2015

Oklahoma State Department of Education

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO EXCELLENT EDUCATORS PLAN

Prepared for the United States Department of Education

MISSION

Oklahoma is committed to engaging stakeholders through a unified and sustainable effort that includes resources and funding that develops a robust public education system - one that is focused on a positive culture, mentoring and leadership.

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ABBREVIATIONS

American Institutes for Research (AIR)

Cooperative Council for Oklahoma School Administration (CCOSA)

Equitable Access to Excellent Educators (EAEE)

Equitable Access Support Network (EASN)

High-minority (MP)

High-minority quartile (HMQ)

High-poverty (HP)

High-poverty quartile (HPQ)

Local Education Agency (LEA)

Low-minority quartile (LMQ)

Low-poverty quartile (LPQ)

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (OEQA)

Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE)

Oklahoma State School Boards Association (OSSBA)

State Education Agency (SEA)

South Central Comprehensive Center (SC3)

Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (TLE)

The Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center)

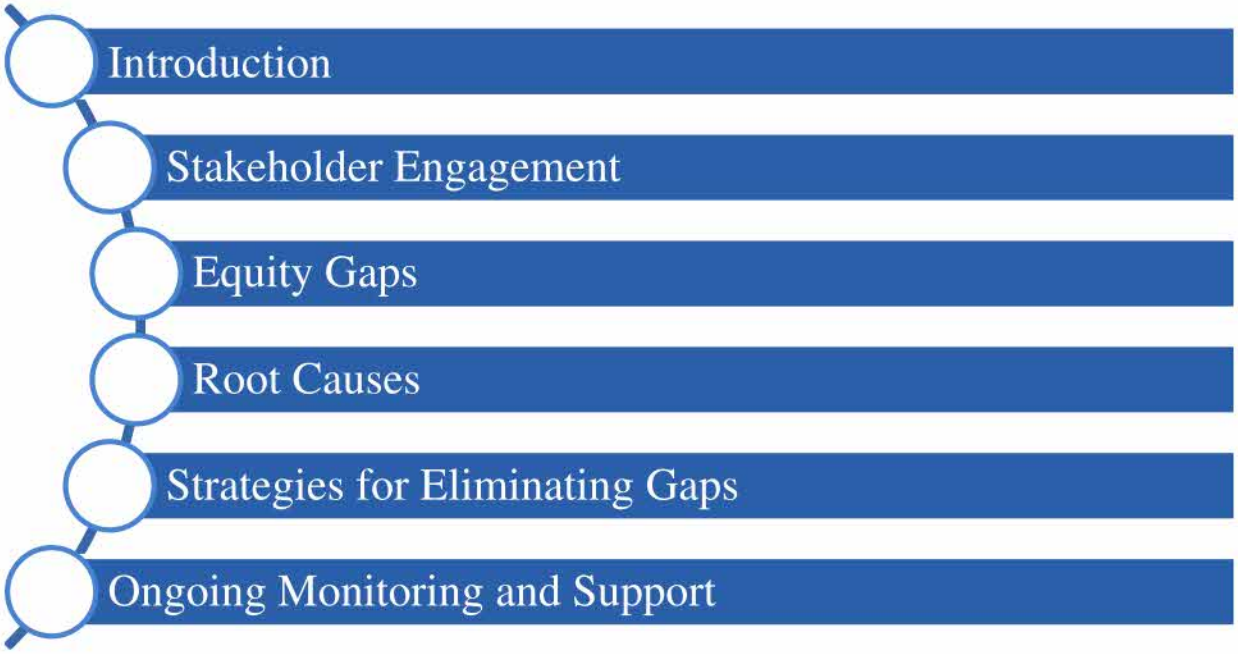
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The current state of education in Oklahoma is a direct reflection of its citizens' commitment to promote education, to address work force needs and to function as a collective whole for the betterment of its communities. Oklahoma is enduring a teacher shortage as well as uncertainty related to standards development, A-F grading and Teacher/Leader evaluation. The work of this Equitable Access to Excellent Educators (EAEE) Plan is significant as a means to target educational inequity for the purpose of designing and implementing powerful solutions.

This plan meets the requirement set forth by the U.S. Department of Education in July 2014 to "ensure that poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers and the measures that the [SEA] will use to evaluate and publicly report the progress of the [SEA] with respect to such steps." Not only does this plan meet the USDE requirement, it also affords our state the opportunity to have a positive impact on Oklahoma education.

Oklahoma's governor, Mary Fallin, advocates for improved health of the state and its citizens, reduced incarceration and higher education attainment. This quest for elevated education achievement is echoed by State Superintendent for Public Instruction, Joy Hofmeister. She specifically yearns to improve the educational opportunities for Oklahoma children by providing adequate and appropriate resources in classrooms, schools and districts as well as acknowledging teachers as the most important factors in children's educational success.

This EAEE Plan details Oklahoma's initiative to provide data-identified equity gaps, root-causes for those gaps, strategies to close the gaps and future plans to monitor and report success of the strategies. The plan conveys a mixed-method approach that uses quantitative data for base-line analysis and qualitative data in the form of focus groups and personal interviews to further explore the root causes of the equity gaps. The EAEE Plan components include the following:



The **Introduction** reveals the process used for plan development and a Theory of Action that targets Qualified, Experienced and Effective Teachers, Valuing Education, Workforce Development and Oklahoma's Unified Voice.

The **Stakeholder Engagement** section depicts the diverse perspectives from a variety of individuals representing educators, parents, students, economic development and community agencies. The role of these stakeholders is an agreed transitioning role from advisor to reviewer to partners in work.

The **Equity Gaps** identified and supported by data include (1) fewer qualified teachers in high minority and high poverty schools; (2) fewer experienced teachers in high minority and high poverty schools and (3) fewer effective teachers in high minority and high poverty schools.

The **Root Causes** pertain to an overall devalued educational culture, poor school climate, teacher shortage, a lack of support for teachers and ineffective teacher retention policies and strategies.

The **Strategies for Eliminating Gaps** include professional development and mentoring for teachers; professional development for principals; improved recruitment and retention strategies; and improved educator preparation and pathways.

Lastly, the **Ongoing Monitoring and Support** section captures future goals to have sustainable efforts supported by adequate resources and funding. Such efforts include wrap-around funding of services for high minority and high poverty schools, resources for needs based professional development, and accountability for district and building leadership through rigorous evaluations.

Equitable Access to Excellent Educators Plan

INTRODUCTION

The goal of Oklahoma's Equitable Access to Excellent Educators Plan is to ensure that all students–regardless of race or income–have equitable access to excellent educators. The EAEE Plan includes quantitative measurements of existing equity gaps, analyses of the root causes of these gaps, strategies for eliminating these gaps and specific steps for ongoing monitoring and support. This plan was prepared with the input of stakeholders representing multiple backgrounds, interests and agencies. OSDE submitted this plan in compliance 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 low-income and minority students are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers and the measures that the agency will use to evaluate and publicly report the progress of the agency with respect to such steps; and (2) the requirement in ESEA Section 1111(e)(2) that a state's plan be revised by the SEA as data indicate changes in state's needs.

BACKGROUND

It is a priority for Oklahoma that all students have access to qualified and effective educators. The 2015 Oklahoma EAEE Plan outlines equity gaps in the areas of teacher qualifications, experience and effectiveness. The EAEE Plan aligns with several other OSDE education reform efforts including:

- The development of new, rigorous College and Career Ready Standards
- The development and implementation of a high-quality Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (TLE) Evaluation system
- Early childhood programs such as pre-kindergarten to improve access to quality education for all students.

OVERVIEW OF PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The development of this plan was led by the OSDE's Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research and the Executive Director of the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (OEQA). The team obtained guidance from The Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center) at American Institutes for Research (AIR) and the Equitable Access Support Network (EASN) in the development of this process. The team also worked closely with the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, statewide stakeholders and an internal advisory committee.

The process consisted of five main steps: identification of equity gaps, stakeholder engagement, identification of root causes of equity gaps, identification of strategies for eliminating equity gaps and the development of a plan for on-going monitoring and support. In Winter 2015, the team created a work plan that examined preliminary data on equity gaps. These data measured differences in the teacher qualifications, experience and effectiveness among schools in the

highest and lowest quartile of poverty and minority students. Guided by these data, the team facilitated a series of eight stakeholder focus groups to further explore these gaps. During these focus groups, stakeholders reviewed data on equity gaps, identified potential root causes of these gaps as well as potential strategies for eliminating them. In Spring 2015, the team developed a process for on-going monitoring and support.

THEORY OF ACTION

The theory of action guiding this work is displayed in Table 1.

QUALIFIED, EXPERIENCED AND EFFECTIVE TEACHERS

Students deserve equitable access to excellent educators who are qualified, experienced and effective. Unfortunately, however, Oklahoma is in a crisis. We have a severe teacher shortage and are rapidly losing many of our best teachers. We need to identify ways to address this key issue in order to give students the quality education they deserve.

EDUCATION IS VALUED

Teaching is one of the most important career paths in our society. Yet, compared to other professional occupations, public education in Oklahoma is not valued. It is important to the future of our state that we change this perception. We need to be able to attract high-quality teaching candidates and retain our effective teachers in order to develop our young people into a robust workforce and improve our economy. In this way, valuing the profession is synonymous with valuing our future. If legislators, parents, business and other community members support and value education and work to better it, then education itself will improve and those very communities will benefit.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Mary Fallin, Oklahoma's Governor, has launched an initiative, "Oklahoma Works" in order to strengthen partnerships between local schools and local businesses where students can dually track their education and work skills. "Oklahoma Works" is designed to realign education and work-skill training systems to better meet the needs of both students and employers.

In order to develop a college and career ready culture, Oklahoma is also developing more rigorous educational standards for our students. Oklahoma Academic Standards serve as expectations for what students should know and be able to do by the end of the school year. The development, review and revision process involves stakeholders throughout the state of Oklahoma and is an ongoing and critical component to ensure Oklahoma students in every classroom receive current and relevant learning experiences. The goal is that all students be college, career and citizen ready upon graduation from high school. By the school year 2016-2017, Oklahoma Academic Standards shall be fully developed and implemented.

UNIFIED OKLAHOMA VOICE

By 2016-17 Oklahoma will fully implement a new set of P-12 Oklahoma Academic State Standards; educators will have a defined roadmap that can determine student preparation and readiness for college and careers. Adopting rigorous standards, aligning the curriculum, enabling quality instruction and implementing assessments that improve teaching and learning are research-based indicators that must be communicated to teachers, students, parents, business leaders, communities and stakeholders.

To speak with a unified voice for Oklahoma education, it will take an allied approach of everyone working together toward common goals. We will build on the progress that has been made and push aggressively in the areas where we still need to improve.

TABLE 1 THEORY OF ACTION

VISION	STRATEGIC INTENT	IMPLICATIONS	COMPACT	INVESTED STAKEHOLDERS
Qualified, Experienced and Effective Teachers	Recruit, Prepare, Mentor, Grow, Retain	By 2018 Oklahoma will increase the number of highly effective teachers in targeted high minority and high poverty classrooms by 25%.	All students, specifically minority and impoverished, will benefit from a robust public education system – one that is focused on a positive culture, mentoring and leadership	P-12 Educators Higher Education Business/Industry Economic Development Community Parents Legislators Students
Education is Valued	Funding, Partnerships, Advocacy, Collaboration	By 2020 a culture of cohesion will exist between schools, legislators, parents, businesses and community.		
Workforce Development	Partnerships, Coalitions, Communication, Career Pathways	Beginning 2015 focused awareness of the urgency of workforce needs. By 2020 we will align education outcomes and workforce development. Beginning in the 2015-2016 school year, Oklahoma will start to close student skills gaps by raising academic standards and expectations.		
Unified Oklahoma Voice	Champion education, focused and positive campaign	Beginning 2016 Oklahomans will communicate a commitment to education for all.		

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

BACKGROUND

OSDE values the input and feedback from the communities it serves. To ensure that diverse points of view were included in the EAEE Plan's development, OSDE sought feedback from a wide variety of stakeholders. OSDE very much valued the input of its stakeholders and is committed to ongoing collaborative work with these groups.

