1.2 times as large
High vs. Low Minority Schools	\$4,957	1.1 times larger	0.9%	1.1 times as large	1.2%	1.1 times smaller
Isolated vs. Non-Isolated-Small Schools	\$4,001	1.1 times smaller	5.8%	1.4 times as large	3.9%	1.3 times as large
High vs. Low Risk Schools	\$3,903	1.1 times larger	1.2%	1.1 times as large	1.5%	1.1 times as large

Table 5. Percentage Difference and Ratio of Percentages for Three Statutory Teacher Metrics Across High Schools in the State

This table summarizes the percentage differences and percent ratios for the three equity gaps in the ESEA statute for all four subgroups in high schools. Table 5 shows that students from high-poverty and isolated-small schools are disproportionately served by inexperienced and out-of-field teachers and the percentage difference and percentage ratio are largest for inexperienced teachers in isolated-small schools. The gap is smaller in high-risk schools. There is also a gap in unqualified teachers for high vs. low minority schools.

Table 5. Percentage Difference and Ratio of Percentages for Three Statutory Teacher Metrics Across High Schools in the State

School Type	Inexperienced Teachers		Unqualified Teachers		Out-of-Field Teachers	
	Percentage Point Difference	Percent Ratio	Percentage Point Difference	Percent Ratio	Percentage Point Difference	Percent Ratio
Low vs. High Income Schools	2.4%	1.3 times as large	1.5%	1.7 times smaller	1.8%	1.4 times as large
High vs. Low Minority Schools	0.8%	1.1 times smaller	1.5%	3.1 times as large	1.2%	1.3 times as large
Isolated vs. Non-Isolated-Small Schools	7.3%	1.9 times as large	0.8%	1.8 times smaller	2.4%	1.5 times as large
High vs. Low Risk Schools	0.4%	1.0 times as large	0.4%	1.2 times as large	1.5%	1.3 times as large

Table 6. Percentage Difference and Ratio of Percentages for Additional Metrics Across High Schools in the State

This table summarizes the percentage differences and percent ratios for three additional equity gaps for all four subgroups in high schools. Table 6, shows that the percentage difference and percentage ratio are largest for teacher turnover in isolated-small schools and high-risk schools, but are also higher in high-poverty schools. There is also a gap in principal turnover in high-poverty and high-risk schools. While average teacher salaries are generally lower in high-poverty and isolated-small schools the gap is significantly higher in the isolated-small schools. Average teacher salaries are higher in the high-minority schools because these schools are larger and situated in less rural locales.

Table 6. Percentage Difference and Ratio of Percentages for Additional Metrics Across High Schools in the State

School Type	Average Salary		Teacher Turnover		Principal Turnover	
	Dollars Difference	Dollars Ratio	Percentage Point Difference	Percent Ratio	Percentage Point Difference	Percent Ratio
Low vs. High Income Schools	\$6,410	1.1 times smaller	1.2%	1.1 times as large	0.7%	1.1 times as large
High vs. Low Minority Schools	\$4,704	1.1 times larger	0.3%	1.0 times as large	1.3%	1.1 times smaller
Isolated vs. Non-Isolated-Small Schools	\$8,512	1.2 times smaller	6.3%	1.6 times as large	0.2%	1.0 times as large
High vs. Low	\$1,013	1.0 times	4.5%	1.5 times	0.4%	1.0 times

RiskSchools		smaller		as large		as large
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Based on data generated by the Maine DOE, stakeholder input, and additional DOE working group analysis, the Maine DOE identified three key equity gaps.

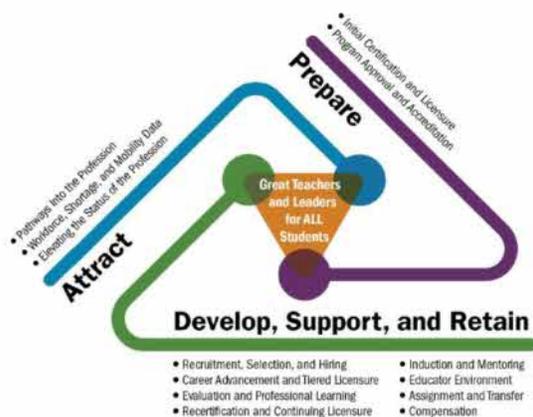
Maine’s Equity Gaps:

1. Students from high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools are served by inexperienced and out-of-field teachers more often than students in other settings.
2. Students in high-risk, isolated-small schools and high-poverty schools are served by teachers who work in the school for shorter periods of time (higher turnover) than students in other settings.
3. Students in high school are served by principals who work in the school for shorter periods of time (higher turnover) more often than students in elementary schools and, overall, principal turnover is higher than teacher turnover.

Section 4. Strategies for Eliminating Equity Gaps

The Maine DOE recognizes that equitable access to excellent teachers and leaders is a complicated endeavor, and that achieving our teacher and leader equity goals will require implementation of a comprehensive, multi-faceted strategy built on a vision of organizational change. Maine’s Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators, relies on a general theory of action and two focused theories of action specific to the identified gaps for equitable access.

Maine’s theories of action to address gaps in equitable access to effective educators are built on the Talent Management Framework developed by the Center for Great Teachers and Leaders shown in the diagram below.



Overall Theory of Action – The following provides a holistic theory of action that guides Maine’s overall thinking about improving equitable access.

- **If** a comprehensive approach to talent management—in particular for high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools and districts—is implemented with fidelity, and its implementation is monitored and modified as warranted over time;
- **If** the profession is characterized as a professional workforce;
- **If** leader induction and mentoring programs are strengthened to foster healthier school climates and more effectively support teachers in high poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools and districts, and
- **If** teacher preparation programs are strengthened to support educators in understanding the unique needs of high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools and districts,
- **Then** Maine school districts will be better able to recruit, retain and develop excellent educators such that all students have equitable access to excellent teaching and leading to help them achieve their highest potential in school and beyond.

Focused Theory of Action –Out-of-licensure, inexperience, and high turnover teachers

- **If** high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools and districts are monitored during the implementation of performance evaluation and professional growth systems to provide targeted supports;
- **If** teacher preparation programs are strengthened to ensure that teachers have more pre-service experiences in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools;
- **If** incentives are put in place to retain and attract teachers in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools through tuition reimbursement; and
- **If** induction and mentoring programs are revised and strengthened to support inexperienced educators to be more successful in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools,
- **Then** Maine school districts will be better able to recruit, retain and develop excellent educators such that all students have equitable access to excellent teaching.

Focused Theory of Action – High turnover principals

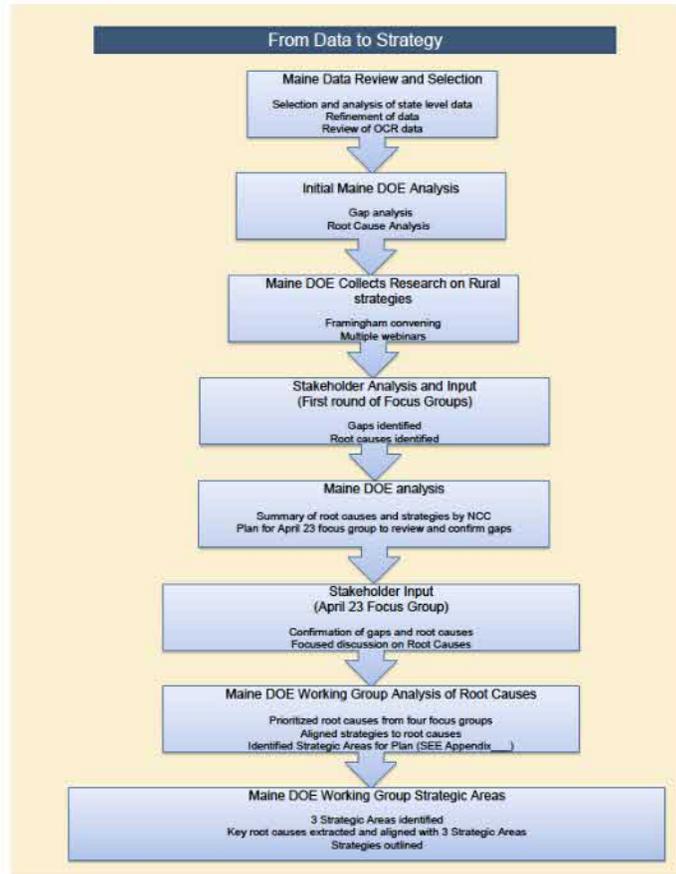
- **If** high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools and districts are monitored during the implementation of performance evaluation and professional growth systems for principals to provide targeted supports;
- **If** professional organizations and state education agencies collaborate to support principals in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools and district;
- **If** incentives are put in place to retain principals in high-poverty, isolated-small, and high-risk schools through longevity bonuses; and
- **If** induction and mentoring programs are revised and strengthened to support inexperienced principals in becoming more successful in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools,
- **Then** Maine school districts will be better able to recruit, retain, and develop excellent principals such that all students have equitable access to excellent leadership.

The Theories of Action were developed in conjunction with the *identification and refinement of root causes and strategies in a process of analysis that consisted of four steps:

1. **Identifying Relevant and Available Data:** In this step, Maine DOE determined what data are available and relevant to identifying equity gaps and determined relevant data sources and refined data based on feedback from CCSSO and data analysis experts in order to conduct an analysis of these data.
2. **Analyzing Data and Identifying Equity Gaps:** In this step, Maine DOE, with assistance from CCSSO experts, identified the equity gaps resulting from our analysis in preparation for the root-cause analysis. Focus group participants were provided with this data and also identified gaps that confirmed and expanded the initial Maine DOE analysis.
3. **Brainstorming Root Causes and Strategies:** In this step, Maine DOE, with focus groups from varying context, brainstormed a complete list of root causes of the equity gaps, and prioritized root causes and also brainstormed strategies associated with the root causes. Using the information collected in the root cause and strategy analyses conducted by stakeholders during the March 11, March 12, April 1 and April 23 stakeholders meetings, the Maine DOE collated the root causes, strategies, and related data needs into the tables shown in Appendix F.
4. **Mapping Strategies to Root Causes:** In this final step, Maine DOE refined the brainstorming from the focus groups. With assistance from CCSSO and other experts, the Maine DOE identified additional evidence-based strategies to address the root causes. Maine DOE then analyzed, aligned, and prioritized the information from all of the steps to generate the three strategic areas and described the associated root causes and proposed substrategies. This process is described in the diagram that follows.

