



## **Educator Equity Plan (DRAFT 5)**

### **Section 1: Introduction**

Missouri recognizes that inequities exist in access to great teachers and leaders across the United States. Students of color, students from low-income families, rural students, students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, and students who struggle academically are less likely than their peers to have access to great teachers and school leaders. The causes of these inequities vary from place to place and context to context, with numerous policy, practice, economic, and socio-cultural factors at play. Because of the multiple causes for inequity in teacher and leader distribution, the solutions must be systemic rather than treating merely the symptoms.

As students progress through Missouri's PK-12 public education system, it is their right to learn under the direction of effective teachers at every grade level and in every content area. The primary problematic equity outcome in the state of Missouri is that this likely does not occur. Along every student's education experience, there is reason to believe that virtually all students, at some point, learn from less-than-effective teachers. Current Missouri data suggest that poorer students and more rural students experience less effective teachers at a higher rate than do students in wealthier schools, generally located in more suburban settings.

According to federal guidance, less effective teachers are those who are inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field. For the purpose of Missouri's Equity Plan, a separate effectiveness index is included in addition to considering the experience, qualifications and assignments of teachers. The inequity issue that the Missouri Plan will address is that poorer and more rural students are taught by inexperienced, unqualified, out-of-field and less effective teachers at a higher rate than by students in wealthier schools, generally located in suburban settings.

In alignment with federal guidance, "poor" students are those from "low-income families" and are identified by eligibility for free and reduced priced lunch (FRPL). By contrast, wealthier students are those from higher-income families and are determined using the same eligibility criteria. Students in schools categorized as "Rural: Remote" are in communities 25 miles from an urbanized area and also 10 miles from an urban cluster. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), urbanized areas and clusters are "densely settled cores of census blocks with adjacent densely settled surround areas. When the core contains a population of 50,000 or more it is designated as an urbanized area. Core areas with populations between 25,000 and 50,000 are classified as urban clusters".

To illuminate potential areas of educational inequity for Missouri students, a comparison was completed between the 5% of schools (110 schools) with the highest percentage of FRPL eligible students to the 5% of schools (110 schools) with the lowest percentage of FRPL eligible students to the schools (315 schools) classified as “Rural: Remote”. The average poverty rate of the community was included as well as the percentage of FRPL students. A community’s average poverty rate is the percentage of persons in the ZIP code in which the school is physically located who fall below the poverty threshold identified by the U.S. Census Bureau. The average poverty rate of the schools with the highest levels of FRPL students is 30.7% as compared to the rural schools with an average poverty rate of 18.4% and to the schools with the lowest number of FRPL students with an average poverty rate of 7.1%.

The 5% of schools with the highest percentage of (FRPL) eligible students represent 35 LEAs, with 38% of them in the St. Louis Public School district, 16% in the Kansas City school district and 16% of them are charter schools. The schools are located in 12 different counties in the state. These counties are located predominantly in the St. Louis and Kansas City metro areas, but also include two counties in the southeast and one county in the southwest and one county in the northeast part of the state. Approximately 88% of the schools are elementary or middle schools, while 12% of them extend to the 12th grade. These 110 schools have a FRPL rates between 91.9% and 100%. Student enrollment in these schools ranges between 16 students and 830 students, with an average minority, or non-white, concentration of 86.3%. In these schools, 41.9% of the teachers are minority, or non-white.

The 5% of schools with the lowest percentage of FRPL eligible students represents 28 school district/LEAs, with 28% of them located in either the Lee’s Summit or Rockwood school districts. These school district/LEAs are located in 13 different counties in the state. These counties are located predominantly in the St. Louis or Kansas City suburban areas or the central part of the state. Approximately 77% of the schools are elementary or middle schools while 23% of them extend to the 12th grade. The FRPL rate in these schools ranges between 0% and 16.4%. Student enrollment in these schools ranges between 62 students and 257 students, with an average minority, or non-white, concentration of 16.6%. In these schools, 4.5% of the teachers are minority, or non-white.

The schools categorized as “Rural: Remote” represent 155 school districts/LEAs located in 71 different counties across the state. These counties come from all regions of the state except the St. Louis and Kansas metro areas. The regions with the most schools are in the northeast, northwest, south central and west central parts of the state. Approximately 61% of the schools are elementary and approximately 39% of the schools secondary. Student enrollment in these schools ranges between 12 students to 735 students with an average minority, or non-white, concentration of 3.6%. In these schools, 0.9% of the teachers are minority, or non-white. On average, 60.4% of the students are FRLP eligible.