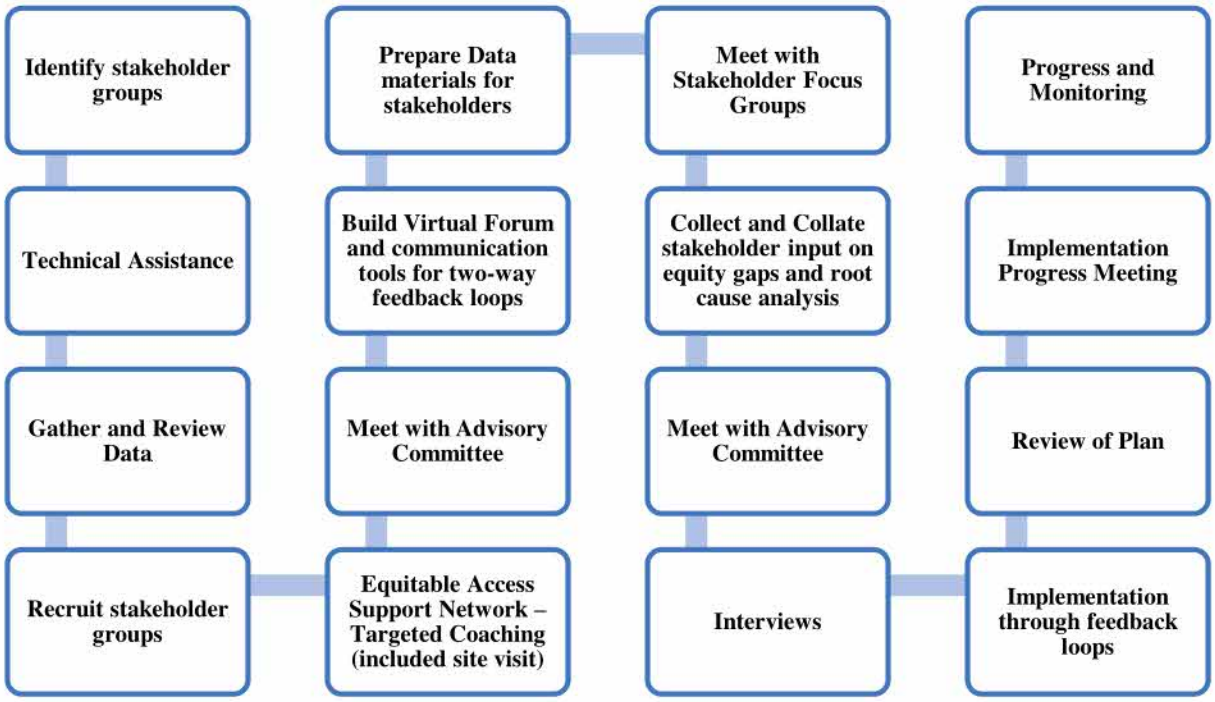
These stakeholders played a key role in the following tasks:

- Defining key terms
- Identifying equity gaps
- Identifying root causes of equity gaps
- Identifying strategies for eliminating equity gaps

APPROACH

Figure 1 provides an overview of the stakeholder engagement process (for a more detailed timeline of the process, see Appendix A). As the illustration shows, the stakeholder engagement process involved several iterative steps.

FIGURE 1 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROCESS OVERVIEW

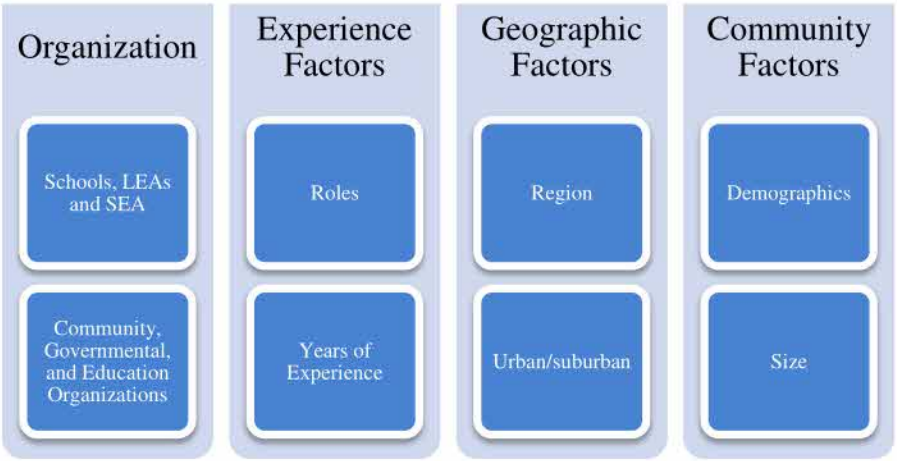


During the first stage, OSDE identified and recruited stakeholders for the focus groups, sought technical assistance and prepared preliminary data for stakeholder meetings, seeking input from the EASN and its own internal advisory committee during the process. OSDE then held a series of eight focus groups. The purpose of these meetings was to collaborate with participants to analyze data on equity gaps, identify root causes and propose strategies for eliminating them. The EAEE Plan was then drafted and distributed to stakeholders for their review. Finally a process for on-going monitoring and support was developed and implemented. This section describes these steps in greater detail.

STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION AND SELECTION

OSDE designed the approach to stakeholder engagement using guidance from The Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center) at American Institutes for Research (AIR) and feedback from other states in the Equitable Access Support Network (EASN) working sessions. OSDE identified stakeholders with a special focus on inclusivity and diversity, while still making sure the stakeholder engagement process was manageable in terms of time and resources. Figure 2 summarizes some of the key selection criteria used to identify focus group participants.

FIGURE 2 STAKEHOLDER SELECTION FACTORS



As it was important to OSDE that the stakeholders reflect the communities they serve, a special effort was made to include stakeholders representing Oklahoma's unique context, which includes a large Native American population and many small rural LEAs. In order to make the EAEE Plan most useful and contextualize it within the larger picture, OSDE engaged stakeholders throughout the educational pipeline, from early childhood to higher education. To ensure the applicability of the EAEE Plan to broader state workforce development goals, OSDE also brought in individuals from economic development agencies.

To identify specific individuals for inclusion in the stakeholder groups, OSDE relied heavily on the feedback of its internal advisory committee. This committee represented individuals from a wide range of departments including–but not limited to–special education, community outreach

and certification (for a full list of participants, see Appendix B). The internal advisory committee reviewed the list of proposed focus group participants and identified additional individuals for inclusion. A list of the resulting individuals included in the focus groups is available in Appendix C.

OSDE grouped participants into eight focus groups based on stakeholder type: teachers; parents/students; administrators; school personnel; education organizations; economic development; higher education/teacher preparation; and community agencies. As summarized in Table 2 below, the individuals in these groups represented a wide range of roles and backgrounds, including students, teachers, LEA administrators, central support staff and community organizations.

TABLE 2 FOCUS GROUP STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

Stakeholder Group	Total	Percent
Community Agency Personnel	10	11%
Economic Development Organization Personnel	9	10%
Higher Education and Teacher Preparation Program Personnel	10	11%
Parents	5	6%
Principals	3	3%
School Personnel	10	11%
State Education Personnel	14	16%
Students	4	4%
Superintendents	5	6%
Teachers	10	11%
Education Organization Representatives	10	11%
Grand Total	90	100%

To recruit individuals, OSDE sent an initial letter of invitation signed by the Governor and the State Superintendent for Public Instruction (Appendix D). Participation in the stakeholder groups was high, with 74% of invited participants agreeing to participate in the focus groups.

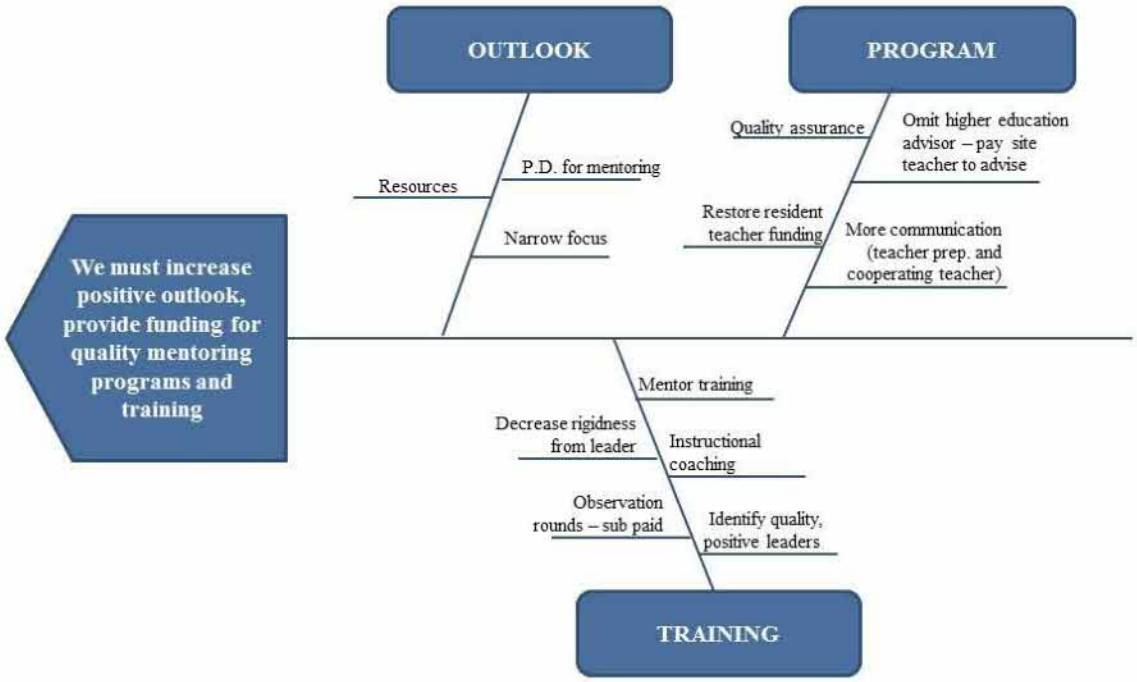
FOCUS GROUPS

Conducting the focus groups involved several steps and input from multiple stakeholders. The internal advisory committee played a strong role in developing and refining the presentation materials for the focus groups. It served as a pilot focus group and gave OSDE important feedback for modifying future presentations, improving and clarifying definitions and identifying additional data that would be helpful to understanding equity gaps. Based on these discussions, for instance, we added additional data for students on individualized education plans (IEPs) and English language learning (ELL) students as our advisory committee thought that stakeholders might be interested in data on these sub-groups as well. We also added district-level data. For example, based on feedback from the stakeholder groups, we added a list of the districts with the

most new teachers both in total number and percent. We also moved several data analyses on statutory terms to tables which were available at the focus groups but not included in the PowerPoint presentations. The purpose of this change was to be able to share some data which the advisory committee thought would be useful for all stakeholder groups in the PowerPoints and use data in the tables in a focused manner to better direct and engage each group based on their interests, experiences and expertise. Thus, rather than providing all groups with all data on statutory terms, stakeholder groups instead discussed what gaps they chose to address and then data for those gaps were provided.

Once the materials were finalized (Appendix E), the stakeholder focus groups were facilitated at OSDE. The same agenda was used for each of the eight groups. Facilitators first shared baseline data with the stakeholders prior to engaging in a series of brainstorming activities related to understanding equity gaps, identifying root causes, citing possible strategies to eliminate gaps and capturing challenge statements from each group (Appendix F). Participants also completed fishbone diagrams, like the one displayed in Figure 3 developed by the teacher focus group, in order to capture their ideas. These materials and other evidence from the interviews were heavily used in drafting the EAEE plan.

FIGURE 3 FISHBONE DIAGRAM TO IDENTIFY EQUITY GAPS



Once this EAEE draft was complete and prior to submission, OSDE disseminated it to the internal advisory committee, focus group participants, state board of education members, superintendents and educators. OSDE's comprehensive dissemination plan leveraged its own networks and those of community partners to reach the largest audience possible. The draft EAEE plan was posted on the public website, sent directly to focus group participants and distributed through our community partners, such as Cooperative Council for Oklahoma School Administration (CCOSA) and Oklahoma State School Boards Association (OSSBA). Feedback from this process was used to improve the EAEE Plan.

ON-GOING MONITORING, SUPPORT AND ENGAGEMENT

To facilitate ongoing communication and engagement, OSDE created a virtual forum for stakeholders to continue the conversation beyond the focus groups and submission of the initial plan (Appendix G). Stakeholders have already been using this forum to engage meaningfully with other educators on issues related to equity and to identify important areas for consideration. For example, one stakeholder stated, "I think it is important that we develop real stories from Oklahoma schools that illustrate the challenges of HP/HM [high-poverty/high-minority] schools but also celebrate the successes." As this comment illustrates, the virtual forum has allowed

stakeholders to dig deeper into the issue of inequity while recognizing success stories that exist in the state.