*See Appendix I for a timeline of related resources and activities.

Summary of Process from Data Analysis to Three Strategic Areas



Three Strategic Areas

These strategic areas were identified through a root-cause analysis, described above, that was conducted both internally and externally through broad stakeholder engagement described above and in Appendix F. The Maine DOE working group studied the root causes and list of possible strategies generated by the focus group and identified three key strategic areas which the state will initially pursue. The Maine DOE then further prioritized and aligned root causes and strategies identified by the stakeholders. The charts below outline key strategies and substrategies and associated root causes as determined by the Maine DOE working group. The three strategic areas are:

- **Recruitment and Retention, pg. 17**
- **State Policies Driven Incentives pg. 20**
- **Educator Preparation Enhancements pg. 22**

Strategic Area 1: Recruitment and Retention

We believe that the data and root-cause analyses call for the adoption and coordination of policies for recruitment, hiring and retention. The substrategies in the chart below were developed from the key ideas that emerged from the stakeholder focus groups.

Key Ideas:

- Conduct surveys to more fully understand why teachers and principals leave high-poverty and isolated-small school settings
- Work with the TIF Human Capital Management Systems (TIF HCMS) committee to identify and develop recruitment strategies
- Recommend that districts consider earmarking of funds for longevity incentives for teachers and principals
- Revise and strengthen existing state mentoring/induction supports
- Identify and train effective teacher mentors, making use of Teachers of the Year, Presidential Awardees, National Board Certified educators, and those identified by the PEPG system
- Develop a state recruitment plan for principal leadership
- Explore the benefits of tiered certification for principals

Associated Root-Cause Analysis Findings

- 1. Difficult to fill positions due to location and available resources and teaching demands.** Maine's high-poverty and isolated-small schools are difficult to fill for many reasons. The locations are often distant from areas that offer access to restaurants, museums and social venues attractive to young educators; the areas lack fiscal resources to purchase sufficient instructional materials and provide professional development; and the communities are often struggling with economic challenges due to plant closings and declining fishing populations. The TIF HCMS has been meeting for the last 18 months to identify recruitment obstacles and strategize solutions for these settings.
- 2. Mentoring and Induction.** Ten years ago, Maine developed a strong mentoring and induction program and network. Changes in SEA staffing and resources have resulted in decreased vitality of the network and fewer supports for educators, particularly in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools
- 3. High Turnover.** Stakeholders reported that inexperienced educators often seek jobs in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools. Due to the small application pools, inexperienced educators can gain valuable teaching experience, and after two or so years, they seek employment in more attractive settings.

Recruitment and Retention Strategies

Substrategy 1: Conduct surveys to more fully understand why teachers and principals leave. It is clear that the state needs to better understand what causes teachers to stay at and leave high-poverty and isolated-small schools. The Maine DOE will work with Maine Education Policy Research Institute (MEPRI) to conduct a study and use the results to influence goals and actions to strengthen retention and to strengthen the impact of strategies outlined in the plan. Annually, we will review the overall status of teacher retention in Maine and announce additional steps that we will take to help improve recruitment and hiring in the interest of retaining educators.

Substrategy 2: Identify and Develop Recruitment Strategies. Maine will identify and share recruitment strategies and tools developed by the TIF HCMS to help LEAs attract and retain current and potential high-quality educators (principals and teachers) to high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools. The Maine DOE will recommend that institutions of higher education in the state include recruitment events with hard-to-staff schools through local educator preparation programs. Research shows that teachers and leaders often prefer to work close to where they grew up. With this information in mind, we will ensure that these campaigns take into account the geographic location of targeted schools. Recruitment incentives may include scholarships to work in targeted schools, loan forgiveness, and longevity bonuses in these settings.

Substrategy 3: Longevity Incentives for Educators. Recognizing the insufficiency of teacher and principal salaries to attract and retain excellent educators in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools, Maine DOE will recommend that districts adopt longevity incentives. The Maine DOE will engage MEPRI to identify successful strategies used in other rural states and seek funding from the legislature to pilot longevity incentives with a small group of high-poverty schools. The incentives for teaching in a high-poverty schools are particularly important to our equitable access planning because such incentives help to counteract the tendency of experienced educators (both principals and teachers) to move to lower poverty schools, and they provide appropriate additional compensation to those teachers willing to work in the most challenging schools. To enable these districts to retain talent we will encourage districts to work with business leaders and community organizations to generate funding to support longevity pay as a way to attract talented college students and career changers to the profession. Careful consideration must be given to the strategies related to funding. This plan recognizes the need for stakeholder engagement in the development of potential funding strategies.

Substrategy 4: Provide Educator Career Advancement Opportunities in High-Poverty Schools. In recognition of the relative lack of career advancement opportunities available to educators in high-poverty schools, Maine DOE will strongly encourage Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to create teacher leader programs, particularly in high-poverty schools and expand opportunities for teacher-led schools.

Substrategy 5: Revise and Strengthen State Induction and Mentoring Support . The Maine DOE will engage the Educator Effectiveness /Proficiency-Based Education (EE/PBE) Advisory Council and the State Board of Education in a review and revision of the existing state mentoring and induction programs for new teachers. The Maine DOE will also work with the MEA to develop and pilot a system of online communities of practice for veteran teachers in high-

poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools and districts that identifies and utilizes effective State Teacher of the Year awardees (STOYs), National Board Certified teachers, Presidential Awardees for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching (PAEMST), and those identified by the PEPG systems as highly effective teachers to serve as mentors. The Maine DOE will recommend that institutions of higher education target continuing educational opportunities and professional development for new and veteran teachers in low-income, small- isolated and high-risk schools and especially to diagnose student needs and provide targeted educator supports including special education training.

Substrategy 6: Strengthen Principal Leadership. Stakeholders were clear in expressing that effective principal leadership is fundamental to school climate and teacher satisfaction and longevity. Toward this end, strengthening principal leadership is a significant component of retaining and recruiting teachers. The Maine DOE will recommend that the State Board of Education consider tiered certifications for principals in the revision of the certification statutes and regulations. The Maine DOE will also recommend that the Maine DOE, MEA and the Maine Principals Association collaborate on recruitment strategies to identify teachers who would make strong candidates for the position of principal.

The Maine DOE will continue to expand supports for school leadership offered through our system of ESEA supports for struggling schools to also include high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools. Currently school improvement specialists provide coaching in the use of Dirigo Star, a resource with demonstrated effectiveness in high-poverty and isolated-small schools.

While the Maine DOE has focused its plan for equitable access on teachers and principals, it has also acknowledge the critical impact that district leadership (the superintendent) plays in implementing many of these actions. Strengthening principal leadership is closely associated with strong leadership by superintendents. The Maine DOE will encourage Maine School Management Association (MSMA), the superintendents and school board association, to plan to make superintendent leadership in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools a priority of the organization.

Substrategy 7: Build School Board and Superintendent Understanding to Support Leadership. Principals in high-poverty, isolated-small schools and high-risk schools need superintendents and school board members who understand the unique challenges of recruiting, retaining and supporting teachers to be effective. The Maine DOE will collaborate with MSMA to provide professional development for superintendents and school board members through the existing MSMA conferences and the Commissioner’s Conference. The Maine DOE will use its weekly communications as a platform to shed light on the equity gaps and share strategies and related work to increase equitable access to excellent educators for all students in Maine including students in high-poverty, isolated-small schools and high-risk schools. The Maine DOE will leverage stories of schools that are bucking the odds in articulating and sharing successful strategies. In addition the Maine DOE will meet with the Dr. Gordon Donaldson and the Small Schools Coalition to share information about equity gaps and strategies for future professional development and resources.

Strategic Area 2: State Policy Driven Incentives

We believe that a key strategy for decreasing gaps in access to excellent educators is for the Maine DOE to shape policy incentives within its control to minimize obstacles to teachers and principals. The substrategies in the chart below were developed from the key ideas that emerged from the stakeholder focus groups.

Key Ideas:

- Waive certification fees
- Support certification requirements that identify appropriate broadened areas of certification (for example, middle/high STEM certification)
- Conducting research to better understand school attendance
- Incentivize longevity of principals and teachers by providing longevity bonuses to educators who teach for 5 years in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools and districts

Associated Root-Cause Analysis Findings

- 1. Salary to benefits ratio.** Stakeholders agreed that teachers and leaders in high-poverty and isolated-small schools often assume more responsibilities than their counter parts in other settings, both in teaching load and in filling extra-curricular roles. This results in a lower salary to benefits ratio in these settings.
- 2. Low student attendance.** Stakeholders reported that student attendance rates are often lower in high-poverty and isolated-small schools, this adds to the overall challenge of teaching.
- 3. High Turnover.** Stakeholders reported that new teachers often seek jobs in in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools. Due to the small application pools, inexperience educators can gain valuable teaching experience and after two or so years they seek employment in more attractive locations.

State policy driven incentives

Substrategy 1: Fee Waivers. As part of the revision to certification regulations the Maine DOE will re-evaluate the existing fee schedules related to teacher certification and endorsement. The Maine DOE will recommend revised criteria for fee waivers for teachers and principals in high poverty and isolated-small schools to the State Board of Education during the rule-making process.

Substrategy 2: Longevity Incentives for Educators. Recognizing the insufficiency of teacher and principal salaries to attract and retain excellent educators in our high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools, incentives for teaching in a high-poverty school are important to the Maine DOE's equitable access planning. Longevity incentives have been demonstrated to increase the length of stay of educators (both principals and teachers) in high poverty schools in other parts of the country. The Maine DOE will recommend that, where possible, LEAs use longevity incentives as a strategy for keeping educators in these challenging settings for a minimum of five years. The Maine DOE will also seek funding from the legislature to pilot longevity incentives with a small group of high-poverty schools and isolated-small schools.

Careful consideration must be given to the strategies related to procurement of funding. This plan recognizes the need for stakeholder engagement in the development of potential funding strategies.