Missouri’s Educator Equity Plan will be developed using data based on the comparison of these three different sets of schools. A tentative timeline for the development of this plan is provided in the Educator Equity Work Plan as listed in Appendix B.

## Section 2: Stakeholder Engagement

Representatives from education associations and the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education have met already on two separate occasions. The first meeting included a general overview of the equity plan process including timelines and sections required in the final plan. The meeting also included a review of a potential data set to inform the plan and discussion on potential causes and strategies.

The second meeting was facilitated by the Center for Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL) and the Reform Support Network (RSN). In that meeting, participants again reviewed available data and made suggestions on additional data to inform the plan. The group also considered root causes for the inequity the data suggest. After exploring root causes, the group began to consider possible strategies to address in the plan. The group also considered additional stakeholders to include in future conversations. These future conversations will include focus groups in school districts where the data suggest educational inequity occurs. The groups in attendance accepted the responsibility of continued conversations with their respective constituents and agreed to bring that feedback to our next meeting, and reviewed the potential timeline for moving forward. The agendas for these two meetings are offered in Appendix A. These are the groups that participated in these initial meetings and are included in the design of Missouri's Educator Equity Plan (EPP):

- **American Federation of Teachers-Missouri:** AFT Missouri represents thousands of teachers and school support staff as well as state government workers employed with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The stated mission of AFT Missouri is to champion fairness, democracy, economic opportunity, and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for students, their families and communities. Two members of AFT Missouri participated in EEP planning.
- **Missouri State Teachers Association:** MSTA is a non-profit state teachers association that serves more than 44,000 educators in the state of Missouri. The stated mission of MSTA is advocating for and empowering public educators so they can teach. Two members of MSTA were invited for EEP planning.
- **National Education Association-Missouri:** The Missouri NEA acts as an advocate for public schools, public school students and public school employees. Its 35,000 members are employed in school districts across the state, as well as in state schools, community colleges and on university campuses. MNEA's stated mission is to serve as the united voice to promote, advance and protect public education and to advocate for the rights

and interests of students and members. Two members of MNEA participated in EEP planning.

- **Missouri Association of School Administrators:** MASA is the only statewide association in Missouri that exists for the purpose of serving the needs of school superintendents and central office administrators with an interest in the superintendency. MASA is a statewide professional association that has grown to include more than 600 school superintendents and school administrators. Two members of MASA participated in EEP planning.
- **Missouri Association of Elementary School Principals:** MAESP is the only statewide association in Missouri that exists for the purpose of serving the needs of elementary and middle school principals, assistant principals and those educators with an interest in becoming principals. MAESP is a statewide professional association that has grown to include more than 1,000 school administrators. The stated purposes of MAESP are to form closer relations with persons concerned with the education of children; to bring about a greater unity of action among the elementary and middle school principals of Missouri, with particular emphasis on elementary and middle school education; and to foster activities that permit increased professional growth of all elementary and middle school principals. Two MAESP members were invited to EEP planning.
- **Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals:** MASSP is a professional organization committed to the ongoing improvement of secondary education, the professional development of middle level and high school principals and assistant principals, and programs for the youth of Missouri. The stated mission of MASSP is to improve secondary education through positive leadership and the enhancement of student performance. MASSP is the only Association in Missouri serving the professional needs of principals and assistant principals of the state's middle level and high schools with programs designed by secondary school administrators for secondary school administrators. Two members of MASSP participated in EEP planning.
- **Missouri Association of Rural Education:** MARE is an organization of school administrators, board members, teachers, parents, institutions of higher education, and businesspeople, all of whom are interested in serving rural community school districts in Missouri. The stated purpose of this association is to focus on the needs and concerns unique to rural education, to provide a forum for the discussion and resolution of those needs and concerns, and to present a unified voice to promote rural education in Missouri. One member of MARE participated in EEP planning.

- **Missouri School Boards Association:** MSBA acts as an advocate for public education in Missouri, serving as the unified voice of school board members throughout the state. The association also strives to provide members with an opportunity to enhance their skills, expand their knowledge, exchange ideas and discuss important issues with their colleagues. Four MSBA members participated in EEP planning.
- **Missouri Parent Teacher Association:** MoPTA's stated mission is to be a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for all families and communities, and a strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child. Its membership includes thousands of parents and school communities across the state. One MoPTA representative participated in EEP planning.
- **Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education:** The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is a public education assistance agency whose mission it is to guarantee the superior preparation and performance of every child in school and in life. The Department has four goals under its Top 10 by 20 initiative, an ambitious effort to raise Missouri's student achievement to rank among the top 10 states by 2020:
  1. All Missouri students will graduate college and career ready.
  2. All Missouri children will enter kindergarten prepared to be successful in school
  3. Missouri will prepare, develop and support effective educators
  4. The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will improve departmental efficiency and operational effectiveness.