OSDE will also continue the stakeholder engagement process through the implementation phase. It will continue to use focus groups to assess implementation efforts, identify ways to support LEAs during the implementation process and review new data to determine the progress of narrowing equity gaps.

LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Evidence from the focus groups reinforced the common sense notion that stakeholder engagement is key to fostering buy-in and long-term partnership development. The success and importance of stakeholder engagement were evident in two emerging themes from the focus groups.

First, focus group facilitators noted that several participants expressed extreme gratitude for being included in the focus groups. Expressing the sentiment of many others in the room, one gentleman noted, "I've never been asked to be around the table before. Thank you for asking." He and other participants were extremely interested and engaged in identifying equity gaps and potential solutions to them. OSDE found great value in such inclusion, both in terms of actual content and morale building. In recent years, Oklahoma educators have been plagued with a sense of diminished support. Armed with this information, our approach seeks to include, recognize and empower teachers, administrators, parents and other stakeholders. Including a wide variety of educators and other stakeholders-many of whom had never been included before-fostered a unique sense of appreciation and respect among participants that was invaluable. We believe that this process of recognizing the unique professional knowledge and expertise of educators is empowering to them and helps us build trust and partnership.

Secondly, including stakeholders from multiple perspectives also improved the actual content of the EAEE Plan. Another focus group participant noted the importance of engaging multiple stakeholders and truly listening to what they say. He asked, "Why is education not in tune with the customer?" "Who is the customer?" When questioned about what he meant by customer, he noted that everyone is a customer: students, parents and the workforce. Such comments highlight the importance of working to foster solutions to equity gaps from the ground up, from the people who experience them every day. OSDE believes that in order to really make impactful change, there cannot be disconnect between the people leading the work and the people implementing and living it. Communication needs to run in both directions. Through continued stakeholder engagement, buy-in and partnership development, we believe that together we can make a difference.

IDENTIFICATION OF EQUITY GAPS

To ensure that our work is data-driven, OSDE used data from multiple sources to identify and quantify equity gaps. Our data use was based on suggestions and guidance from federal guidelines, the EASN and stakeholder focus groups. This section defines the key terms used in this document, discusses the data sources used and presents analytical findings.

KEY TERMS

Oklahoma defined key terms internally with feedback from the internal advisory committee. Definitions are derived from national sources, state sources and research literature. Table 3 summarizes these definitions.

TABLE 3 DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

Term	Definition
Unqualified Teacher	A teacher who does not hold standard teaching certification or has requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis.
Out-of-Field Teacher	Teaching a core academic subject or a grade for which the teacher does not meet the NCLB definition of "highly qualified." Includes teaching without a major, with only a minor or without any endorsement.
New Teacher	A teacher with less than one year of experience.
Inexperienced Teacher	A teacher with three or fewer years of teaching experience.
Effective Teacher	Defined in pending legislation (See Appendix I)
Minority Student	A student who is reported as a race or ethnicity other than White.
Low-Income (Poor) Student	A student who is reported as eligible for free or reduced price meals.
Rural	Census-defined rural territory (NCES)
Urban	Territory inside an urbanized area (NCES)
Town	Territory inside an urban cluster (NCES)
Suburban	Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area (NCES)

Oklahoma's selection of these key terms for analysis was guided by federal statutory terms and guidelines, research evidence and internal discussion. Federal guidelines require the exploration of the distribution of out-of-field and unqualified teachers. The importance of these factors is also supported in the research. A study from the Center for Public Education, for instance, identified content knowledge and teacher training/credentials as two key characteristics of an effective teacher. To enrich the analysis and make it more relevant for Oklahoma, the EAEE Plan also explores the distribution of new and inexperienced teachers. The inclusion of new and inexperienced teachers in the analysis is based on research evidence which finds that new and inexperienced teachers are less effective, on average. The same study from the Center for Public Education also identified teaching experience as another one of the five characteristics of an effective teacher. Another study by Rivkin, Hanushek & Kain (2005) also provides evidence that

students of experienced teachers attain significantly higher levels of achievement than students of new and inexperienced teachers (less than three years of experience).

Current legislation includes a five tier rating system for the effectiveness of teachers.

1. Superior
2. Highly Effective
3. Effective
4. Needs Improvement
5. Ineffective

Once these ratings are implemented, effective teachers will be defined as the legislation from Senate Bill 706 outlines (see Appendix I). While Oklahoma has yet to finalize a Teacher Leader Effectiveness Evaluation system, the EAEE Plan also includes preliminary evidence on teacher effectiveness as measured through qualitative teacher evaluations, which are currently already in use.

Finally, in defining the terms for analysis, it is important to note that there are individual teachers who are highly effective although they lack one or more of the factors OSDE identified for analysis (content knowledge, teaching experience, professional certification, and effective teacher rating). Likewise, there are ineffective teachers who have all of these traits. We nonetheless examine these measures since the presence of these qualities is more likely to produce positive outcomes for students ("Teacher Quality and Student Achievement").

DATA SOURCES

OSDE used data from 2013-2014 from several sources to conduct the rest of this analysis. Table 4 summarizes these data sources.

TABLE 4 DATA SOURCES

Data Source	Description
School Personnel Records (SPR)	District certified teacher and support personnel reports that include employment data for all certified and support school employees.
Teacher Certification	Teacher certification data, including certification route, subject(s) and degree-granting institution.
The WAVE	Student information database that includes student demographic, enrollment, teacher and course data.
Teacher Evaluation Pilot Data	District certified qualitative data from teacher evaluation rubrics.

Notably, since the teacher effectiveness system is still under development and has not been fully implemented, the teacher evaluation data are preliminary and incomplete. For example, qualitative teacher effectiveness data from teacher evaluation is available for only 37,080 of 49,156 total teachers (33,992 of 41,118 FTE teachers).

For the stakeholder PowerPoint (Appendix E), OSDE also included 2011-2012 data from the state profile produced from the Civil Rights Data Collection.

In the future, we plan to include additional years of data to demonstrate whether gaps are a one-time occurrence or an ongoing issue.

APPROACH

In order to better understand gaps in the equitable distribution of students *across schools*, OSDE conducted a school-level gap analysis. The goal of this analysis was to identify gaps in the equitable distribution of new, inexperienced, alternatively certified and effective teachers for poor and minority students.

The analysis consisted of three steps. First, the 25th and 75th percentile values for the student level variables were calculated. These values are summarized in Table 5 below.

TABLE 5 SUBGROUP QUARTILES

Student Group	Low Quartile	High Quartile
Poverty	52%	80%
Minority	31%	58%

Next, schools were classified into the low or high quartiles of each group based on the percent of students at their school in each student group. Schools with 52% percent or fewer poor students were labeled as low poverty quartile (LPQ) schools. Schools with 80% or more poor students were labeled as high poverty quartile (HPQ) schools. Schools with 31% percent or fewer minority students were labeled as low minority quartile (LMQ) schools. Schools with 58% or more minority students were labeled as high minority quartile (HMQ) schools.

Finally, OSDE calculated the average percent of new, inexperienced, unqualified teachers, average percent of out-of-field teachers and average teacher effectiveness ratings for all quartile groups.

RESULTS

The following sections outline the results of the data analysis for each of the defined terms.

OUT-OF-FIELD TEACHERS

Only 27 teachers (.06%) met OSDE's definition for out-of-field teachers. The reason for this is that Oklahoma requires that all teachers take a certification test or demonstrate competency in each subject taught based on a high objective uniform state standard of evaluation (HOUSSE). Because of this requirement few teachers in Oklahoma teach subjects for which they are not certified to teach. Those who do teach in subjects they are out-of-field for must co-teach with a teacher who is highly qualified in that subject.

Due to the small number of teachers meeting the definition for out-of-field teachers, analysis of gaps based on these variables produced no meaningful results. While some small gaps were evident in the percent of out-of-field teachers, these results were not statistically significant, meaning that we cannot say that these differences were due to random chance, not actual differences. Consequently, out-of-field teachers will not be a focus of the equitable access plan for 2015.

TABLE 6 OUT-OF-FIELD GAP ANALYSIS: ALL SCHOOLS

Group	Percent of Out-of-Field Teachers
All Schools	.06%
HPQ	.04%
LPQ	.13%
Income Gap	.06%
HMQ	.15%
LMQ	.05%
Minority Gap	.1%

UNQUALIFIED TEACHERS

Equity gap analysis revealed a noticeable gap in the equitable distribution of unqualified teachers for poor students and a significant gap for minority students. The results of these analyses are shown in Table 6. Statewide, 17.5% of teachers are unqualified. In high-poverty schools, however, 19.4% of teachers are unqualified compared to 16.8% in low-poverty schools—a 2.6% gap. A more significant gap exists in high-minority schools; 20.5% of teachers are unqualified, on average, compared to only 15.7% of teachers in low-minority schools—a 4.8% equity gap.

TABLE 7 TEACHER PREPARATION AND EXPERIENCE GAP ANALYSIS: ALL SCHOOLS

Group	Percent of Unqualified Teachers
All Schools	17.5%
HPQ	19.4%
LPQ	16.8%
Income Gap	2.6%
HMQ	20.5%
LMQ	15.7%
Minority Gap	4.8%

In order to understand how these gaps vary by geographical region, OSDE also conducted separate analyses comparing rural and small town schools to urban and suburban schools. Examining the schools in the top and bottom poverty and minority quartiles revealed

underrepresentation of rural schools in both quartiles. Most of the schools in the high poverty and minority quartiles were located in cities while many of the low poverty and minority quartile schools were located in suburban settings. In order to ensure adequate representation of schools in different geographical settings and provide meaningful results for LEAs in different geographical settings, OSDE thought it was important to conduct geographic sub-group analyses.

Interestingly, equity gaps differ significantly for rural and small town schools relative to urban and suburban schools. As Tables 7 illustrates, schools in rural areas and small towns[1] have similar shares of unqualified teachers. In urban and suburban areas from Table 8, however, the gap is 8.2%. Similar trends are seen in minority gaps as well. This analysis suggests that inequities are much more pronounced in urban and suburban schools in Oklahoma relative to rural areas and small town schools.

TABLE 8 GAP ANALYSIS: RURAL AND SMALL TOWN SCHOOLS

Group	Percent of Unqualified Teachers
All Schools	16.2%
HPQ	15.6%
LPQ	16.7%
Income Gap	-1.1%
HMQ	15.2%
LMQ	16.0%
Minority Gap	-0.8%

TABLE 9 GAP ANALYSIS: URBAN AND SUBURBAN SCHOOLS

Group	Percent of Unqualified Teachers
All Schools	21.2%
HPQ	25.1%
LPQ	16.9%
Income Gap	8.2%
HMQ	26.4%
LMQ	13.9%
Minority Gap	12.5%

NEW AND INEXPERIENCED TEACHERS

Equity gap analysis revealed significant gaps in the equitable distribution of new and inexperienced teachers for poor and minority students. The results of these analyses are shown in

[1] As classified by NCES

Table 9. Statewide, 6.7% of teachers are new and 21.6% are inexperienced. In high-poverty schools, however, 9.5% of teachers are new, on average, compared to only 5.5% of teachers in low-poverty schools—a 4% equity gap. The gap is even greater—9.2%—for the percent of teachers with three or fewer years of experience.

The similar gaps exist for high-minority schools. In high-minority schools, 9.8% of teachers are new, on average, compared to only 5.4% of teachers in low-minority schools—a 4.4% equity gap. In high-minority schools, 27.2% of teachers are inexperienced, on average, compared to only 19.4% of teachers in low-minority schools—a 7.9% equity gap.

TABLE 10 TEACHER PREPARATION AND EXPERIENCE GAP ANALYSIS: ALL SCHOOLS

Group	Percent of New Teachers	Percent of Teachers with Three or Fewer Years of Experience
All Schools	6.7%	21.6%
HPQ	9.5%	27.9%
LPQ	5.5%	18.8%
Income Gap	4.0%	9.2%
HMQ	9.8%	27.2%
LMQ	5.4%	19.4%
Minority Gap	4.4%	7.9%

The percent of new and inexperienced teachers differs significantly for rural and small town schools compared to urban and suburban schools. As Tables 10 illustrates, schools in rural areas and small towns have a 4.3% difference between the percent of teachers with three or fewer years of experience in high and low poverty schools. Table 11 shows that in urban and suburban areas, however, the gap is 16%—about four times greater. Similar trends are seen in minority gaps as well. This discrepancy suggests that inequities are much more pronounced in urban and suburban schools in Oklahoma relative to rural areas and small town schools.