Substrategy 3: Collect Data to Better Understand Attendance Issues. Stakeholders reported that educators who work with chronically absent students often face greater obstacles in their teaching than educators whose students attend school regularly. Stakeholders identified poor attendance as a significant challenge and root cause for turnover for teachers in high poverty schools. Maine DOE will recommend that the Joint Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs and Maine Education Policy Research Institute (MEPRI), which serves as the research arm for the Joint Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, conduct research on attendance in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools to verify that poor attendance is a root cause of turnover. In the meantime, Maine DOE will also encourage SAUs to collaborate with Count ME In to improve strategies for increasing student attendance.

Substrategy 5: Expansion of Certification Areas. Maine DOE will work with the State Board of Education to expand certification areas to create new certifications and endorsements that address current needs, while adequately preparing educators to provide greater flexibility to schools. For example, the Maine DOE is currently engaged in conversation about the addition of a STEM certification earned through matriculation in a prescribed undergraduate degree. The proposed course of study could provide the basis for a 7-12 STEM certification in physical science, engineering, mathematics and computer science. This certification, which has been a long-standing need, would also provide increased flexibility in recruitment in schools disproportionately served by out-of-licensure educators in mathematics and science.

Substrategy 6: Online Access To Excellent Educators. Courses similar to the AP-4-All program that will provide students in high-poverty and isolated-small schools access to courses taught by educators who are licensed and experienced.

Substrategy 7: Expansion Of Data Metrics And Definitions. The Maine DOE will convene members of the Educator Effectiveness/Proficiency-Based Education Advisory Council in developing a definition of ‘excellent educator’ and then the Maine DOE will collect data through the LEA PEPG systems to understand if all students are served by excellent educators.

The Maine DOE understands that improved and increased data collection related to educator effectiveness, Title I, and human capital management, is likely to improve our understanding of the root causes for equitable access and in the future could lead to the identification of more effective strategies to reduce equity gaps.

The Maine DOE will use its authority to collect data provided through the recently revised statute and regulations for educator effectiveness as a support for better understanding the root causes related to equitable access gaps. Data collection will include but not be limited to summative effectiveness ratings for teachers and principals.

The Maine DOE will evaluate and where possible implement mechanisms for collecting new and improved data related to:

- turnover of teachers and principals;
- reasons for leaving positions in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools;
- experience data for principals;
- improved data related to years of experience;
- recruitment strategies; and
- numbers of applicants.

Strategic Area 3: Educator Preparation Enhancements

We believe that a key strategy for decreasing gaps in access to excellent educators is to strengthen the teacher and principal preparation. The substrategies in the chart below were developed from the key ideas that emerged from the stakeholder focus groups.

Key Ideas:

Require principal training in changing demographics and economies in Maine communities

- Require principal training in developing community champions/partnerships
- Reassess teacher preparation needs and consider revision of teacher preparation program reviews and student teaching placements
- Develop program of tuition reimbursement for targeted leadership courses in high needs schools
- Improve teacher training programs to better meet the needs of educators in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools
- Increase field experiences during teacher training that bring teachers to student teach in

high-poverty, isolated-small, and high-risk field experiences

- Improve school leadership to better meet the needs of educators in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools

Associated Root-Cause Analysis Findings

1. Lack of Adequate Pre-Service Preparation for Teachers. Stakeholders agreed that many teachers are not adequately prepared for the teaching demands of high-poverty, isolated-small schools and high-risk school settings. Currently teacher preparation programs do not regularly provide student teaching experiences in these settings. This is due to the geographic and travel constraints. The majority of Maine’s teachers are trained by Maine institutions and this is not the case for principals who often earn their credentials online.

2. Lack of adequate pre-service preparation for principals. Stakeholders agreed that many principals are not adequately prepared for the demands of high-poverty and isolated-small schools and high-risk school settings. Currently many principals are certified through online programs rather than advanced degree programs offered by Maine institutions of higher education. As a result strategies to increase knowledge and skills among these educators are more appropriately focused on licensure requirements and mentoring opportunities for principals in high-poverty and isolated-small schools.

3. High Turnover. Stakeholders reported that new teachers often seek jobs in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools, and are successful in getting hired because the application pools are small. The combined effect of successful employment in challenging settings is that these inexperienced educators gain teaching experience, and after two or so years, they seek employment in more attractive locations.

Recruitment and Retention Strategies

Substrategy 1: Reassess/Strengthen Teacher Preparation Programs. The Maine DOE will convene teacher preparation program leadership to reassess the preparation provided to educators entering high-poverty and isolated-small schools and high-risk school settings. The Department will work with teacher preparation programs to evaluate course requirements and additional placement strategies for ensuring that new teachers have student teaching experiences in high-poverty and isolated-small schools and high-risk school settings by offering housing for teachers in these settings and providing online mentoring. In addition the Maine DOE will encourage the institutions of higher education to consider policies that support loan forgiveness programs for educators who teach in these settings.

Substrategy 2: Certification requirements. The Maine DOE will work with the Maine Principals Association and State Board of Education to consider changes to the certification requirements to include course work or mentorships that will give principals experiences and strategies related to changing economics and demographics in rural Maine communities and development community champions and partnerships to support student success.

METRICS TO EVALUATE PROGRESS and PUBLIC REPORTING

The Maine DOE will:

- Annually update the gap analysis described in this plan. The updated information will be posted on the Maine DOE website, shared in a newsroom article and distributed to superintendents.
- Provide regular updates in the Commissioner's Weekly Update as progress is made on the plan.
- Incorporate educator summative effectiveness rating for schools, generated through the 2016-2017 PEPG systems, into the annual gap analysis update starting in 2017-2018.

NEXT IMMEDIATE STEPS:

Maine DOE will take the following immediate steps to continue the refinement and implementation of the plan for equitable access to excellent educators.

The Maine DOE will meet with the Human Capital Management Systems Committee in July to confirm key strategy areas and associated root causes and substrategies, and to collect input on relevant metrics and performance objectives for the strategies.

- COMPLETED, July 22, 2015

Section 5. Ongoing Monitoring and Supports –

Major Activities and Initiatives	Parties Involved	Organizer	Strategy Alignment	Time Frame	
				Start	Frequency
Engage the Human Capital Management Systems (HCMS) committee to review and suggest clarifications to Maine’s plan for equitable access to excellent educators.	Maine DOE Educator Effectiveness Coordinator , HCMS	HCMS Chairs	Overall	July 2015	Annually
Participate as a member on the HCMS Committee to assist with development of human capital management resources for districts and plan for collection of data related to educator turnover and school climate.	Maine DOE Educator Effectiveness Coordinator , HCMS	HCMS Chairs	Retention and Recruitment Sub Strat 2	September 2015	Quarterly
Share resources developed by the HCMS statewide to assist LEAs to plan for vacancies and improve interview protocols.	HCMS, Maine DOE	Educator Effectiveness Coordinator	Retention and Recruitment Sub Strat 2	Fall 2016	One time
Explore the development of courses similar to the AP-4-All program that will provide students in high-poverty and isolated-small schools access to courses taught by educators who are licensed and experienced.	Maine DOE Learning through Technology Team	Mike Muir	State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 6	Summer 2015	Ongoing
Commissioner’s Weekly Updates – Fall publication focused on reporting progress on equitable access.	Maine DOE staff	Maine DOE Director of Standards and Instructional Support	Overall	Fall 2015	Quarterly

Major Activities and Initiatives	Parties Involved	Organizer	Strategy Alignment	Time Frame	
				Start	Frequency
Planning for recruitment strategies, incentives and program criteria changes for educator preparation programs to better support educators who teach in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools	Maine DOE, Teacher Preparation Programs	Higher Education Specialist	Educator Prep – Sub Strat 1	Fall 2015	Quarterly
Review of certification fees	Maine DOE, State Board of Education	Director of Standards and Instructional Supports and Director of Certification	State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 1	Fall 2015	Four monthly meetings
Meet with Maine Parent Federation and Civil Rights groups to share information and solicit advice about implementation and monitoring	Maine DOE, Maine Parent Federation, Civil Rights groups	Maine DOE Director of Standards and Instructional Support	Overall	Winter 2015	Annually
Provide input into the revision of certification expectations for teachers and principals to increase training focused on the needs of high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools and explore options for a tiered certification for principals.	Maine DOE, State Board of Education, Chief Academic Officer	Maine DOE, State Board of Education	State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 5 Educator Prep – Sub Strat 2	Fall 2015	Quarterly
Convene leadership of educator preparation programs and State Board of Education to identify training needs to better prepare teaching applicants that for positions in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools and coordinate efforts with the convening of a legislatively required stakeholders group to	Maine DOE, Teacher Preparation Programs	Higher Education Specialist	Educator Prep – Sub Strat 1	Fall 2015	Quarterly

Major Activities and Initiatives	Parties Involved	Organizer	Strategy Alignment	Time Frame	
				Start	Frequency
focus on developing and supporting school leadership.					
Meet with leadership of MSMA and MPA to develop and implement a pilot program to support principals in a small number of high poverty and isolated small schools.	MMSA, MPA, Maine DOE	Chief Academic Officer	Retention and Recruitment Sub Strat 6 Educator Prep – Sub Strat 2	Winter 2015	To be determined
Convene leadership of teacher preparation programs to identify strategies to increase the recruitment of high quality teaching applicants.	Maine DOE, Teacher Preparation Programs	Higher Education Specialist	Retention and Recruitment Sub Strat 4	Winter 2015	Annually
Definition of excellent educator - The Maine DOE will meet with the EE/PBE Advisory Council to solicit input and develop a definition for excellent educators.	Maine DOE, EEPBE Advisory Committee, The Leaders Network, The Committee of Practitioners	Maine DOE Educator Effectiveness Coordinator	State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 7	Spring 2016	One time
Meetings with EE/PBE, TLN, Committee of Practitioners to share the plan for increasing access to excellent educators and solicit advice on implementation of the plan. .	Stakeholders Maine DOE	Maine DOE Educator Effectiveness Coordinator , Title I Coordinator	Overall	Fall 2015	Annually.