Eight staff members representing the separate offices of the Department, the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioners of Education participated in EEP planning.

At the December State Board of Education meeting, members of the Board heard a presentation on Missouri's Equity Plan. They were provided a summary of the plan that was submitted in 2006 and an overview of the plan that is currently under development. This overview included an introduction to the potential data to be reviewed, general root causes of that data and possible strategies to address educational inequity in our state. Members of the Board contributed their initial thoughts and suggestions in these areas and expressed their desire to be continually updated throughout the development process.

Missouri's Area Supervisors have also been included in conversations about the data, possible root causes and strategies for the Equity Plan. There are eleven area supervisors serving nine different regions of the state. These supervisors work directly with the districts in their region.

They are very informed regarding the issues that challenge each of their districts. The Area supervisors provided initial thoughts on possible root causes and potential strategies that might be included in the Equity Plan.

Continued stakeholder engagement will occur as the development process for the Equity Plan continues. This will include direct focus meetings with practitioners (superintendents, principals, teachers, board members, etc.) who experience the challenges that occur as a result of educational inequity in Missouri. The Area Supervisors will assist in these focus meetings. Additional meetings with the state's education partners will occur as well as Missouri explores further root causes, strategies and a theory of action for using strategies to address educational inequity.

### **Section 3: Equity Gaps**

In comparing teachers in school district/LEAs with the highest 5% FRPL eligible students to the lowest 5% FRPL eligible students to students in the most rural schools in the state, the data illustrate potential areas of educational inequity across these schools. Missouri's Equity Plan will offer possible root causes for what is illuminated by the data and strategies for addressing the inequity of educational opportunity the data suggest.

Research suggests that "fully certified teachers have a statistically significant positive impact" in regards to areas of teaching and learning (Goldhaber, 2002). According to Missouri data, teachers who are less than qualified are more predominant in schools with higher percentages of FRPL-eligible students at a rate of 15.6% and in the state's most rural schools at a rate of 13.9%. In the lowest 5% of FRPL schools, the rate is much less at 5.3%. This data is further broken down into Elementary and Secondary levels. In analyzing data at these two levels, there appears to be a much higher rate of unqualified teachers at the secondary level in both schools with high levels of FRPL students (20.6%) and in rural schools (16.5%) as compared to schools with low levels of FRPL students (6.2%).

In addition to more teachers being less than qualified, data indicate they are less effective as well. Data collected through the state's data reporting system on educator evaluation indicate that teachers in schools with high percentages of FRPL students and in rural schools are collectively less effective than in schools with low percentages of FRPL students. On average, 84.7% of the teachers in schools with low numbers of FRPL students are collectively considered effective. In contrast, 81.2% of rural teachers and 78.8% of teachers in schools with high numbers of FRPL students are collectively considered effective.

A number of studies confirm that on average, "brand new teachers are less effective than those with some experience under their belts" (Clotfelter, Ladd, and Vigdor 2007a, 2007b; Harris and Sass 2007; Kane, Rockoff, and Staiger 2006; Ladd 2008; Sass 2007). The teachers in the lowest 5% FRPL schools and the teachers in rural schools have more years of experience than do the teachers in the highest 5% FRPL schools. On average, teachers in schools with low percentages

of FRPL students have 13.72 years of experience and teachers in the rural schools have 12.1 years of experience. Teachers in schools with high percentages of FRPL students have approximately 2-3 years less experience at an average of 9.97 years.

There is general agreement that retaining teachers, particularly those that have been found to be effective at instructing students, has a positive impact on student achievement in a school. Teachers in the lowest 5% FRPL schools are retained at higher rates than teachers in both the highest 5% FRPL and rural schools. On average, 89.6% of teachers in schools with low numbers of FRPL students are retained from one year to the next as compared to 84.3% in the rural schools and 77.8% of teachers in schools with high numbers of FRPL students.

In a brief written in 2010, Jennifer King Rice maintains that “teacher experience – or more accurately, teacher inexperience – is systematically related to teacher productivity.” This generally means that teacher productivity is influenced by the experience level of the teacher. The percentage of first-year teachers in schools with high percentages of FRPL students and in rural schools is greater than in schools with a lower percentage of FRPL students. In schools with high numbers of FRPL students, 15.4% of teachers are first-year teachers and in rural schools 13.9% of teachers are first-year teachers. In schools with low numbers of FRPL students, only 6.8% of the teachers are first-year teachers. Similarly, schools with a high number of FRPL students had more teachers with three or less years of experience as did rural schools.