TABLE 12 GAP ANALYSIS: RURAL AND SMALL TOWN SCHOOLS

Group	Percent of New Teachers	Percent of Teachers with Three or Fewer Years of Experience
All Schools	5.7%	19.1%
HPQ	7.0%	22.1%
LPQ	5.2%	17.9%
Income Gap	1.8%	4.3%
HMQ	6.6%	19.6%
LMQ	5.2%	19.1%
Minority Gap	1.4%	0.5%

TABLE 12 GAP ANALYSIS: URBAN AND SUBURBAN SCHOOLS

Group	Percent of New Teachers	Percent of Teachers with Three or Fewer Years of Experience
All Schools	10.0%	28.9%
HPQ	13.3%	36.8%
LPQ	6.3%	20.8%
Income Gap	7.1%	16.0%
HMQ	13.3%	35.8%
LMQ	6.1%	21.0%
Minority Gap	7.1%	14.8%

EFFECTIVE TEACHERS

Analysis on preliminary teacher and leader evaluation data from 2013-2014 revealed gaps in the equitable distribution of effective teachers for poor and minority students. As shown in Table 12, statewide, the average qualitative teacher evaluation score is 3.61. In high-poverty schools, however, the average score is 3.57 compared to 3.66 in low-poverty schools—a .09 equity gap.

A small gap also exists among teachers in high-minority versus low-minority schools. As Table 12 demonstrates, in high-minority schools the average qualitative teacher evaluation score of teachers is 3.6. In low-minority schools, the average score in 3.62—a .02 equity gap.

TABLE 13 TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS GAP ANALYSIS: ALL SCHOOLS

Group	Qualitative Scores from Teacher Evaluations
All Schools	3.61
HPQ	3.57
LPQ	3.66
Income Gap	.09
HMQ	3.60
LMQ	3.62
Minority Gap	.02

Equity gaps for the effectiveness metric also differ significantly for rural and small town schools relative to urban and suburban schools. As Tables 13 illustrates, schools in rural areas and small towns have a .13 difference in the average qualitative teacher evaluation scores between high and low poverty schools. Table 14 shows that in urban and suburban areas, however, the gap is .04—about three times smaller. Similar trends are seen in minority gaps as well. This suggests that inequities in the qualitative scores from teacher evaluations are much more pronounced in rural and small town schools in Oklahoma relative to urban and suburban schools.

TABLE 14 TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS GAP ANALYSIS: RURAL AND SMALL TOWN SCHOOLS

Group	Qualitative Scores from Teacher Evaluations
All Schools	3.55
HPQ	3.49
LPQ	3.62
Income Gap	.13
HMQ	3.49
LMQ	3.59
Minority Gap	.10

TABLE 15 TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS GAP ANALYSIS: URBAN AND SUBURBAN SCHOOLS

Group	Qualitative Scores from Teacher Evaluations
All Schools	3.71
HPQ	3.69
LPQ	3.73
Income Gap	.04
HMQ	3.71
LMQ	3.71
Minority Gap	0

GAPS

The above data and analyses support the presence of the following three equity gaps:

- Gap #1 – Fewer qualified teachers in high poverty and high minority schools.
- Gap #2 – Fewer experienced teachers in high poverty and high minority schools.
- Gap #3 – Fewer effective teachers in high poverty and high minority schools.

The root causes for these equity gaps are discussed in the following section.

ROOT CAUSES OF EQUITY GAPS

APPROACH

FOCUS GROUPS

Focus group facilitators used the protocol from the Root-Cause Analysis Workbook produced by the Center for Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL) at the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to guide the root-cause analysis. The process involved:

1. Reviewing relevant and available data
2. Identifying equity gaps found in the data
3. Analyzing root causes through a series of fishbone diagram activities
4. Connecting root-causes to practical strategies

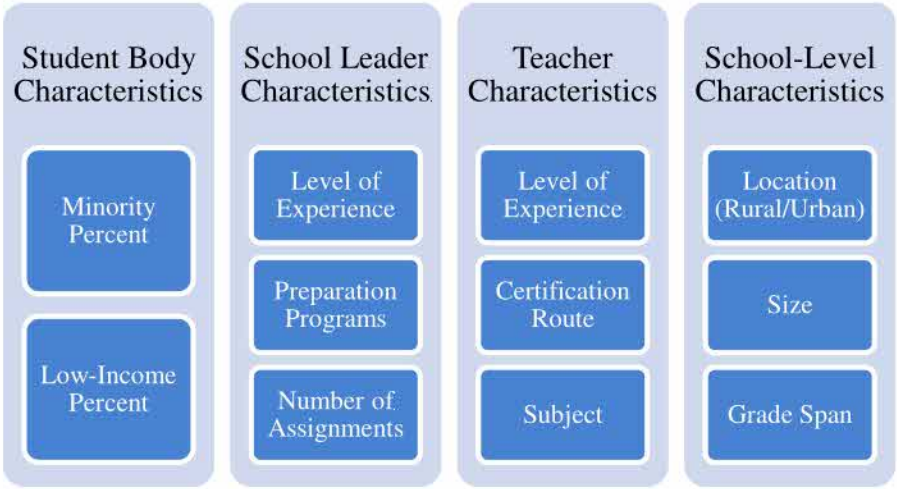
This process resulted in the identification of several root causes for inequities related to issues including school climate and culture, a devalued educational culture, teacher shortage, a lack of support for teachers and ineffective teacher retention policies and strategies, among others. For a detailed list of the root causes identified, please see the challenge statements in Appendix F.

In order to better understand these root causes and how to best address them, OSDE is conducting additional qualitative research on these topics. Specifically, OSDE is completing a series of interviews with both teachers and administrators and will conduct a survey examining shared perspectives. The details of the approaches to both the interviews and survey are described below.

INTERVIEWS

OSDE is conducting a series of interviews with both teachers and administrators. The purpose of these interviews is to further explore the factors that support or hinder their success in diverse settings. Using the factors identified in the focus groups, OSDE developed a semi-structured interview protocol (Appendix G) with questions aiming at unpacking the root causes identified in the focus groups. To this end, OSDE is interested in how factors such as professional development or school environment support—or fail to support—success and persistence in diverse classrooms. OSDE is also interested in understanding what its staff can do to better support and improve teacher experiences, satisfaction and persistence towards the ultimate goal of closing equity gaps and improving overall student success.

FIGURE 4 SAMPLING PARAMETERS



As summarized in Figure 4, OSDE is interviewing principals and teachers in a wide variety of settings. Principals and teachers working in schools with large poor and minority populations are being interviewed so that we may better understand the unique challenges they face. Likewise, we are also interviewing new and inexperienced principals and teachers as well as teachers who entered the field through different pathways in order to understand how we may better support them. We are also interviewing teachers who teach different subjects so that we can understand how their experiences differ relative to teachers teaching other subjects. Finally, we are interviewing educators in a wide variety of school settings. We are interviewing educators in rural as well as urban schools, in small and large schools and in elementary, middle and high schools. By sampling a diverse set of educators in a diverse set of schools, we hope to identify common solutions as well as issues that require differentiated solutions.

SURVEY

Using data derived from the interviews, OSDE will identify the most salient findings regarding root causes for equity gaps as well as solutions to better support educators in their work to close them. We will then develop a survey based on this evidence in order to quantify the extent to which the thoughts and opinions of the interview subjects are shared with other educators across the state. The results of this survey will help us identify the most widespread challenges and supports to educating students in a wide variety of settings and closing equity gaps. The findings will also help us identify the most promising solutions and help us leverage state resources for maximal impact.

STRATEGIES FOR ELIMINATING EQUITY GAPS

The stakeholder engagement process resulted in the identification of the following root cause of equity gaps in Oklahoma:

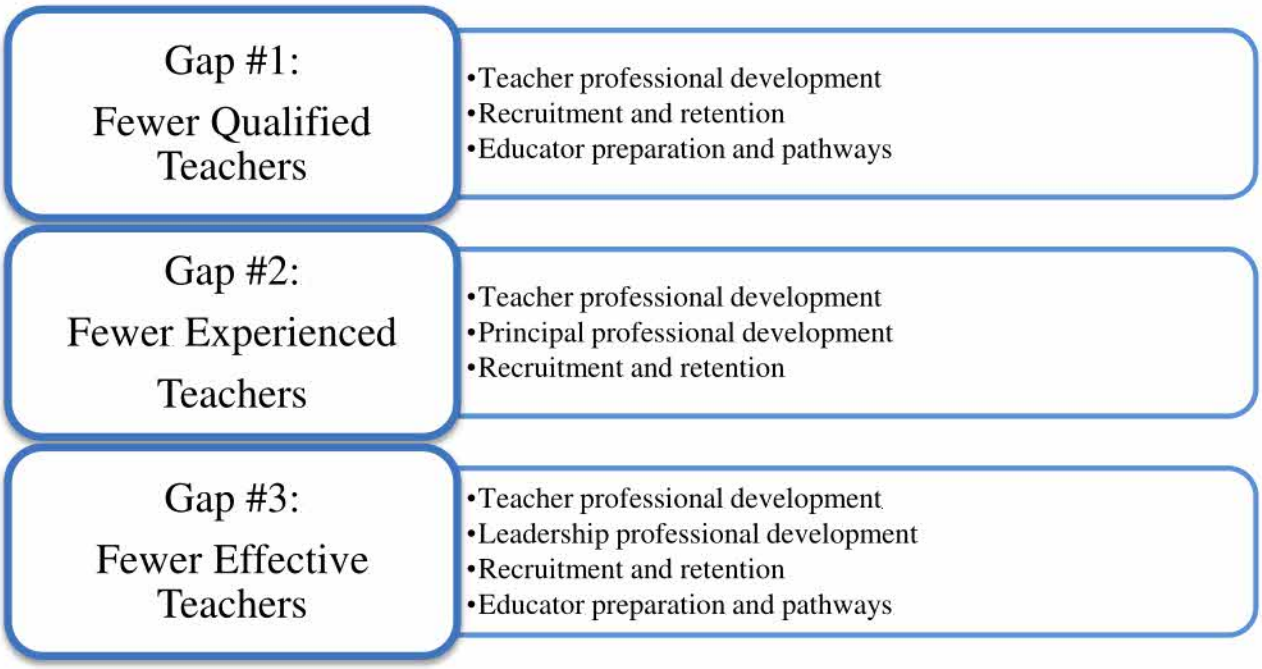
- Lack of support for teachers and principals in HP and HM schools
- Poor school climate and culture in HP and HM schools
- Poor working conditions and pay in HP and HM schools
- Lack of value for education as a career path

The process also identified the following specific strategies to shrink equity gaps in Oklahoma:

- Professional development and mentoring for teachers in high-poverty/high minority schools
- Professional development for principals in high-poverty/high-minority schools
- Improved recruitment and retention practices
- Improved educator preparation and pathways

Figure 5 summarizes the strategies that address each gap. This section describes each strategy in detail and outlines the mechanisms by which it intends to reduce equity gaps.

FIGURE 5 STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS GAPS



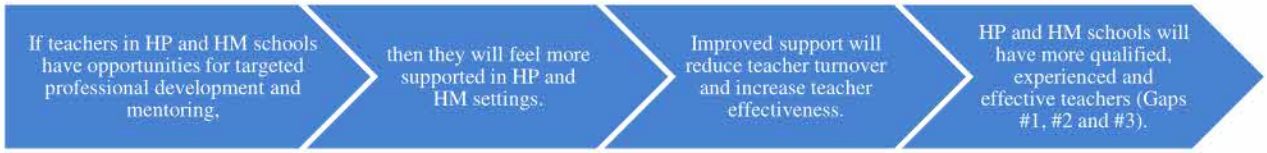
DEVELOPMENT OF THE TLE SYSTEM

Notably, while not a strategy in and of itself, the further development and eventual full implementation of Oklahoma's TLE evaluation system is necessary for the successful implementation of the strategies outlined in this section for three main reasons. First, the TLE

evaluation system provides the state with important data for understanding the distribution of effective teachers in Oklahoma and setting targets for closing gaps. Secondly, the TLE evaluation system provides principals with useful data on teacher effectiveness that can help them identify their most effective teachers. Additionally, it can also help principals identify areas for professional development for teachers. Finally, the TLE evaluation system serves teachers by helping them understand and address their strengths and areas for development. Most important, it can also help them identify opportunities for targeted professional development. Specifically, providing meaningful and relevant professional development for teachers requires the following:

1. Make evaluation system to improve practice
2. Ensure principals have ability to rate accurately and give high quality feedback
3. Ensure that principals can direct or provide teachers with resources to improve practice
4. Help districts develop data capacity to disaggregate evaluation data by domain, by school

STRATEGY ONE: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MENTORING FOR TEACHERS IN HIGH-POVERTY/HIGH MINORITY SCHOOLS



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Stakeholders expressed a strong desire for meaningful and practical professional development opportunities for teachers in high-poverty (HP) and high-minority (HM) settings. Teachers said that they love it when they can go to a professional development session and leave with immediate applications for their classrooms. Currently, however, most professional development opportunities are delivered at the district-level and do not accurately serve the varied needs of the Oklahoma teachers and particularly teachers in high-poverty and high-minority settings.