Major Activities and Initiatives	Parties Involved	Organizer	Strategy Alignment	Time Frame	
				Start	Frequency
The Maine DOE Title I Coordinator and the Educator Effectiveness Coordinator will work with the Committee of Practitioners to generate guidance for the development of guidance for district plans for equitable access.	Committee of Practitioners, Title I Coordinator,	Maine DOE	State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 7	Spring 2016	One time
Plan to share Count ME In strategies with high-poverty and isolated small schools with high rates of absenteeism.	Count ME In, Maine DOE	Maine DOE Director of Standards and Instructional Support	State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 7	Fall 2015	Annually
Explore funding options to expand supports for school leaders available through school improvement supports	Maine DOE	School Improvement Specialists	State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 7	Fall 2015	Ongoing
Meet with coordinators of federal title programs at Maine DOE to identify one or two manageable strategies for increasing LEA attention to equitable access as part of the Title I and Title II funding.	All LEAs	Maine DOE Title I Coordinator	State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 7	Winter 2015	One time
Engage MEPRI to collect data to better understand the root causes for educator retention in high-poverty and isolated small schools and attendance issue in these settings.	MEPRI, high-poverty and isolated-small schools	Chief Academic Officer	Retention and Recruitment Sub Strat 1 State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 3 State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 7	Fall 2015	One time

Major Activities and Initiatives	Parties Involved	Organizer	Strategy Alignment	Time Frame	
				Start	Frequency
Provide Year I progress report on equitable access.	Maine DOE	Maine DOE Director of Standards and Instructional Support	State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 7	Spring 2016	Annually
Update revise State Mentoring and Induction policies and recruit STOY, PAEMST, National Board and highly effective teachers identified through the PEPG process to serve as mentors to new teachers.	Maine DOE, State Board of Education	Maine DOE Educator Effectiveness Coordinator	Retention and Recruitment Sub Strat 5	Spring 2016	Every month
Convene high-minority and high-receivership Title I schools to share and pilot strategies for examining and reducing equity gaps.	Selected Title I schools, Maine DOE	Title I Coordinator	State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 7	Spring 2016	Annually
Maine DOE will provide a critical review of potential funding streams for longevity incentives.	Internal Maine DOE team	Maine DOE Educator Effectiveness Coordinator	Retention and Recruitment Sub Strat 3 State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 3	Summer 2016	Biennially as part of budget development
Host an update meeting with stakeholders about progress on the implementation of the equitable access plan.	Stakeholders	Maine DOE Educator Effectiveness Coordinator	State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 7	Fall 2016	Twice a year
Review and update Maine’s Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators	Internal Maine DOE team and stakeholders	Chief Academic Officer	State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 7	2017-2018	Every two years

Major Activities and Initiatives	Parties Involved	Organizer	Strategy Alignment	Time Frame	
				Start	Frequency
Rulemaking for changes in certification (statute and CH 115, parts I and II).	Maine DOE, State Board of Education, Maine DOE	Maine DOE, State Board of Education, Maine DOE	Retention and Recruitment Sub Strat 4 & 6	Fall 2015 through 2017.	One time
Rulemaking for changes in teacher preparation (CH 114)	Maine DOE, State Board of Education, Maine DOE	Maine DOE, State Board of Education, Maine DOE	Educator Prep – Sub Strat 1.	Fall 2015 through 2017	One time
Year I PEPG data submitted to public in report on equitable access	Internal Maine DOE team	Maine DOE Director of Standards and Instructional Support, Data Team	State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 7	Spring 2017	Annually
Public report on Year 2 progress and input gathering from stakeholders	Internal Maine DOE team, stakeholders, and the public	Maine DOE Director of Standards and Instructional Support, Data Team	State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 7.	Summer 2017	One time
Second Update Maine’s Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators	Internal Maine DOE team and stakeholders	Chief Academic Officer	State Policy Incentive – Sub Strat 7	Fall 2018	Every two years

Section 6. Conclusion

Maine DOE strongly supports the U.S. Department of Education’s goal of ensuring that every student has equitable access to excellent educators and welcomes this opportunity to present our plan for advancing this mission in Maine. Our multi-faceted plan reflects extensive outreach to the community and thoughtful deliberation about actions that most likely will enable our schools and districts to attain this important objective. Although our plan will evolve over time, we believe that our theory of action and the targeted strategies we have included in the plan embody a solid approach to improving educator effectiveness, particularly for those most in need. We look forward to proceeding with this plan.

Appendix A. Stakeholder Representation in Maine’s Equity Access Root Cause Analysis Focus Groups from March through April 2015

Organization	Stakeholder Name	Stakeholder Title	Date of Meeting
Special Education	Susan Prince	Director	3-11-15
	Delia Dearnley	Director	3-11-15
	Gaytrine McDonald	Director	3-11-15
MSBA	Marlene Tullent		3-11-15
Woodstock	Gina Billings		3-11-15
Principal/RSU14	Phillip Potenziano		3-11-15
NCC Facilitators	Kathy Dunne	Facilitator	3-11-15
	Scott Reynold	Facilitator	3-11-15
Maine DOE	Rachelle Tome	Chief Academic Officer	3-11-15
	Meghan Southworth	Title II Director	3-11-15
Maine State Board of Education/ Business Partner	Alan Burton	Vice President, Cianbro State Board of Education	3/12/15
Maine PTA	Gina Billings	Parent	3-11-15
Bangor Schools (High minority)	Mike Missbrenner		3/12/15
	Ryan Enman		3/12/15
Portland Schools (High minority)	Gail Cressey		3/12/15
	Marcia Gendron		3/12/15
Biddeford School Dept. (High minority)	Deb Kenney		3/12/15
	Margaret Pitts		3/12/15
MSAD 52 High poverty	Becky Foley		3/12/15
Multicultural Affairs/DHHS	Julia Trujillo Luengo	Director	3/12/15
Maine Schools for Excellence	Greg Potter	Superintendent, RSU 19	4/1/15
	Jan Morse, Ended.	Asst. Superintendent, RSU 19	4/1/15
	Sheri Gould	Literacy Specialist, RSU 19	4/1/15
	Frank Boynton	Superintendent, Millinocket School Department	4/1/15
	Amanda Winslow	TEPG Coordinator, Lewiston Public Schools/Teacher	4/1/15
	Carl Landry	Superintendent, MSAD 55	4/1/15
	Sue Day	Curriculum Coordinator, MSAD 55	4/1/15
	Larry Worcester	Superintendent, MSAD 24	4/1/15
	Howie Tuttle	Superintendent, RSU 12	4/1/15
	Pat Hopkins	Superintendent, MSAD 11	4/1/15

	David Murphy	Superintendent, MSAD 44	4/1/15
	Sue Williams, NBCT	MSFE Prov. Development Coordinator/Teacher	4/1/15
	Jane Blais, NBCT	MSFE Prov. Development Coordinator/Teacher	4/1/15
	Scott Harrison	MSFE Project Director	4/1/15
Maine DOE	Tom Desjardin	Maine DOE, Acting Commissioner	4/1/15
	Bill Hurwitch	Maine DOE, Dir., Statewide Longitudinal Data System	4/1/15
	Rachelle Tome	Maine DOE, Chief Academic Officer	4/1/15
	Anita Bernhardt	Maine DOE, Director, Standards and Instruction	4/1/15
	Charlotte Ellis	Maine DOE, Education Data Reporting Coordinator	4/1/15
	Mary Paine	Maine DOE, Educator Effectiveness Coordinator	4/1/15
Maine State Board of Education	Alan Burton	Vice President, Cianbro	4/23/15
	Martha Harris	Attorney, Paine, Lynch & Harris	4/23/15
Maine Education Association	Grace Leavitt	Vice President/Teacher	4/23/15
	Dan Allen	Director of Training & PD	
National Education Association	Mike Thurston	Board of Directors	4/23/15
Maine Principals Association	Holly Couterier	Asst. Executive Director	4/23/15
Maine School Board Association	Maureen King	School Board Member	4/23/15
Maine School Management Association	Bob Hasson	Asst. Executive Director	4/23/15
Unity College	Jeannie Hamrin	Co-director of Teacher Education	4/23/15
Colby College	Karen Kusiak	Assist. Professor of Education	4/23/15
Husson University	Barbara Moody	Director of Teacher Education	4/23/15
Bowdoin College	Doris Santoro	Assoc. Professor of Education	4/23/15
University of Maine	Jim Artesani	Chair, Dept. of Teacher Education	4/23/15
	Pamela Kimball	Field Exp./Certification Program Director	
Maine Teacher of the Year	Jennifer Dorman	Skowhegan M.S	4/23/15
	Jeff Bailey	Teacher, Oxford Hills	4/23/15
Maine Department of Education	Rachelle Tome	Maine DOE, Chief Academic Office	4/23/15
	Anita Bernhardt	Maine DOE, Director, Standards and Instruction	4/23/15
	Meghan Southworth	Prof. Development	4/23/15

		Coordinator, Title II	
	Charlotte Ellis	Education Data Reporting Coordinator	4/23/15
TIF Director	Scott Harrison	Project Director for Maine Schools for Excellence	4/23/15
Northeast Comprehensive Center	Andrea Reade	Facilitator	4/23/15
PAEMST	Amy Troiano	Westbrook High Dept. Chair/ Presidential Awardee	4/23/15
Organization	Stakeholder Name	Stakeholder Title	Date of Meeting

Appendix B. TIF Meeting Materials –April 1

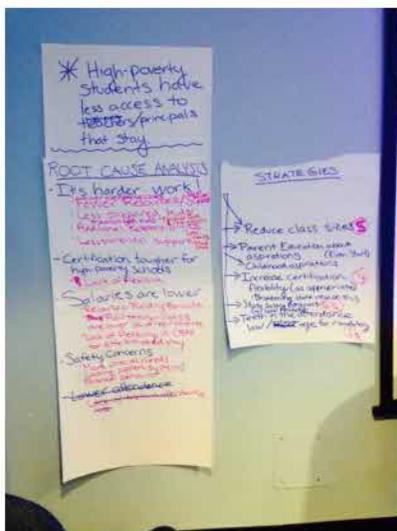
Representatives from Maine’s Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Maine Schools for Excellence (MSFE) districts convened on April 1, 2015, 1 – 2:30pm at the Cross Office Building, Augusta, Maine to engage in a facilitated discussion and root-cause analysis of the challenges associated with ensuring equitable access to excellent teachers for all students.

Maine was awarded 2, 5-year TIF grants (TIF3, 2010 and TIF4, 2012) covering ten (10) high risks districts representing 48 schools, 1,500 educators and roughly 15,000 students. The TIF/MSFE work has focused on strengthening human capital management (HCM) programs and activities (including recruitment, selection, induction, mentoring, evaluation and professional growth, recognition and reward) in order to better attract and retain a workforce of high performing teachers and leaders who are aligned in purpose, teamed in their efforts and motivated to succeed in delivering high quality instruction to all students. Toward this purpose, TIF/MSFE work is also focusing on improving school environment through the development of better measurement tools and protocols for making optimal use of data. Strengthening communications and collaboration between Maine school districts and Maine’s educator preparation institutions is another strand of TIF/MSFE work.

