



Ohio

Ohio's 2015 Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

JUNE 1, 2015

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Too often, poor and minority students receive less effective teachers than their counterparts (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Since teachers are the most important school-based factor affecting student achievement (Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005) and school leaders are second (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003), Ohio's education reform efforts must focus on ensuring all students have equitable access to excellent educators.

As part of the *Excellent Educators for All Initiative* led by the U.S. Department of Education, this plan meets Ohio's requirement to develop a State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators. The purpose of the state plans is to work toward ensuring that poor and minority children are not taught by unqualified, inexperienced or out-of-field teachers at higher rates than other children. There are six outlined requirements (U.S. Department of Education, 2014) for the state equity plans:

1. Describe and provide documentation of stakeholder consultation regarding the state plan;
2. Identify equity gaps;
3. Conduct a root-cause analysis;
4. Outline steps to eliminate equity gaps;
5. Describe measures that will be used to evaluate progress toward eliminating equity gaps; and
6. Describe how the state will publicly report progress.

The Ohio Department of Education brought together a diverse group of stakeholders to create a context-driven state educator equity plan for ensuring equitable access to excellent educators for poor and minority students. These stakeholders identified Ohio's educator equity gaps and possible strategies to address them.

Ohio's Current Educational Context

The Ohio Department of Education has worked hard for many years to address equitable access for all students to a high-quality education. Ohio is in the midst of fulfilling many education reforms to ensure that *every child* will graduate from high school prepared to succeed in college, other postsecondary training or a skilled job. Current Ohio reforms include:

- A Third Grade Reading Guarantee to promote early literacy;
- An early detection and intervention system for students at risk of dropping out;
- Multiple new pathways to graduation that accommodate a diverse student population;
- An expanded career-technical education system;
- A College Credit Plus program that provides free college credit to academically eligible middle and high school students; and
- A refined, statewide teacher evaluation system that promotes instructional improvement.

Ohio also has adopted more rigorous K-12 learning standards, launched matching online assessments and established a stronger accountability system in its annual A-F district and school report cards. Finally, Ohio Gov. John Kasich and state lawmakers have created the \$250 million