In order to address this root cause, OSDE intends to help provide more meaningful professional development to educators that reflects the voice and needs of Oklahoma educators. We support the implementation of professional development opportunities that:

1. Extend over long periods of time
2. Engage teachers as active learners
3. Focus on combining content and pedagogy
4. Include opportunities for practice, feedback and reflection rather than one-day workshops

Evidence from "Teacher Quality and Student Achievement" suggests these four factors are associated with professional development opportunities that have the greatest impact.

Since we do not currently have the resources to provide comprehensive professional development in-person, we will focus our efforts initially on virtual and regional options. Also as part of our support of priority and focus schools (many of which are high-poverty and high-

minority), OSDE also intends to offer assistance in developing meaningful professional development opportunities to teachers in these schools as part of the school turnaround process.

MENTORING

Evidence from "Collaboration: Closing the Effective Teaching Gap" (2009) shows that when teachers are given time and tools to collaborate with their peers, they are more likely to teach effectively and remain in the high-needs schools that need them most. Stakeholders in the focus groups echoed this research finding, stating they find great value in peer-to-peer mentoring and that quality mentoring (or lack of it) is an important part in their decision about whether or not to stay in the teaching profession.

Previously, Oklahoma had a resident teacher mentoring program for first year teachers. Each new teacher was supported by a committee of three people: a veteran teacher at his or her school, his or her school principal and a faculty mentor from a teacher preparation program. Notably, a high-poverty, high-minority district in a small town deemed that mentoring was important, so it has since always projected those costs. Even in times of financial difficulty, the district continued to fund a mentoring program because it met with the district's beliefs and strategic planning. Focus group participants expressed a strong desire to bring this program back. They said that it was particularly valuable for first-year teachers to have on-site support from a veteran teacher and principal. Veteran teachers and principals expressed interest in being mentors as well. As one special education expert stated, "No one says no [to being a mentor] when they are dedicated to the profession and doing meaningful work."

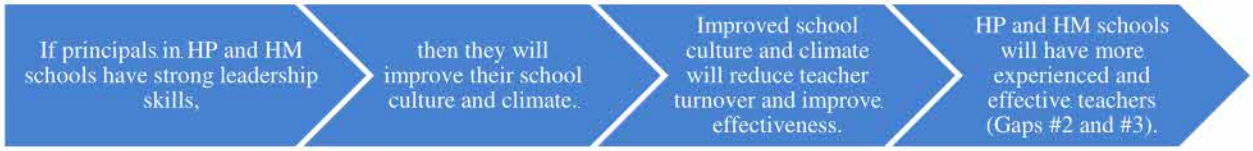
OSDE would like to work with other groups such as the State Regents for Higher Education, OEQA and teacher preparation programs to reinstate a statewide mentoring program for first year teachers. OEQA is currently piloting and evaluating an induction mentoring program that could prove promising. Since a statewide mentoring program would require legislative action, OSDE and its partners plan to champion for this cause. While we will do our best to obtain legislative approval for this program, if we are not able to ultimately offer such a program, we will provide some mentoring sessions as an agency to support first-year teachers, many of whom are in high-poverty and high-minority schools.

We also think it is important to provide training to mentors. In one focus group, a special education teacher reported that he was asked to be a mentor, but did not feel equipped to do so. He had no preparation and did not know how to effectively mentor. As a state, we intend to identify schools with the highest rates of new teachers–many of which are in high-poverty and high-minority schools–and offer mentor training services to them.

Key Metrics for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Percent of teachers in high-poverty, high-minority schools who report feeling supported in their professional growth
- Percent of teachers in high-poverty, high-minority schools who report being satisfied with their PD experiences
- Number of mentored teachers in high-poverty, high-minority schools
- Number of mentors in high-poverty, high-minority schools
- Number of mentors participating in mentor training services

STRATEGY TWO: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR PRINCIPALS IN HIGH-POVERTY/HIGH-MINORITY SCHOOLS



Stakeholders reported school culture and climate as one of the key root causes for equity gaps. Focus group participants noted that they thought it was the role of the principal to set the tone of the building and foster a positive school climate marked by high academic expectations, cultural sensitivity and professionalism. Teachers in the focus groups said that they feel dissatisfied when their building principal is not a true instructional leader, does not value them, does not understand them and does not know how to empower them to become leaders themselves.

Given the importance stakeholders placed in the principal's role in developing the school culture and environment, focus group participants noted that principals in high-minority and high-poverty settings may benefit from professional development aimed at improving their leadership skills. For instance, principals may benefit from cultural competency training to help them understand the importance of diversity and how to effectively lead instruction in a diverse setting. Principals may also benefit from increased knowledge about how to use data to drive instruction or obtain funding for their school, among other skills.

To help principals grow these skills and improve their effectiveness in leading high-poverty and high-minority schools, OSDE will offer trainings and resources to help new and existing principals in high-poverty and high-minority settings build these skills.

Key Metrics for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Number of principals who stay more than 5 years in high-poverty, high-minority schools
- Number of principals in high-poverty, high-minority schools participating in OSDE principal professional development
- Percent of principals in high-poverty, high-minority schools reporting being satisfied with their PD experiences
- Principal turnover rate in high-poverty, high-minority schools

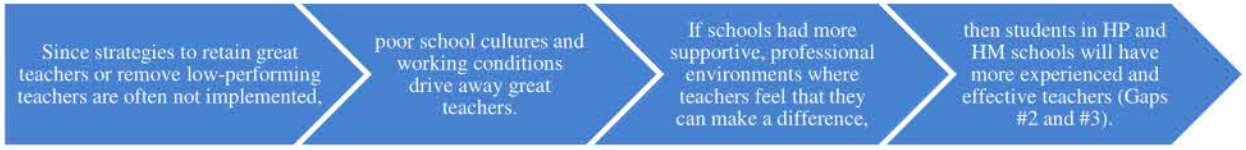
STRATEGY THREE: IMPROVED RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRATEGIES

VALUING EDUCATION

Teaching is one of the most important career paths in our society. Members of society could not acquire their current career paths if it were not for teachers. Yet, compared to other professional occupations, public education in Oklahoma is not valued. Several misconceptions about the teaching profession still exist and teachers are often not treated with the respect and professionalism they deserve. It is important to the future of our state that we change this perception. We need to be able to attract high-quality teaching candidates and retain our effective teachers in order to develop our young people into a robust workforce and improve our economy. In this way, valuing the profession is synonymous with valuing our future.

To address this root cause, focus group participants noted the importance of recognizing the accomplishments of teachers. Teachers, often, do not seek attention for their accomplishments so it is up to principals, superintendents, OSDE and other stakeholders to recognize and praise the accomplishments of teachers. Also, while teachers are not primarily motivated by pay, OSDE believes that pay parity is nonetheless critical to fostering an environment in which education is valued and attracting and retaining top talent is enhanced. To this end, OSDE leadership is advocating for regional pay parity. By making Oklahoma teaching salaries more comparable to those in neighboring states, we hope to more effectively recruit and retain great teachers.

IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES TO RETAIN GREAT TEACHERS



Research from *The Irreplaceables* suggests that principals are a critical factor in teacher retention. Findings include

- Policies to retain irreplaceables or remove low-performing teachers are not implemented.
- Poor school cultures and working conditions drive away great teachers.
- Policies give principals and district leaders few incentives to change their ways.

If principals are equipped to retain top teachers, equity gaps in high needs areas have the potential of being decreased.

Unfortunately, districts do not tend to rigorously review their processes of recruiting and retaining. They also do not study and track their retention and use that knowledge to craft smarter retention policies. To address this gap, OSDE is offering a session at our summer conference on "The Irreplaceables." This session will help principals learn specific strategies to retain their great teachers (the irreplaceables), which the TLE system will help them identify.

Key Metrics for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Teacher turnover in high-poverty, high-minority schools
- Teacher pay
- Number of high-poverty, high-minority schools implementing interventions to improve the school climate and culture
- Disparities in disciplinary actions between minority and non-minority students in high-poverty, high-minority schools, as an indicator of school climate

STRATEGY FOUR: IMPROVED EDUCATOR PREPARATION AND PATHWAYS

Since many new teachers teach in high-poverty and high-minority settings, efforts to better prepare teachers to teach in diverse settings are important. Equally important are efforts to attract more qualified and effective teachers and more minority teachers. To address this gap, OSDE, in partnership with the State Regents for Higher Education, plans to expand its Teach Oklahoma program and offer it in more high-poverty and high-minority schools. The mission of the Teach Oklahoma program is to encourage high performing high school juniors and seniors who possess exemplary interpersonal and leadership skills to consider teaching as a career. The program provides a curriculum based, hands-on approach educating students regarding the requirements to become a successful teacher and enabling students to put their knowledge to work through a classroom internship. In this way, Teach Oklahoma provides schools and districts with the opportunity to recruit homegrown professionals.

Key Metrics for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Number of high school students in high-poverty, high-minority schools completing the Teach Oklahoma program
- Percent of minority teachers in high-poverty, high-minority schools
- Percent of students majoring in education, as an indicator of interest in the teaching profession

TIMELINE

Table 15 outlines the timeline and parties involved for each of the aforementioned activities.

TABLE 16 ACTIVITIES TO ELIMINATE GAPS

Major Activities	Parties Involved	Organizer	Dates
Professional Development for Principals	OSDE	Executive Director of Professional Development	Summer 2015 (conference)
Professional Development for Teachers	OSDE	Executive Director of Professional Development	Summer 2016 (conference)
Recruitment and Retention Efforts (Higher Education; Teach Oklahoma)	OSDE OACTE OEQA State Regents for Higher Education	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research; Executive Director of OEQA; Oklahoma Teacher Connection Coordinator	Fall 2015
Educator Preparation and Pathways (Higher Education; Teach Oklahoma)	OSDE OACTE OEQA State Regents for Higher Education	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research; Executive Director of OEQA; Oklahoma Teacher Connection Coordinator	Fall 2015

ONGOING MONITORING AND SUPPORT

MEASURING PROGRESS TO ELIMINATE GAPS

Once implementation to address equity gaps begins, the OSDE will measure progress toward short and long term goals with particular focus on sustainable efforts that includes resources and funding. The path toward these goals includes (1) advocating for wrap-around funding of services for high minority and high poverty schools, (2) providing resources for quality, needs based professional development, and (3) holding district and building leadership accountable, through relevant and rigorous evaluations.

REPORTING PROGRESS OF ELIMINATING GAPS

Public reporting of the progress being made toward decreasing or eliminating equity gaps will begin immediately as legislation passes in the Spring of 2015. Notification of newly passed legislation will be broadcast through weekly email messages to district level leaders and through the OSDE website. Laser-focused advisory committee meetings will be continuous, deliberate and intentional to explore and solve equity gaps. The stakeholder groups will continue to stay engaged via the virtual forum. Feedback from this forum will be gathered and shared at TLE Commission monthly meetings as well as State Board of Education monthly meetings. The plan to conduct interviews with targeted individuals should prove to be a method of progress toward the goal of equity gap reduction. The EngageOK Summer Conference focuses on several sessions linked to equity gap awareness and strategies. The core group serving as the Advisory Committee for the state's EAEE Plan will stay in close contact with analytical working sessions. The state superintendent's Advisory Councils will be a critical avenue for reporting to the public. Beyond educator councils, some of those councils include parent groups, economic development and community advocacy. All major activities listed below will allow for a continuous process of updating the EAEE Plan.