TIF/MSFE districts have assembled local steering committees comprised of teachers and leaders and other key stakeholders which meet at least monthly to oversee the development, implementation and on-going maintenance of their human capital work. Bi-monthly, all 10 districts gather at a statewide practitioners’ group (SPG) convening to hear from subject matter experts, share and learn from one another to continuously improve local HCM systems and programs.

Following our April 1 SPG meeting, Ellen Sherratt, Ph.D. from American Institutes for Research, facilitated the Equity discussion. To ensure that conversations were productive and solutions-oriented, Dr. Sherratt used structured discussion protocols. Participants included teachers and administrators, Maine DOE and Maine Schools for Excellence (MSFE) staff.

Root Cause and Strategies “fishbone”



(TIF Meeting Materials) TIF Meeting Slides

Ensuring Equitable Access to Excellent Educators in Maine: A Root Cause Analysis with TIF Leaders

April 1, 2015

Center on
GREAT TEACHERS & LEADERS
A Research Institute for Research

AIR
ANALYTICAL INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH

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What is a Root Cause Analysis?

- A root-cause analysis is intended to explain why equity gaps exist and persist in your state.
 - It involves iteratively asking *why, why, why, why, why* to obtain a comprehensive and complete set of root causes behind equity gaps.
 - It is intended to ensure that your equitable access strategies are directly targeted to address the root causes behind your equity gaps.
 - It should be based on data.
 - It should take place among the team of leaders and stakeholders who are developing your plan.

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A Research Institute for Research

The Root Cause Analysis Workbook

- The Moving Toward Equity Root Cause Analysis workbook takes users through eight key steps:
 - Step 1: Specify the equity gaps to be addressed.
 - Step 2: Identify root causes.
 - Step 3: Categorize the root causes.
 - Step 4: Visualize your root causes and categories.
 - Step 5: Determine strategies for educator talent development.
 - Step 6: Create a theory of action.
 - Step 7: Determine how to measure progress.
 - Step 8: Put your equitable access plan into motion.

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Root Cause Analysis “Fishbone” Diagram



Root Cause Analysis Discussion

- What do you see as the root causes to Maine's key equity gap?

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(TIF Meeting Materials)

Focus on Root Cause Analysis

“High-poverty students have less access to (high quality) teachers and principals that stay.”

The group identified several challenges faced in their own high-risks schools that make it difficult for them to attract and (especially) retain top performing educators. Challenges cited by the group included difficulty of the work, safety concerns, tougher certification standards, and lower salaries.

Regarding the difficulty of work, teachers in high-riskschools are faced with more challenging students. A high percentage come to school less prepared than their peers in low poverty / low minority schools. Many kids have experienced some trauma in their lives and bring that to the classroom. Special education demands are higher. Absenteeism rates are higher. Parental involvement is lower, and many of the parents in these schools lack any formal education.

Regarding health and safety, teachers in high-riskschools are faced with a greater percentage of students with special needs, and fewer resources in which to assist them. Fewer social services are available to support struggling kids and families, and teachers oftentimes feel compelled to try and make-up for what these students are missing in their lives.

Despite these additional responsibilities and stressors associated with teaching in high-riskschools, districts are unable to provide salaries that are fair and equitable. Under these conditions, teachers are doing more, for less. Inflexibility with the current funding formula and collective bargaining agreements, make it difficult for districts to align their compensation system with the unique needs of each school in a way that helps them to attract and retain excellent educators.

Potential Strategies

The group began to brainstorm strategies for closing the equity gap. They include:

- Reducing class sizes
- Providing more education to parents about aspirations
- Providing more education to children, early on about aspirations
- Increase certification flexibility, as appropriate, and broadening the State’s view on this
- Develop a statewide salary contract with local flexibility
- Add teeth to the attendance law, lowering the age for mandatory attendance

Of these strategies, finding ways to reduce class sizes and develop a statewide salary contract with local flexibility were viewed as levers with the greatest potential to help districts attract and retain excellent educators and close the equity gap.

Appendix C. March 11 and 12 Plan for Equitable Access to Effective Educators in Maine Stakeholders Focus Groups

5/29/2015

Welcome!

Planning to Ensure Equitable Access
to Excellent Educators

March 2015
Maine Department of Education



Meeting Purposes

- Engage in focused conversations about the gaps based on analysis of the data
- Identify root causes for the gaps, and
- Identify possible strategies for addressing the root causes.



AGENDA

- 9:00 Welcome and overview of the day
- 9:30 Setting the stage
- 10:00 Data presentation and discussion
- 10:20 Mining the data
- 11:45 Lunch
- 12:15 Root cause analysis
- 1:45 Exploring strategies
- 2:30 Next steps
- 2:45 Wrap-up and reflections



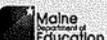
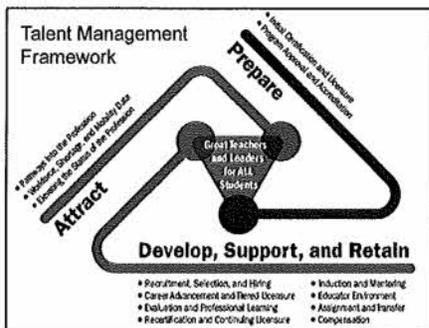
Why this work?

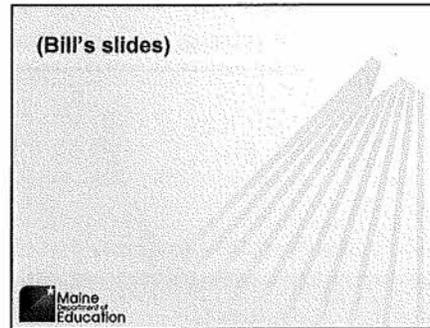
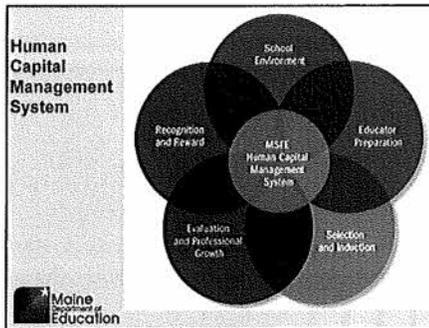
- > USDE charge to move America toward the goal of ensuring every student in every public school has equitable access to excellent educators.
- > Opportunity to extend and refine Maine's earlier work on equity.
 - Movement away from "Highly Qualified" (HQ) Teachers
 - Refinement of Measures of Educator Excellence



Setting the Stage

- What we have done so far?
- What we will do today?
- What we anticipate before the submittal of the plan?
- What we anticipate after the submittal of the plan?



Mining the Data

Purposes

- To identify gaps in equitable access to effective educators through review of state level elementary and high school data
- To identify questions and data sources that may be useful

Maine Department of Education

Steps

Step One: Looking at the data and noticing (individuals)

Step Two: Sharing what we notice (small groups)

Step Three: Prioritizing data findings (whole group)

Step Four: Identifying and stating the problem (small groups) and additional questions/data that would help to better understand the problem

Maine Department of Education

Consensus

- 1= support it and it reflects the wisdom of the group
- 2= support it but need more information or discussion
- 3= do not support it

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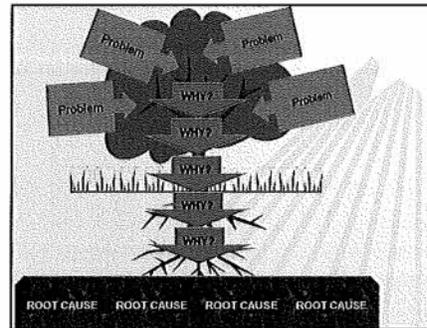
Identifying the problem

- What is the problem?
- What proof do we have that the problem exists?
- What is the impact of the problem?
- What else do we want to know? What data would be useful to better understand the problem?

Maine Department of Education



"If I had an hour to solve a problem I'd spend 55 minutes thinking about the problem and 5 minutes thinking about solutions."
 — **Albert Einstein**

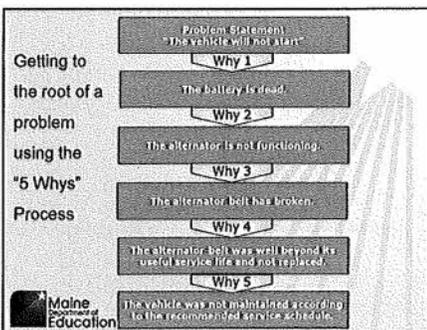



Getting to the root cause

- Use pausing, paraphrasing, probing, and inquiry to support each others' refinement of the need or problem
- Ask WHY Five times to get closer to the underlying problem and to avoid premature leap to solutions
- So, what does this look like?




"A problem well stated is a problem half solved."
Charles Kettering

Step One: Ask "Why Did This Happen"

- Simply determine what happened to cause the problem. Just go one layer at a time here. Don't try to get too fancy.

Step Two: Ask "Is This a Root Cause?"

- Is the *Why* you just wrote down the real and underlying root cause of the problem. If it's not then you have another symptom and you need to go back to Step 1 and ask again. Repeat Steps 1 and 2 until you have the final and underlying cause of the issue.



Pitfall: Blaming Statements

"Students just don't have the motivation to learn."
"Parents aren't interested in education."
"Students with exceptional needs are unable to learn conceptual mathematics."

- Why are these blaming statements?
- What *might* be an underlying assumption of each statement?
- How can they be reframed?



Ways to Reframe Blaming Statement

- Probe and Inquire into the meaning or assumptions that underlie the statement
- Paraphrase to provide an opportunity for clarity and understanding
- Ask, is the statement phrased in such a way that indicates an action we can take, something that is within our control to influence?



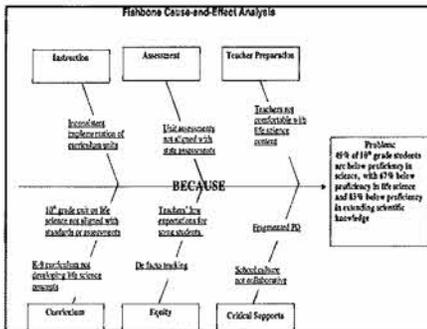
Record and cluster your ideas

- As you identify your causes, record them on post-it notes
- Cluster ideas that are related to one another and categorize them



**Linking causes to the problem:
Fishbone technique**

- The "Fishbone" is a graphic organizer to help you link your possible causes to the identified problem. The spines of the fish represent categories that may impact the problem.
- Since your groups share a common problem, you can collectively brainstorm causes, but will also be able to "track" your own ideas relative to your context



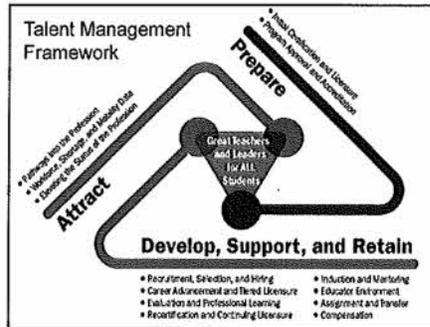
Your Fishbone

- Draw the fishbone on chart paper
- Label the 6 spines
- Tape the identified problem to the "head" of the fish
- Write possible causes on post-it notes (each person has their own color of post-it)
- Put the post-it notes on the spines
- Use the Cause Cards as needed to prompt your thinking



Reviewing the Possible Causes

- Cluster or move them around to different spines as needed
- Examine them for evidence of cultural insensitivity, ones that are not in your control to act upon, and/or that place blame on others – reframe these statements
- Eliminate those that do not seem to be within your control to influence

Strategies – Examples and Resources from Center on Great Teachers and Leaders

- [Policy Levers in Disadvantaged Schools](#)
- [Educator Preparation and Certification](#)
- [Recruitment, Selection, and Hiring](#)
- [Teacher Assignment and Transfer](#)
- [Induction and Mentoring](#)
- [Evaluation and Professional Learning](#)
- [Compensation](#)
- [Educator Environment](#)

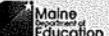


Generating Solutions

Problem/Challenge Area	Possible Solution	Rationale	New or Existing in Maine



Next Steps



Power Point Slides were condensed from slides used on March 11.

(March 11 and 12 Plan for Equitable Access to Effective Educators in Maine Stakeholders Focus Groups)

AGENDA

Date: March 11, 2015

Time: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Purposes of Focus Group:

- engage participants in focused conversations about the gaps based on analysis of the data;
- identify root causes for the gaps, and; identify possible strategies for addressing the root causes

- 9:00 Welcome and Introductions** **Rachelle/NCC**
- Welcome from DOE
 - Introduce participants
 - Discuss meeting objectives
 - Circulate participant sign-in sheet with option to be included in electronic mailing list
- 9:15 Overview of Purpose and Agenda** **NCC**
- Set norms for the discussion
 - Review agenda
- 9:30 Setting the Stage: Context and Work to Date** **Rachelle Tome**
- Why this work? The charge to create a plan
 - What ME DOE has done thus far – what we are thinking moving ahead
 - A Systems Perspective: Levers for closing the gap between students and effective teachers and leaders in Maine
 - TE/PEPG systems
 - Educator Preparation
 - Recruitment and placement
 - Induction and mentoring
 - Professional support
- 10:00 Data Presentation and Discussion** **Rachelle Tome**
- The questions we had
 - The data we had to help us understand (and the data we didn't have)
 - Here is what we know and don't yet know based on our data
- 10:20 Mining the Data** **NCC**
- 12:00 Lunch**
- 12:45 Root Cause Analysis** **NCC**
- 2:15 Break**
- 2:30 Exploring Strategies** **NCC**
- 3:30** **Next Steps**
- How the findings will be recorded and incorporated
 - How participants will be informed/involved
- 3:45** **Feedback on meeting**

MATERIALS:

PowerPoint

Handouts: Definitions, data sets

Appendix D. Combined Notes from March 11, 12 and April 1

Two Key Stakeholder Priority Problems/Gaps (A and B)

Problem A: Educator retention is lower at high poverty and isolated small schools than other schools. (*Explored March 11th (problems 1 and 2) also at 3rd meeting (full page of poster pics).*)

Evidence:

- Teacher: 15.7%, Principal: 16.8%
- Teacher turnover is 5-6% higher
- There are 7% more inexperienced teachers there, 4-6% more non-HQTs

Possible Root Causes:

- The work is harder
- Tougher certification requirements
- Lower salaries
- Resources (salaries, services, higher education)
- Safety concerns
- Educator frustration/discontentment
 - Lack of leadership
- Educator frustration/discontentment
 - Unmet need for resources
 - Money
 - How money is used
- Location
- Climate/reputation of school

Possible Strategies:

- State salary contract (with local flexibility) (6.5)
- Raise salaries
- Consider tuition reimbursement
- Reduce class sizes (5)
- Increase certification flexibility (broaden State view) (4)
- Add teeth to attendance law (lower age for mandatory) (1.5)
- Educate parents and students about aspirations (Even Start)
- Diagnose and meet educator needs
- Retain good leaders
- Remove negative stigmas

Possible Areas to Explore Further:

- What areas have biggest gaps (specialty, grade, SPED)
- % of ISS that are also high poverty
- Retirement connections
- Role of salary
- How many teachers seek further education
- Existing support systems for teachers
- Average tenure of teachers at these sites
- Where these teachers go
 - Who left profession
 - Who moved to another district

(Combined Notes from March 11, 12 and April 1)

Problem B: Students in high poverty schools are underperforming compared to peers. (*Explored March 11th (problem 3) and March 12th (problem 2).*)

Evidence:

- Low proficiency scores
- High proficiency gaps

Possible Root Causes:

- Low salaries in schools with greater needs
 - Hiring inexperienced teachers
 - Cost-effective to hire inexperienced teachers
 - Money available for salary is less, due to benefits and retirement
 - No assurance for equitable spending for teachers
- Transiency
 - Students disadvantaged at home
 - Social/emotional needs
- Transiency
 - Starting school ready (“on grade level”)
 - Poor student attendance
 - Gaps in student understanding
 - More inexperienced teachers
 - Harder job, less reward, less desirable
 - Pay, challenges, lack of appreciation
- Educators not entering school ready
 - Lack of effective teacher training
 - IHEs and candidates are unclear on demands
 - Minimal field experiences
 - Recruitment practices
 - Awareness and availability of training
 - Lack of recognition and value of performance

Possible Strategies:

- Improve teacher preparation programs
- Strengthen alternative pathways for certification
- Improve induction and mentoring program
- Diagnose and meet teachers’ professional needs
- Create incentives for teachers to work in priority districts
- Rethink letter grading system

Possible Areas to Explore Further:

- What % of non-HQTs are teaching math and ELA?
- Transiency rates.
- Combination data of high poverty and high minority
- Rate of changing demographics

Other Problems/Gaps to Potentially Address:

- High poverty schools underperform isolated schools academically in elementary schools (*Explored March 12th as problem 1; see pages 5 and 6 of meeting notes*)
- Average teacher salary at low poverty schools is about \$5,500 more than at high poverty schools. (*Explored March 12th as problem 3; see pages 8 to 10 of meeting notes*)
- High rates of teacher absenteeism? (See full-page fishbone diagram for group exploration.)
- High percentage of inexperienced and non-HQTs in elementary high poverty and high minority schools
- Elementary low poverty and low minority schools have higher HQTs
- High school isolated small schools have lower proficiency, highest teacher turnover, lowest average salary, and low HQTs
- High school high poverty schools have high out-of-field teachers and high non-HQTs
- High school proficiency is lower than elementary proficiency
- Overall high school salaries are higher except for isolated small schools
- High poverty, isolated small schools have high turnover, lower HQTs, and less experience

(Combined Notes from March 11, 12 and April 1)

General Data to Gather and Explore Overall

- Special education versus non- special education performance
- Male versus female educators
- Free and reduced-priced lunch
- Teacher/student ratios (class size)
- Poverty/Isolated crosstab or regional data
- Turnover data broken out (grade span, specialty, SPED, etc.)
- Collecting exit data (factors that contribute to leaving)
- How many elementary math and ELA teachers are HQT by content area
- Learnings from TIF
- Does minority identification include Hispanic or LEP classifications...break those out
- Consider looking at highest and lowest performing groups beyond the look at average
- What is the relationship of Title I and teacher effectiveness
- Comparing high poverty AND high minority to those that are only 1 of 2
- Looking at percentages of transient and homeless groups of students
- Consider with more data over 3 years what the implications are (note on inexperienced teachers)
- What's the distribution of teacher age (beyond just average)?
- Look regionally (seemed to prefer superintendent regions, but counties were also mentioned as an option) to find extremes
- Interview data from high poverty and rural isolated small schools around reasons for attrition
- From April 6, 2015 State Leaders' Meeting
 - Remember K-12 isolated small schools...though small in number; we want to be sure to include those.
 - Have we restricted our criteria in Maine to the point of discouraging those in other states from coming into Maine?
 - Is there a measure of professional satisfaction? Could we create one? One school has done a TEL survey...maybe we could do a pilot of some. We should catch this.
 - Are districts opposed to collaboration?
 - Look at data of students in isolated small schools and their access to AP courses.

Additional Strategies to Consider (Shared April 6, 2015)

- Lighting the interest early in middle and high school for students to become educators
- Mechanisms for recruitment

Appendix E. Plan for Equitable Access to Effective Educators in Maine Stakeholders Focus Groups – April 23

Participants in this meeting advanced the analysis of previous groups. The group identified missing gaps and refined root cause and strategy identification.

AGENDA

Date: April 23, 2015

Morning Session: 8:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Location: Maple Hill Farm

Facilitators: *Andrea Reade, Northeast Comprehensive Center*

Anita Bernhardt, Maine Department of Education

Meghan Southworth, Maine Department of Education

Purposes:

- To engage participants in focused conversations about the gaps based on analysis of the data;
- To identify root causes for the gaps, and;
- To identify possible strategies for addressing the root causes.