TABLE 17 ACTIVITIES FOR MONITORING PROGRESS

Major Activity	Parties Involved	Organizer	Dates
Weekly Superintendent Message	OSDE	Executive Director of Communications	Spring 2015-Winter 2018
Equity Gap Literacy for Legislators	OSDE	Director of Government Affairs, Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness & Policy Research	Spring 2015-ongoing
Website	OSDE	Communication Department	Spring 2015-Winter 2018
TLE Commission Monthly Meetings	OSDE	Executive Director TLE	Spring 2015-Winter 2018
State Board Monthly Meetings	OSDE	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness & Policy Research	Spring 2015 – Winter 2018

Virtual Forum	Stakeholders	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness & Policy Research	Spring 2015 – Winter 2018
Educator Interviews	OSDE OEQA	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness & Policy Research	Spring 2015-ongoing
EngageOK Summer Conference	OSDE LEAs	OSDE Cabinet	Summer 2015
Quarterly Advisory Analysis Committee	OSDE	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness & Policy Research	Spring 2015-ongoing
State Superintendent's Advisory Councils	OSDE	Deputy Chief of Staff	Spring 2015-ongoing
Individual Public Presentations	OSDE	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness & Policy Research	Spring 2015-ongoing

CONCLUSION

Driven by the belief that all students deserve great teachers, Oklahoma's Equitable Access to Excellent Educators (EAEE) Plan identifies gaps in the distribution of qualified, experienced and effective teachers in high-poverty and high-minority schools; proposes a set of potential root causes for these gaps; and outlines a specific set of strategies to shrink the gaps. The EAEE Plan reflects thoughtful input from a wide variety of stakeholders and is designed to evolve over time through ongoing monitoring, support and engagement. Rooted in a Theory of Action in which Oklahoma has qualified, experienced and effective teachers, values education, is adequately preparing its students for the workforce and has a unified voice as our guiding vision, Oklahoma's Equitable Access to Excellent Educators plan is a reasonable and realistic agenda for positive impact in our state's quest for equity of opportunity. We and our stakeholders believe in and are committed to this goal. As one educator explains, "It's about the kids – my heart is in high-poverty and high-minority schools; we are their only hope and it is a pretty awesome responsibility."

APPENDIX A – DETAILED PROCESS TIMELINE

ADVISORS, REVIEWERS, & PARTNERS IN WORK

Major Activity	Parties Involved	Organizer	Dates
Identify stakeholder groups	OSDE; ESAN	Executive Director of Systems Approach to Building quality Schools	Fall 2014
Technical Assistance	GTL Center	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research; Executive Director of OEQA	Winter 2015
Gather and Review Data	OSDE; OEQA	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research; Executive Director of OEQA	Winter 2015
Recruit stakeholder groups	OSDE; OEQA	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research; Executive Director of OEQA	Winter 2015
Equitable Access Support Network Targeted Coaching (included site visit)	OSDE; OEQA	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research; Executive Director of OEQA	Winter – Spring 2015
Meet with Advisory Committee	OSDE; OEQA; SC3	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research	Winter 2015
Build Equitable Access website and communication tools for two-way feedback loops	OSDE Tech. Support and staff	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research	Winter 2015
Prepare Data materials for stakeholders	OSDE; OEQA	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research; Executive Director of OEQA; OSDE Data Scientist	Winter 2015
Meet with Eight Stakeholder Groups	Stakeholders (approx. 64) *Advisors*	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research; Executive Director of OEQA	Winter 2015
Collect and Collate stakeholder input on equity gaps and root cause analysis	OSDE; OEQA	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research	Spring 2015
Meet with Advisory Committee	OSDE; OEQA; SC3	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness	Spring 2015

Major Activity	Parties Involved	Organizer	Dates
Interviews	Identified interviewees (HP/HM school leaders/teachers and other stakeholders)	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research; Executive Director of OEQA	Spring 2015
Implementation through feedback loops	Stakeholders *Advisors*	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research; Executive Director of OEQA	Spring 2015
Review of Plan	Stakeholders *Reviewers*	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research; OSDE Data Scientist	Spring 2015
Implementation Progress Meeting	Stakeholders *Partners in Work*	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research	Fall 2015
Progress and Monitoring	Stakeholders *Partners in Work*	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research	Twice per year through Winter 2018

APPENDIX B – ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Name	Position	Agency
Melissa White	Executive Director, ACE/Counseling	OSDE
Cindy Koss	Deputy Superintendent, Academic Affairs & Planning	OSDE
Todd Loftin	Executive Director, Special Education Assessment & Instruction	OSDE
Joanie Hildenbrand	Assist. Superintendent, Child Nutrition	OSDE
Melissa McGavock	Director, Federal Programs, Bilingual/Migrant Educ.	OSDE
Jennifer Lamb	Director, Elementary Mathematics	OSDE
Joshua Flores	Director, Secondary English Language Arts	OSDE
Ramona Coats	Executive Director, Federal Programs	OSDE
Jeff Smith	Executive Director, Certification	OSDE
Sonia Johnson	Executive Director, Parent & Community Engagement	OSDE
Gloria Bayouth	Executive Director, Federal Programs	OSDE
Shellie Gammill	Accreditation	OSDE
Robyn Miller	Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Policy Research	OSDE
Desarae Witmer	Executive Director of School Turnaround	OSDE
Megan Clifford	Data Scientist	OMES
Sherry Labyer	Executive Director	OEQA
Sarah Hall	Associate Director, Technical Assistance	South Central Comprehensive Center

APPENDIX C – STAKEHOLDER LIST

Teachers	Affiliation
Jason Proctor	H.S. Mathematics, Tahlequah, Teacher of the Year 2015
Michael Rogers	5th grade, Blackwell, District Teacher of the Year 2015
Kari Monholland	9th grade English, Millwood, District Teacher of the Year 2015
Kris Zorn	4th grade, Bartlesville, District Teacher of the Year 2015
Stacy Ford	Elementary Librarian, Norman, District Teacher of the Year
Veronica Johnson	Mathematics, OKC, Dove Academy
Misty Rangle	1st grade, Collinsville
Seth Meier	Special Education, Mid-Del
Tina Roger	Middle School Science, Woodward
Genia Harber	High School Social Studies, Wister
Parents/Students	Affiliation
Christopher Stockton	Senior, Oklahoma State University
Dillon Stanley	Sophomore, University of Oklahoma
Kayla Bickell	Senior, Mustang High School
Anjali Kumari	Senior, Northwest Classen High School, OKC
Stacey Husted	Parent, Blackwell
Mike Daffin	Parent, Sallisaw
Chris Deal	Parent/School Board Member, Duncan
Dianna Carter	Parent/PTA President, Putnam City
Jim Blevins	Parent/School Board Member, Elk City
Administrators	Affiliation
Steve Dunham	Principal, Comanche High School
Dr. Sean McDaniel	Superintendent, Mustang
Dr. Jeanene Barnett	Superintendent, Bristow
Melissa Hitt	Principal, Elgin
Dr. Tom Diehgan	Superintendent, Lawton
Merry Stone	Assistant Superintendent, Duncan
Kathy Dunn	Assistant Superintendent, Mid-Del
Heather Zacharias	Principal, John Adams Elementary, OKC
School Personnel	Affiliation
Mashon Edge	Psychologist, Deer Creek
Kasey Brenneis	Director, Human Resources, Duncan
Charleen Hudson	Title IIA Coordinator, OKC
Talia Shaull	Chief Human Capital Officer, Tulsa
Beth Richert	Director, Instructional Technology, Clinton
Gena Koster	Director, Secondary Special Education, Broken Arrow
Amy Spiva	Registered Nurse, Elementary, Stillwater
Lorrie Conley	Middle School Counselor, Antlers
Christy Prather-Skinner	Counselor, Boulevard Academy Alternative, Edmond
Jana Burke	Executive Director of Teacher & Leadership, Tulsa Public Schools

Education Organizations	Affiliation
Shawn Hime	Executive Director, Oklahoma State School Board Association
Alicia Priest	Vice President, Oklahoma Educators Association
Steven Crawford	Executive Director, Cooperative Council for Oklahoma School Administration
Ginger Tinney	Executive Director, Professional Oklahoma Educators
Kathy Adams	President, United Suburban Schools Association
Robert Trammell	President, Organization of Rural Oklahoma Schools
Cathryn Franks	Board Member, State Board of Education
Ryan Owens	Executive Director, United Suburban Schools Association
Economic Development	Affiliation
Steven Hendrickson	Director of Government Operations, Boeing
	Community Outreach, Devon
Marilyn Feaver	Executive Director, Southern Oklahoma Impact Coalition
Cynthia Reid	Sr. Vice President of Communications & Marketing, OKC Chamber of Commerce
Dr. Phyllis Hudecki	Executive Director, Oklahoma Business & Education Coalition
Keith Wilson	Executive Director, Oklahoma Juvenile Affairs
Jari Askins	Interim Executive Director, Oklahoma Pardon & Parole Board
Tim Burg	Executive Director, Shawnee Economic Development Foundation
Jonathan Small	Executive Vice President, Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs
Michael Southard	President, Ada Jobs Foundation
Higher Education/ Teacher Preparation	Affiliation
Dr. Bryan Duke	Associate Dean, College of Education, University of Central Oklahoma
Dr. Stan Sanders	Chair, Teacher Education, Northeastern State University
Dr. Stacy Reeder	Chair, Instructional Leadership & Academic Curriculum, University of Oklahoma
Dr. Lisa Huffman	Dean, School of Education, Cameron University
Dr. Jennifer Job	Assistant Professor, Curriculum & Instruction, Oklahoma State University
Dr. Lois Lawler Brown	Chair, Education Department, Oklahoma City University
Dr. Beverly Devries	Professor, School of Education, Southern Nazarene University
Dr. Ruth Jackson	Chair, Teacher Education, Langston University
Dr. Vanessa Anton	Associate Dean, College of Education, Northeastern State University
Dr. Brenda Sherbourne	Dean, College of Education, East Central University
Community Agencies	Affiliation
Brent Bushey	Executive Director, Oklahoma Public School Resource Center
Joan Korenbilt	Executive Director, Respect Diversity Foundation
Dr. Raúl Font	President/Executive Director, Latino Community Development Agency

Julia Sterr	Child Welfare Services, Oklahoma Department of Human Services
Danny Wells	Executive Officer, Education, Chickasaw Nation
Lynne Chatfield	Public School Director, Chickasaw Nation
Travis Hartfield	Coordinator, Office of Community & Faith Engagement, Oklahoma Department of Human Services
Jake Yunker	Deputy Policy Director, Office of Governor Fallin
Phil Gover	Teach for America
Sandra Kent	Executive Director, OKLA+ Schools

APPENDIX D – STAKEHOLDER INVITATION LETTER

STATE OF OKLAHOMA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

March 16, 2015

Dear Stakeholder,

Please accept this letter as an invitation to participate in an important stakeholder group commitment. The critical work described below would require your valued perspective as an advisor, reviewer, and monitor over the next several months.

On July 7, 2014, the U.S. Department of Education announced the ***Excellent Educators for All*** initiative to help states and school districts support high quality educators for the students who need them most. As a key piece of the initiative, each state is required to submit a *State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators* by June 2015 describing how the state education agency (SEA) will make certain minority students and low-income students are taught by experienced, qualified, or in-field teachers at the same rate as other students. As Oklahoma seeks to compile this information, we request your engagement on our state's plan.

If you are willing to participate in this unique opportunity, we ask that you first attend one of the stakeholder group meetings that will be held in March and April. In the coming week, you will be contacted to finalize your commitment and determine which stakeholder group meeting date best fits your schedule. Following this meeting, you would be expected to electronically engage in continued conversations as we determine strategies for closing the identified gaps and monitoring the plans developed from the stakeholder meetings.

Thank you for your dedication to education in Oklahoma. Ultimately, we hope you will choose to engage in this effort to sustain equitable access to excellent educators. Again, you will be contacted directly as a follow-up to this letter.