8:00		Arrival and Refreshments
8:30	Rachelle Tome/ Anita Bernhardt	Welcome from DOE and Overview of Work to date
8:40	Charlotte Ellis	Review of Data used for Root Cause Analysis
9:00	Andrea Reade/ Meghan Southworth	Reviewing the Equity Gaps and Identify Any Additional Gaps
9:45		Break
9:55	Andrea Reade/ Meghan Southworth	Review Previously Brainstormed List of Root Causes and Themes.
10:00	Andrea Reade	Conduct Root Cause Analysis for Any New Gap Areas.
10:50	Andrea Reade/ Meghan Southworth	Review previously identified strategies.
10:55	Andrea Reade	Explore New Strategies.
11:25	Anita Bernhardt/ Rachelle Tome	Wrap up and Next Steps

Power Point Slides were condensed from slides used on March 11.

(April 23 Plan for Equitable Access to Effective Educators in Maine Stakeholders Focus Groups)

Handout : Root Cause Analysis

Challenge: _____

Step 1: Brainstorm possible root causes for the identified challenge.

Brainstorm:

Step 2: Identify categories that best group the brainstormed root causes. Then list the root causes in the corresponding categories and then list at least three out possible strategies to address the root cause.

Category 1:	Category 2:	Category 3:	Category 4:



Possible Strategies	Possible Strategies	Possible Strategies	Possible Strategies

(April 23 Plan for Equitable Access to Effective Educators in Maine Stakeholders Focus Groups)

Focus of Gap and Root Cause Analysis

Step One: Looking at the data and noticing (individuals)

Step Two: Sharing what we notice (small groups)

Step Three: Prioritizing data findings (whole group)

Charts from each group were posted. Each individual was given three red dots with which to 'vote' for his or her top three priorities. The number of dots beside each statement is indicated in (). Those highlighted are restatements of the Equity Gap Statements already identified by Maine DOE (see Equity Gap 1 and Equity Gap 2)

Group One Observations

- Principal turnover is higher than teacher turnover at high school.
- Unqualified, out-of-field and turnover (principal and teacher) is higher at high school.
- Increase in unqualified teachers from K-8 to 9-12 for high minority schools. (4)
- **Teacher turnover is greatest in isolated small schools.** (2)
- Teacher and principal turnover for isolated, high poverty and high-risk schools is similar. (8)
- Many more out of field and unqualified teachers at high school than K-8. (4)

Group Two Observations

- Lowest salary is for high school teachers in isolated small schools. (2)
- Elementary school out of field teachers in high poverty or isolated small schools is higher.
- **High schools that are isolated or high poverty have a lower percentage of unqualified teachers than low poverty or non-isolated high schools.** (1)
- **Highest percentage of unqualified teachers is in low poverty high schools.** (2)
- **In both elementary and high schools that are isolated small schools there are increased percentages of inexperienced teachers and higher teacher turnover.** (2)
- At high school there is a significant gap between high-risk vs. not high-risk in teacher turnover.
- Highest principal turnover in low minority high schools.

Group Three Observations

- **High poverty and isolation are two factors that have the most significant or most noticeable differences K-8 and 9-12.** (9)
- Isolated small schools have percentages across the categories at K-8 – especially in experience, turnover and teachers salary – similar to 9-12 – except for principals' turnover and unqualified teachers.
- **Average salaries are lowest for isolated small schools (K-8 & 9-12) and high poverty (K-8).** (1)
- Principal turnover problem everywhere but most noticeable in 9-12 high low minority. (9)

Group Four Observations

Elementary

- High turnover both teacher and principal in all elementary schools.
- **Salary gap is huge in high poverty schools.** (1)
- **Salary gap is high in isolated schools.**
- High poverty all groups stand out except salary.
- Minute difference between high minority and low minority across groups.
- Increase of inexperienced teachers in isolated small, high poverty and high-risk schools
- Principal turnover is higher in low income and isolated small schools.
- **Isolated schools stand out in all groups (extremely high teacher turnover).** (2)

High School

- Same salary gap in high vs. low poverty schools.
- Same salary gap in isolated schools.
- Highest percentage of unqualified is at low poverty high schools.
- High percentage of inexperienced in isolated small and in high poverty.

(April 23 Plan for Equitable Access to Effective Educators in Maine Stakeholders Focus Groups)

- High poverty and isolated small have increased percentage of inexperienced and out of field but not high quality.
- Increased percentage of out of field teachers in high-risk schools.

Note: Much discussion here around the process of prioritizing those observations not well aligned with our existing equity gaps. Principal turnover is key and it is not now included in our equity gap statements. Percentage of unqualified teachers at low poverty high schools is also a concern for the group.

It was decided two groups would be formed - one to tackle principal turnover and the other to tackle unqualified teachers.

Step Four: Identifying and stating the problem (small groups) and additional questions/data that would help to better understand the problem

Problem Statement #1: High turnover of Principals in all schools, K-12. Principals are important to student and staff success.

Potential Impact: Research shows a link between effective leadership and ... student achievement, teacher retention, instructional leadership, school climate, school direction, parent/student engagement, teacher engagement, initiative turnover & fatigue, limited forward progress ... especially for high-risk, high poverty and isolated small schools.

Additional Data:

- Inexperienced
- Unqualified
- Salaries
- Why they move – exit surveys
- Climate surveys – including participation
- Relationship of Superintendent turnover to Principal turnover
- Principal district mentorships
- Principal leadership program participation
- Preparation (coursework)
- Conduct research survey of principal effectiveness literature and turnover literature.

Root Causes:

- Lack of School Board support
 - budget
 - limited resources
 - regressive tax structure
 - political will
 - limited community involvement
- They [Principals] are the face of success/failure
 - stress
 - lack of experience
 - can't deal with issues (too many)
 - lack of formal, sufficient preparation because of urgency to get Principals
 - lack of resources in training programs
- Preparation
 - they don't know what to expect
 - each school is different
 - they lack the broad skills to be successful
- Induction/Mentoring
 - preparation isn't sufficient
 - more mandates
 - Principals need constant skill development

(April 23 Plan for Equitable Access to Effective Educators in Maine Stakeholders Focus Groups)

- Community
 - less involved parents
 - no support for students
 - school is second to life.
 - lack a safety net
 - no additional supports outside of school

Possible Strategies:

- Support – wrap around services
- Schools support as community center
- Train educators to be advocates for public policy
- Train for changing demographics
- Develop community champions/partnerships
- Engage local employers-community/school model
- Increase community collaboration for learning – before/after school, student mentoring, rethinking the school day/year

Mentoring/Preparation

- Tiered certification for Principals
- Leadership
- Develop recruitment plan for the State
- Expand teacher led schools
- Split responsibilities of Principal
- Communicate (from Maine DOE) the importance/impact of leadership
- Tuition reimbursement for leadership in high-risk schools
- Mandate mentoring/induction programs
- Identify/train effective mentors

Problem Statement #2: 3.8% unqualified teachers and low poverty high schools and at least 2% unqualified teachers at high minority, high poverty and high-risk high schools.

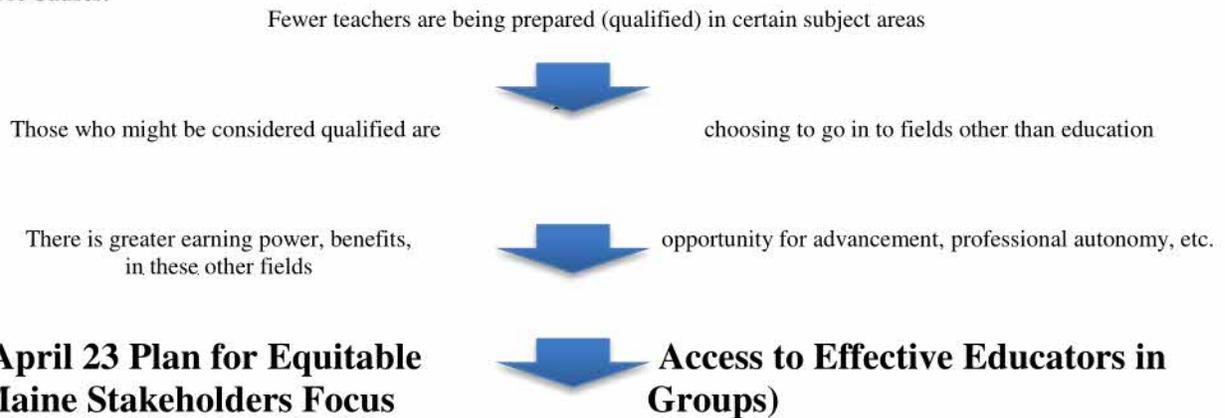
Potential Impact:

- Students at these high schools have less access to qualified teachers
- May equate to less access to 'effective' teachers
- Some subject areas may be impacted more than others
- Unqualified teachers could be teaching multiple years/classes of students

Additional Data:

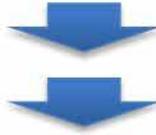
- Clarification of the definition of 'unqualified'. Does no endorsement mean unqualified or out of field?
- What subjects are teachers unqualified to teach and at what grade levels?
- Has this data trend been consistent over the past 5 years?
- How long do unqualified teachers remain unqualified?
- What is the turn over rate of unqualified teachers?

Root Causes:



Education profession has low status and teachers aren't valued. It is not "market driven" but rather a "social service". Those in the profession lack autonomy and support

It's the "nature" of public schools. The public's on education because they spent 13+ years in



perception is erroneous. The public thinks they are experts school.

Low rigor in teacher preparation programs.

Low entrance requirements to get in to teacher preparation programs.

Low requirements for certification

Possible Strategies:

- Better recruitment/attraction in to teacher preparation programs
- Restructuring for greater consistency in teacher preparation programs
- Credits given to those coming to the profession from other fields for work/life experience and expertise (as it applies to licensure)
- Better systems/supports to "grow your own"
- Certification requirements focus on the wrong things or don't focus on enough things. There needs to be a balance of content and pedagogical knowledge required
- Better-developed system of induction and mentoring.
- More rigorous screening of candidates entering teaching preparation programs
- Increase pay/benefits for educators to be comparable to other professions
- Provide greater opportunities and/or "levels" for advancement with compensation
- Loan forgiveness

~Parking Lot~

Will data from metro areas (Portland, L-A) be broken down by schools to highlight inequities within districts?

What professional development is or could be provided to support inexperienced teachers in high-risk high minority schools? Rather than average salary, consider starting and top salaries or range of salaries.

Data on Principal salaries?

Appendix F. Collated Root Cause Analysis

The root causes described below were identified by stakeholder groups as possible strategies that could help to close gaps.