Mary Fallin
Governor

Joy Hofmeister
State Superintendent for Public Instruction

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recycled paper

APPENDIX E – POWER POINT AT STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

OKLAHOMA EDUCATOR EQUITY PLAN

STAKEHOLDER MEETING
MARCH/APRIL 2015

OBJECTIVES FOR TODAY

Stakeholders will

1. learn the expectations the U.S. Department of Education has for state equity plans.
2. examine state equity data related to years of teaching experience and type of certification.
3. examine the geographic distribution of poor and minority students across the state.
4. engage in an activity to identify equity gaps and begin to complete a root cause analysis.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Announced in July 2014 – State Education Agencies (SEAs) are to develop State Plans to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators

Submission date June 1, 2015

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EXPECTATIONS

- Stakeholder Engagement
- Identification of Equity Gaps
- Root Cause Analysis of the Identified Equity Gaps
- Steps to eliminate Equity Gaps
- Measures and Methodology for Evaluating Progress
- Public Reporting on the Progress

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION REQUIREMENT

Calculate Equity Gaps between the rates which minority children and impoverished children are taught by **inexperienced**, **unqualified**, or **out-of-field** teachers compared to rates at which other children are taught by these teachers

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ALLOWANCE

Encourages states to also look at Equity Gaps for other sub-groups, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities

PRELIMINARY DATA: STATE PROFILE

About this State	
Number of Schools	1,773
In each quartile	Approximately 443
Number of Districts	529
Total Student Enrollment	666,011
Total Number of Teachers	41,254

Average Percent of Students in Poverty		Average Percent of Minority Students	
All Schools	61%	All Schools	46%
Highest Poverty Quartile Schools (HPQ)	90%	Highest Minority Quartile Schools (HMQ)	74%
Lowest Poverty Quartile Schools (LPQ)	35%	Lowest Minority Quartile Schools (LMQ)	23%

SCHOOL LOCALE DEFINED

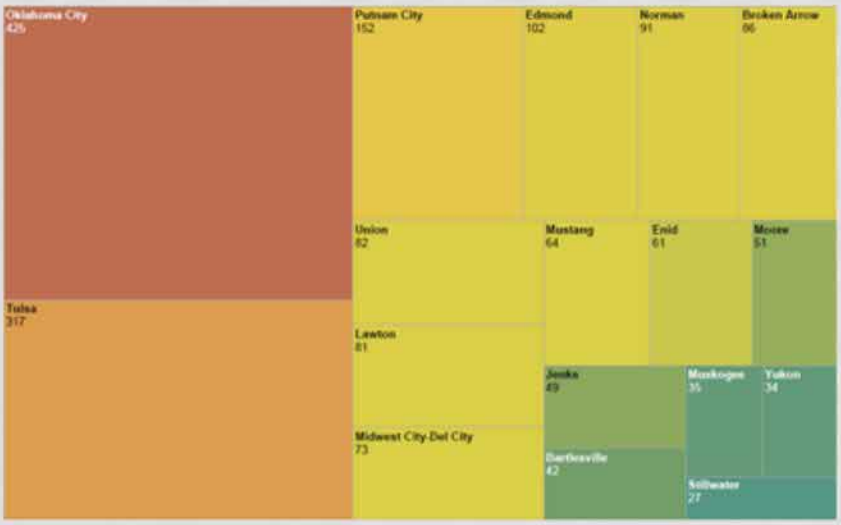
- City
- Suburb
- Town
- Rural

- Each subdivided into three subcategories (handout provided)

DISTRICTS WITH THE MOST NEW TEACHERS

District	Number of New Teachers	Number of Total Teachers	Percent of New Teachers
Oklahoma City	425	2,897	15%
Tulsa	317	2,654	12%
Putnam City	153	1,259	12%
Edmond	102	1,433	7%
Norman	91	990	9%
Broken Arrow	86	1,103	8%
Union	82	895	9%
Lawton	81	970	8%
Midwest City-Del City	73	882	8%
Mustang	64	644	10%

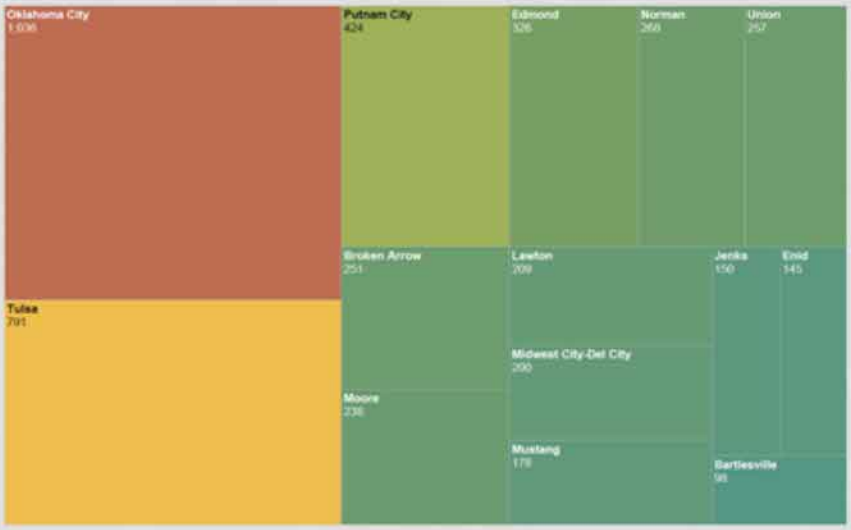
NUMBER OF NEW TEACHERS BY DISTRICT

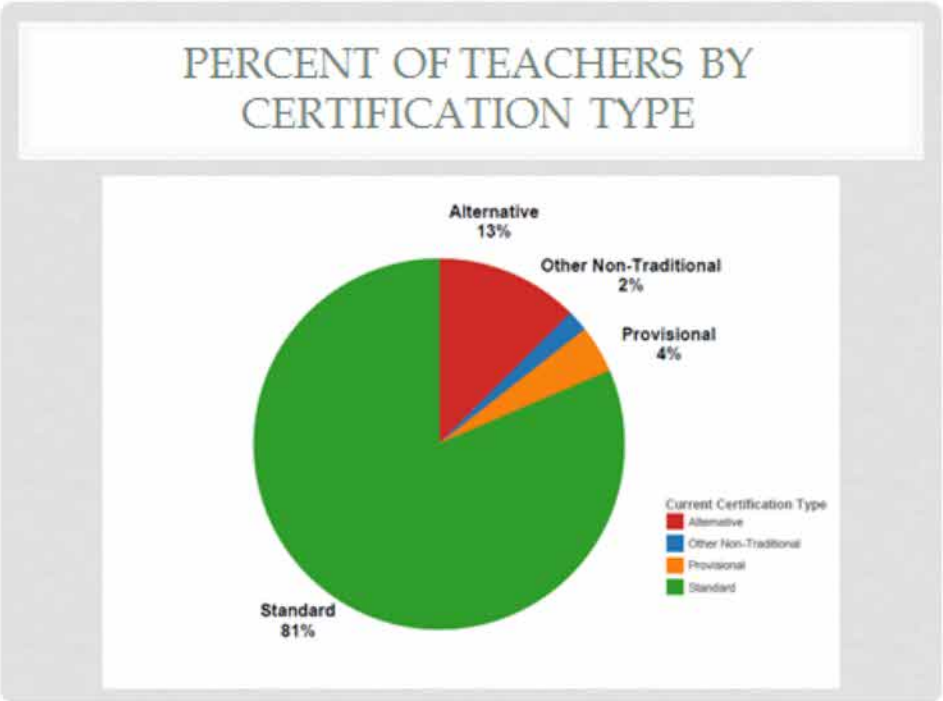


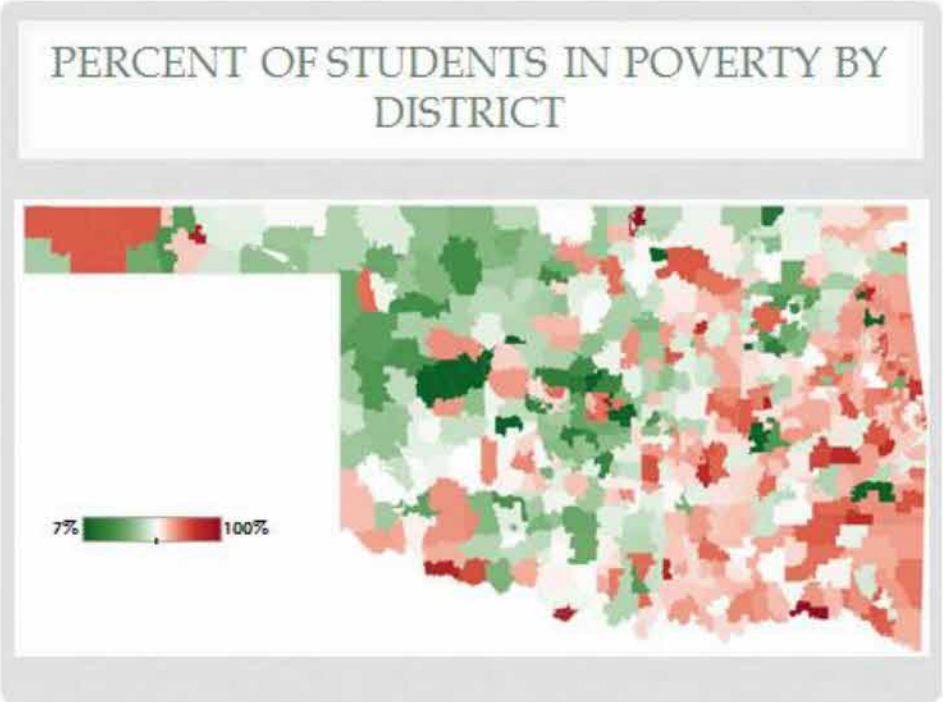
DISTRICTS WITH THE MOST INEXPERIENCED (<3 YEARS) TEACHERS

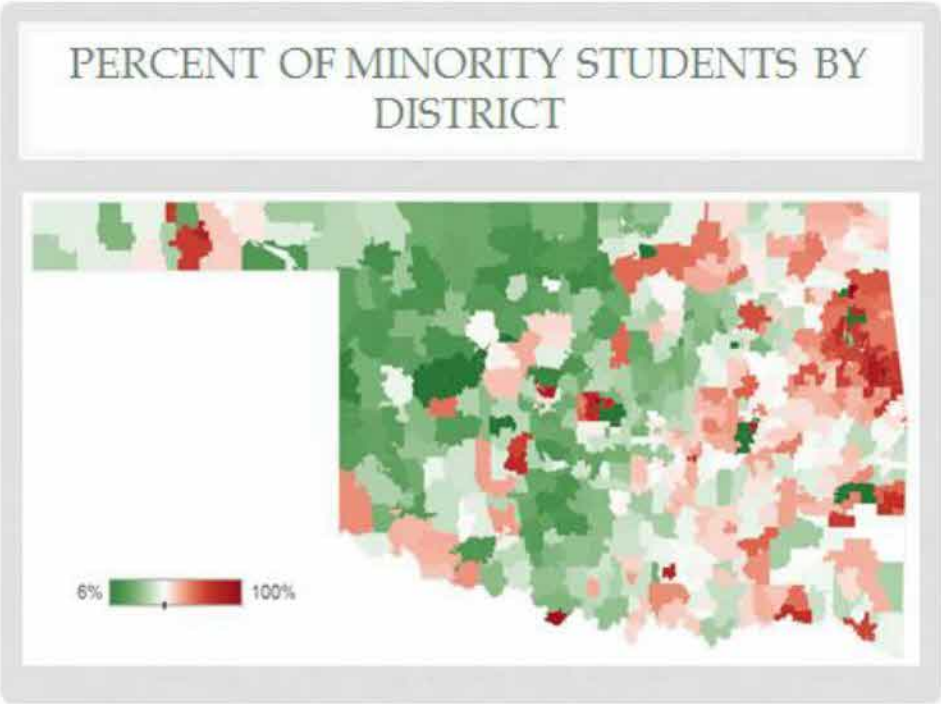
District	Number of Inexperienced Teachers	Number of Total Teachers	Percent of Inexperienced Teachers
Oklahoma City	1,036	2,897	36%
Tulsa	791	2,654	30%
Putnam City	424	1,259	34%
Edmond	326	1,433	23%
Norman	268	990	27%
Union	257	895	29%
Broken Arrow	251	1,103	23%
Moore	238	1,266	19%
Lawton	209	970	22%
Midwest City-Del City	200	882	23%
Mustang	178	644	28%

NUMBER OF INEXPERIENCED TEACHERS (< 3 YEARS) BY DISTRICT




PERCENT OF TEACHERS BY CERTIFICATION TYPE
Alternative 13%
Other Non-Traditional 2%
Provisional 4%
Standard 81%
Current Certification Type
Alternative
Other Non-Traditional
Provisional
Standard


PERCENT OF STUDENTS IN POVERTY BY DISTRICT
7%
100%


PERCENT OF MINORITY STUDENTS BY DISTRICT
6%
100%

APPENDIX F – CHALLENGE STATEMENTS

COMMUNITY

Challenge Statement:

Engaging Oklahoma to improve state and school reputations by prioritizing effective school culture and professionalization of educators.