ROOT CAUSE and ASSOCIATED STRATEGIES: OUT OF LICENSURE, OUT-OF- FIELD AND HIGH TURNOVER TEACHERS

<p>Students from high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools are disproportionately served by inexperienced and out of field teachers, and experience higher teacher turnover than students in other settings.</p> <p>Data Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer monitoring of violations in out-of-field • Closer monitoring of turnover rate • Closer monitoring of years of experience in state data system are monitored • Recruitment strategies are collected • Numbers of applicants are collected 	
Root Cause	Strategies
<p>More difficult to fill positions due to location and available resources and teaching demands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide longevity bonuses to teach for 5 years in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools and districts • Tuition reimbursement to teach for 5 years in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools and districts • Improve school attendance by strengthening attendance laws and providing community-based strategies (Count ME In) • Improve recruitment strategies • Accountability for violations for out-of-field teachers • Improve mentoring and induction
<p>Harder for schools to find teachers who can fill multiple certification requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support certification requirements that identify appropriate broadened areas of certification (for example, middle/high STEM certification) • Recruit community members to teach in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools and districts (the local is more likely to stay) • Waive certification fees • Provide continuing educational opportunities and PD to teachers in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools, especially to diagnose student needs and provide targeted educator supports including special education training • Strengthen induction and mentoring programs

Higher Principal Turnover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve school leadership • Incentivize longevity of principals
School climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide supports to increase student aspirations and parent aspirations for students
Lack of appropriate training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve teacher training programs • Increase field experiences during teacher training that bring student teachers to high-poverty, isolated-small, and high-risk field experiences
Salary to benefit ratio is low. (more work for less pay)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivize staying – longevity pay • Find ways to appreciate these educators • Improve recruitment strategies and supports • Create a statewide contract with flexibility and support for isolated-small, high-poverty and high-risk schools.

ROOT CAUSE and ASSOCIATED STRATEGIES: HIGH TURNOVER PRINCIPALS

<p>Students in high school are generally served by principals who work in the school for shorter periods of time (higher turnover) more often than students in elementary schools, and in high schools principal turnover is higher than teacher turnover overall.</p> <p>Research shows a link between effective leadership and student achievement, teacher retention, instructional leadership, school climate, school direction, parent/student engagement, teacher engagement, initiative turnover and fatigue, limited forward progress, especially for high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools.</p> <p>Data Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of educator turnover • Monitoring of reasons for leaving positions in high poverty, rural isolated and high needs schools • Monitoring of experience data for principals • Monitoring of summative effectiveness ratings • Monitoring of peer collaboration in performance evaluation and professional growth (PEPG) 	
Need for increased lack School Board awareness of needs in high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide supports to engage local employers in community/school models • Collaborate with Maine School Management Association on leadership support for superintendents and school boards of isolated-small schools • Develop a Small Schools Leadership Consortium
Principal preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for changing demographics and economies in Maine communities • Training for developing community champions/partnerships • Identify preparation needs; develop program of tuition reimbursement for targeted leadership courses in high needs

	schools; maybe do this in cohort or consortium
Induction/Mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnering with Maine School Management and Maine Principals Association to bring gap to light and strategize • Tiered certification for principals • Develop a statewide recruitment for principal • Communicate (from Maine DOE) the importance/impact of leadership • Mandate mentoring/induction programs • Identify/train effective mentors • Longevity incentives • Survey for actual reasons for leaving • Work with priority schools and School improvement Specialists

Appendix G. Initial Planning for Key Activities for Development of a Plan for Equitable Access to Effective Educators

The following is an overview of the initial plan development process, including specific actions to be taken by the Maine DOE. This initial plan was developed in partnership with Northeast Comprehensive Center.

Process Step	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline
Engage Stakeholders (who to engage, for what, how, and by when)	Establish DOE workgroup: Determining roles and responsibilities	Anita Bernhardt, Rachelle Tome	Dec 24 th
	Define the terms; Analyze data and expectations of plan; Identify districts for focused inquiry; Review draft action plan and revise as needed	DOE Work group	Dec 30 th
	Engage the districts for focused inquiry to get feedback on root cause for schools with high minority/high poverty populations; generate initial possible solutions	Anita Bernhardt	Jan 20 th
	Engage with TIF districts for focused inquiry to consult on root cause analysis that ties educator effectiveness data in to the analyses; generate initial possible solutions	Anita Bernhardt, Scott Harrison	Feb
	Coordinate work with ESEA Waiver stakeholder workgroups to identify linkages between equity plan and waiver extension request	Jaci Holmes, Janette Kirk	Jan
	ESEA group will assist with the root cause analysis	Jaci Holmes, Janette Kirk	Jan/Feb
	Role-alike groups will assist with the root cause analysis: 1. MEA 2. MPA 3. Higher Ed 4. MADSEC 5. MSMA 6. Regional Superintendent and Curriculum Coordinator meetings Generate initial possible solutions	Anita Bernhardt oversees and makes initial contact. NCC supports focus group meetings with stakeholders.	Feb 3 hour meetings
	Convene DOE Workgroup to review stakeholder feedback		First Week of March
II Understanding the Problem (questions to probe for equity, data available/needed, data analysis and assessing quality, displaying data for stakeholder engagement)	Preliminary mining of data based on initial set of questions and data matrix.	Bill Hurwitch	Jan 1
	Determine which data and in what form data will be presented to stakeholder groups; Create questions for San Diego Peer Review	Internal Workgroup	Dec 30
	Conduct an internal root cause analysis	Internal Workgroup	Jan 20
	Generate data presentations that will be used in stakeholder	Bill Hurwitch, Charlotte Ellis	Jan 15

	engagement		
III Setting Priorities (who will be involved in root cause analysis, how, and when)	Identify stakeholder groups and send invitations	Rachelle Tome	Feb, March
	Coordinate facilitation of groups by Northeast Comp Center and Summarize notes from sessions...	Anita Bernhardt	April
IV Raising Awareness (building a coalition, engaging the media, communication channels)	Write a Commissioner's Brief for superintendents, curriculum coordinators and principals on the status of Equity Plan and ESEA waiver	Anita Bernhardt	Dec 30th
	Regional Superintendent and Curriculum Coordinator meetings.	Regional Representatives	Jan-Feb
	Generate monthly Commissioner Update to keep public conversation going about this work	Anita Bernhardt	Ongoing
	Brief State Board of Education	Anita Bernhardt	Feb
V Taking Action Policy Levers to consider: Educator Preparation and Certification Recruitment, Selection, and Hiring Teacher Assignment and Transfer Induction and Mentoring Evaluation and Professional Learning Compensation Educator Environment	Create an outline for the Equity Plan	Anita Bernhardt	Mid-Jan
	Develop questions for Peer Review Meeting in San Diego	DOE Workgroup	Feb 3-4
	Create rough draft for sharing with stakeholders	DOE Workgroup	April
	Submit Plan to USED	Anita and DOE Workgroup	May 15th
VI Measuring Progress & Adjusting Strategies (benchmarks for success and schedule for review of data)	Develop benchmarks and schedule for review of progress	DOE Workgroup	March

Appendix H. Maine DOE Equitable Access Development Team

Name	Title
Maine DOE Equitable Access	Steering Team
Rachelle Tome	Maine DOE, Chief Academic Officer
Bill Hurwitch	Maine DOE, Dir., Statewide Longitudinal Data System
Anita Bernhardt	Maine DOE, Director, Standards and Instruction
Jan Breton	Director of Special Services
Jaci Holmes	Federal Liaison
Maine DOE Equitable Access	Work Group
Rachelle Tome	Maine DOE, Chief Academic Officer
Bill Hurwitch	Maine DOE, Dir., Statewide Longitudinal Data System
Charlotte Ellis	Maine DOE, Education Data Reporting Coordinator
Anita Bernhardt	Maine DOE, Director, Standards and Instruction
Lance Gilman	Statewide Longitudinal Data System
Janette Kirk	Learning Systems Team/ESEA Director Title I
Meghan Southworth	Prof. Development Coordinator, Title II
George Tucker	School Improvement Specialist
Mary Paine	Maine DOE, Educator Effectiveness Coordinator
Nancy Mullins	English as a Second Language / Bilingual Education/ Director, Title III

Appendix I. Resources

The Maine DOE accessed many resources to inform the development of the Plan for Equitable Access to Effective Educators. The following is a list of those resources with the most significant influence on the development of Maine's plan.

Webinars

- 12/09/2014 – Educator Equity: Understanding Your Data 2:30-4:30PM
- 12/19/2014 – Educator Equity: Understanding Your Data- Webinar
- 01/20/2015 – Collecting Data for Equitable Access in Preparation for San Diego – Webinar
- 03/04/2015 – (REL) Closing the Achievement Gap in Rural Districts 3-4:30PM
- 04/22/2015 – Visualizing Equity Gaps: Examples from Oklahoma and Tennessee

Meetings

- San Diego Convening – 02/03/2015 -02/04/2015 – Due to inclement weather Maine DOE was unable to participate directly in the San Diego meeting and instead participated in three conference calls with presenters at the San Diego conference.
 - 02/05/2015 – Phone conference (Rural Schools Strategies) - Tony Bradshaw and Tracy Najera
 - 02/05/2015 – Phone conference – (Rural Schools Strategies) - Laurie Goe
 - 02/11/2015 – Phone conference - Ellen Sherratt
 - 02/12/2015 – Phone conference - (Data analysis) Andy Baxter
- Northeast Meeting in Framingham, MA - 04/02/2015 including meeting with Janice Poda (Rural Schools Strategies) and .

Resources/Resource Organizations

- CCSSO – Janice Poda, Consultant, Education Workforce
- Center on Great Teachers and Leaders, AIR, website and workbooks
- Center on Great Teachers and Leaders, AIR – Ellen Sherratt
- Educator Preparation State Self-Analysis - Education Delivery Institute (EDI)
- Equitable Access Support Network – Equity Plan Readiness/Planning Tool
- Northeast Comprehensive Center (NCC) – Kathy Dunne, Carole Keirstead, Scott Reynolds
- SCEE – Tim Dove, Educator in Residence

CCSSO Equity Plan Reviews – Maine DOE participated in two reviews of the draft plan for equitable access.

- 04/13/2015
- 05/01/2015