Professionalization

School Culture

State & School Reputation

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Challenge Statement:

Improved Partnerships & Communication MUST be forged between businesses, communities and educators.

Define Quality/Successful Education

Communication

School Climate/Culture

SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Challenge Statement:

In order to achieve student growth, we must address the deteriorating value of public education by prioritizing appropriate funding and addressing poverty and structural, ineffective teacher preparation concerns currently interfering in Oklahoma's Education system.

Education devalued

Poverty

PARENTS/STUDENTS

Challenge Statement:

In order to address equity gaps, we need to successfully recruit and incentivize teachers to lure them and then mentor and engage them to keep them; a key factor in making this happen is funding.

Recruiting, Mentoring, Incentivizing

Home life-Parental Support-Student Apathy

Climate &culture of education in Oklahoma

ADMINISTRATORS

Challenge Statement:

Develop and promote a strategic, focused and positive campaign to champion public education with a united effort from legislators, school leadership, teachers, parents, students and higher education.

Professional Development

Leadership

Legislative Inconsistencies

Public Relations

Legislative Inconsistencies

EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONS

Challenge Statement:

We must have a climate that provides resources and support that encourages and sustains highly effective teachers in high minority and high poverty schools.

Lack of support

Lack of resources

Lack of mentoring

HIGHER EDUCATION

Challenge Statement:

Changing Perceptions: Collaborative advocacy through broad based support to elevate the professional status of educators.

Teaching Profession

Professional Image/Opportunities/Demands

Governance

TEACHERS

Challenge Statement:

We must increase positive outlook and provide funding for quality mentoring programs and training.

Programs

Outlook

Training

APPENDIX G – INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Introductory Background Questions

1. What is your current role?
2. How long have you been in this role?
3. What other roles did you have prior to your current role?

Equity Gap Content Questions

1. Oklahoma has large gaps in the equitable distribution of experienced and traditionally certified teachers, particularly in urban settings. Why do you think this is?
2. What would you suggest?
3. Do you think that teachers are equitably distributed in Oklahoma? Why are why not? What student groups do you think are affected (IEP, ELL, poor, minority, etc.)?
4. What do you think are some of the root causes of these equity gaps?
5. What would you suggest to close the equity gaps related to effective teachers in high minority and high poverty schools?
    a. Retention
    b. Distribution

Specific Teacher Questions

1. What factors influenced your placement?
2. If it was your goal (mission, social justice) to teach in this setting, do you feel that you are achieving your goals? Do you feel that you are making a difference?
3. Do you plan to return? Why or why not?
4. Do you feel that you were adequately prepared to teach in a high minority and high poverty school?
5. What were your expectations entering this demographic?
6. Did your expectations meet your experience?
7. Any surprises?
8. What supports have you been given?

Professional Development Content Questions

(Teachers)

1. How has PD changed your teaching?
2. Tell me about a PD experience that improved your teaching practices
3. Do you think the individuals providing training are sufficiently trained?
4. To what extent do you have input in designing/choosing your own PD experience?

5. Thinking about all the PD that you have received over the course of your career, how useful has it been for helping you improve your instruction?

(Principals)

1. What types of PDs have been offered in your district?
2. To what extent do you have input in designing/choosing your teachers' own PD experience?
3. Do you think the individuals providing training are sufficiently trained?
4. What other resources are you using and sharing with your teachers?
5. What kinds of PD are available specific to your role as principal?
6. Tell me about a PD experience that improved your leadership skills/ practices

Mentoring Content Questions

(Teachers)

1. Do you have a mentor?
2. Based on feedback from your mentor, did you make any changes in your instruction?
3. Do you think mentors are sufficiently trained or experienced?
4. How much burden does mentoring place on the mentors? How much burden does mentoring place on the administrators?
5. What selection/matching process is there for mentor assignment?
6. What should an effective mentor/mentee relationship look like?
7. Does it go beyond the first year? First three years?
8. Have your retention rates increased due to mentoring?
9. If you do/did not have a mentor, what is your idea of effective mentoring?

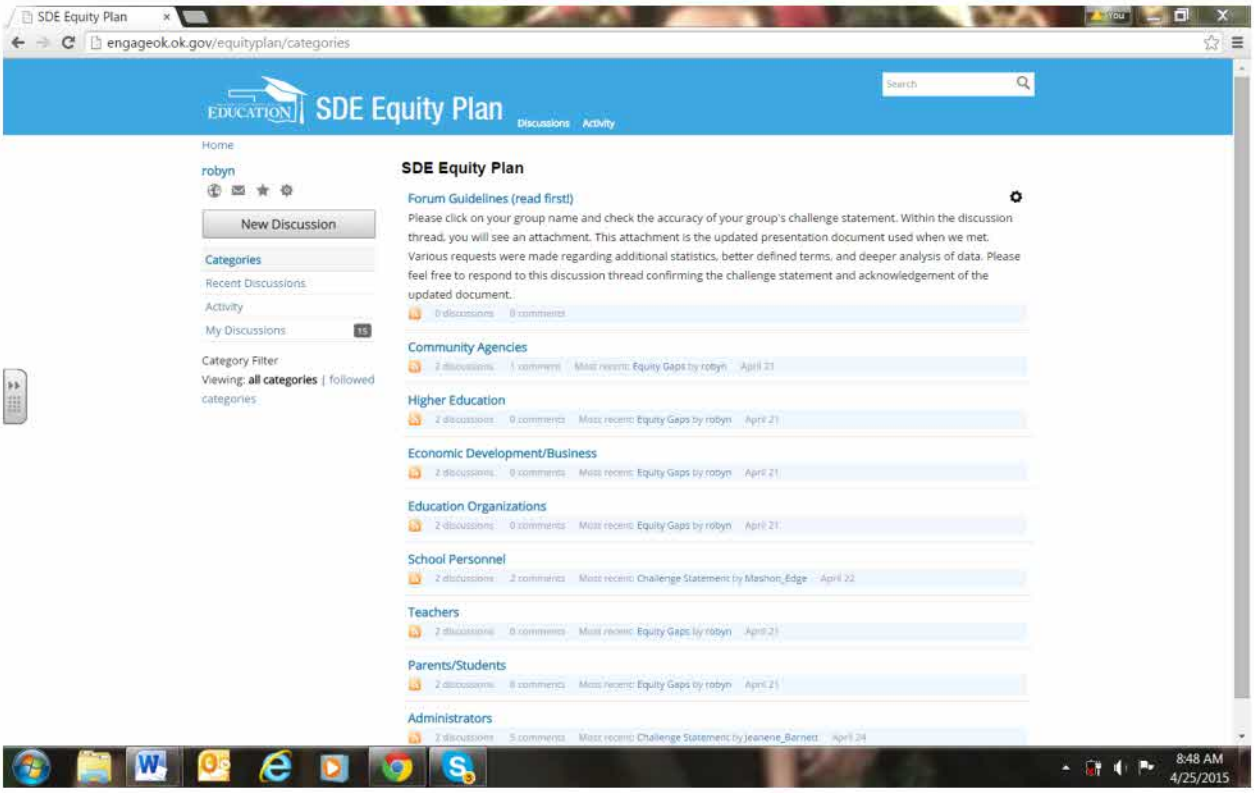
(Principals)

1. Do you have a process for mentor/mentee assignment? If so, what is it?
2. Are mentors compensated for their efforts? If so, how much? (money, credit hours, benefits)
3. What burden is associated with a mentoring program?
4. If no mentor program is implemented, how do you assist, train and support teachers?

Effectiveness in Teacher/Leaders Content Questions

1. When it comes to the effectiveness of a teacher/leader, what characteristics come to mind?
2. What necessary steps can be taken to enhance the effectiveness of a teacher?
3. Do you have the resources for such steps? What are those resources?

APPENDIX H– VIRTUAL FORUM



APPENDIX I – SENATE BILL 706

An evidence-based qualitative assessment tool for the teacher qualitative portion of the TLE that will include observable and measurable characteristics of personnel and classroom practices that are correlated to student performance success, including, but not limited to:

a. organizational and classroom management skills,
b. ability to provide effective instruction,
c. focus on continuous improvement and professional growth,
d. interpersonal skills and
e. leadership skills.

An evidence-based qualitative assessment tool for the leader qualitative portion of the TLE that will include observable and measurable characteristics of personnel and site management practices that are correlated to student performance success, including, but not limited to:

a. organizational and school management, including retention and development of effective teachers and dismissal of ineffective teachers,
b. instructional leadership,
c. professional growth and responsibility,
d. interpersonal skills,
e. leadership skills and
f. stakeholder perceptions

Comprehensive remediation plans and instructional coaching for all teachers who receive qualitative or quantitative ratings of "needs improvement" or "ineffective." A career teacher who has received a qualitative and quantitative rating of "ineffective" for two (2) consecutive school years shall be dismissed or not reemployed on the grounds of instructional ineffectiveness by the school district, subject to the provisions of the Teacher Due Process Act of 1990.

A career teacher who has received a qualitative and quantitative rating of "needs improvement" or lower for three (3) consecutive school years shall be dismissed or not reemployed on the grounds of instructional ineffectiveness by the school district, subject to the provisions of the Teacher Due Process Act of 1990.

A career teacher who has not averaged a qualitative and quantitative rating of at least "effective" as measured pursuant to the TLE over a five-year period shall be dismissed or not reemployed on the grounds of instructional ineffectiveness by the school district, subject to the provisions of the Teacher Due Process Act of 1990.

APPENDIX J – TLE TIMELINE

TEACHER AND LEADER EVALUATION (TLE) SYSTEM TIMELINE

Major Activities	Parties Involved	Organizer	Dates
Complete build-out of Teacher Leader Evaluation (TLE) system	OSDE, Legislators, SBE, LEA's, TLE Commission	TLE Executive Director Teacher Effectiveness Department	School Year 2017-2018
Qualitative and quantitative scores become consequential/employment	OSDE, Legislators, SBE, TLE Commission	TLE Executive Director Teacher Effectiveness Department	School Year 2017-2018
Qualitative and quantitative scores implemented	OSDE, Legislators, SBE, TLE Commission	TLE Executive Director Teacher Effectiveness Department	School Year 2016-17
Implemented roster verification	OSDE, LEA's	TLE Executive Director Teacher Effectiveness Department	School Year 2014-2015
TLE currently researching further reliable quantitative measures	TLE Commission, OSDE	TLE Executive Director Teacher Effectiveness Department	School Year 2014-15 2015-2016
Qualitative component only o **LEA's pilot roster verification**	OSDE, LEA's	TLE Executive Director Teacher Effectiveness Department	School Year 2013-2014
Further research required by TLE Commission regarding OAM'S – Quantitative component of TLE temporarily suspended	TLE Commission, OSDE	TLE Executive Director Teacher Effectiveness Department	School Year 2014-2015
LEA's pilot quantitative component of TLE o **Collected Value Added Measurement**	OSDE, Legislators, SBE, TLE Commission	TLE Executive Director Teacher Effectiveness Department	School Year 2013-2014

Major Activities	Parties Involved	Organizer	Dates
(VAM) Results			
Research conducted by TLE Commission on Student Academic Growth, Other Academic Measures for quantitative component of TLE	TLE Commission, OSDE	TLE Executive Director Teacher Effectiveness Department	School Year 2012-2013
TLE Commission develops guidelines for quantitative components of TLE	OSDE, Legislators, SBE, TLE Commission	TLE Executive Director Teacher Effectiveness Department	School Year 2012-2013
Statewide Professional Development for TLE system	OSDE, LEA's	TLE Executive Director Teacher Effectiveness Department	School Year 2012-2013
Selection of Qualitative Evaluation Instrument	OSDE, Legislators, SBE, TLE Commission	TLE Executive Director Teacher Effectiveness Department	School Year 2011-2012
Legislative Mandate of TLE System ○ **New evaluation system for Oklahoma Teachers and Leaders (including formation of TLE Commission)**	OSDE, Legislators, SBE, TLE Commission	TLE Executive Director Teacher Effectiveness Department	School Year 2010-2011

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