Not only are there more first-year teachers in schools with high percentages of FRPL students, but they receive less mentor support. On average, 78.6% of first-year teachers in the schools with high numbers of FRPL students are assigned a mentor. There are fewer first-year teachers in schools with low percentages of FRPL students, and 92.4% of them are assigned a mentor. Remarkably, while there is a relatively high percentage of first-year teachers in rural schools, 97.5% of them are assigned a mentor.

First-year teachers and their principals are surveyed to measure how well the new teachers were prepared by their teacher education program. The rating is across a 1-5 scale, with ratings 3-5 representing preparation that was adequate, well done, and very well done by the teacher education program. The first-year teachers in schools with low percentages of FRPL students and first-year teachers in rural schools gave higher ratings to the preparation they received than first-year teachers in schools with a high percentage of FRPL students. The teachers in schools with low percentages of FRPL students gave a rating of 4.45 (99.2%) and first-year rural teachers gave a rating of 4.24 (97.8%), indicating they were adequately, well, or very well prepared to teach. The first-year teachers in schools with high percentages of FRPL students gave the preparation they received a lower rating of 3.87 (90.1%).

The principals of first-year teachers in schools with low percentages of FRPL students rated the preparation of their first-year teachers at 4.30 (97.6%), and principals of first-year teachers in rural schools gave a rating of 3.94 (93.4%). Principals in schools with high percentages of FRPL students rated their first-year teachers' preparation at 3.66 (87%).

Salaries of the teachers in these three different sets of schools were analyzed as well. The adjusted salary takes into account a type of cost-of-living adjustment to allow for comparability.

Teachers in schools with low percentages of FRPL students were paid more than teachers in rural schools and schools with high percentages of FRPL students. On average, teachers in schools with fewer FRPL students earned an average salary of more than \$10,000 per year than the teachers in schools with a high percentage of FRPL students or in rural schools. A more detailed analysis of teacher salary included a comparison of 1<sup>st</sup> year teachers with BA, 1<sup>st</sup> year teachers with MA, teachers with 5 years of experience or less and teachers with 6 to 10 years of experience. The data suggest that the gap between teachers in schools with low numbers of FRPL students and teachers in both rural schools and those with high numbers of FRPL students begins to expand with teachers who have 6 years or more of experience.

Between the different groups of teachers, there was a difference in respect to teacher absenteeism. Current thinking suggests, and research seems to support, that students learn more from a regular classroom teacher than from a substitute teacher. "To the extent that less learning occurs when regular teachers are absent and student motivation is also reduced, student academic performance may suffer" (Ehrenberg, Ehrenberg, Rees, and Ehrenberg, 1991). It should be noted that days of absenteeism did not include administratively approved leave for professional development, field trips or other off-campus activities with students. Teachers are absent more than 10 days per year in schools with high percentages of FRPL students as well as in schools with low percentages of FRPL students. In schools with high percentages of FRPL students, 30.2% of the teachers are absent 10 days or more. In schools with low percentages of FRPL students, 31.5% of the teachers are absent 10 days or more. In contrast, only 17.5% teachers in rural schools are absent 10 days or more.

Most important, student performance in each of these different types of schools differs as well. In schools with a high percentage of FRPL students, performance reflected a proficiency rate of 24.2% in ELA and 26.5% in Math. The performance of students in rural schools reflected a proficiency rate of 54.1% in ELA and 50.7% in Math. The performance of students in which a low percentage is FRPL eligible reflected a proficiency rate of 68.8% in ELA and 66.0% in Math.

It is important to note that additional data were included as a result of stakeholder engagement. Building on the original set of data, and based on stakeholders request, the following additional data has now been included:

- Average poverty rate of the community
- The percentage of minority teachers
- A more details look at teacher salary that includes 1<sup>st</sup> year teachers with BA, first year teachers with MA, teachers will 5 years or less experience, and teachers with 6-10 years experience
- In addition to percentages of first year teachers, also added was the percent of teachers with less than three years experience

Stakeholders felt this additional data might be helpful as we collectively identify root causes and strategies to address those causes.

The data just described is summarized in the chart below:

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Highest 5% FRPL of schools (110 schools) Students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch</b>	<b>Lowest 5% FRPL of schools (110 schools) Students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch</b>	<b>Most Rural School Buildings (315 schools) NCES Urbanicity Classification **“Rural: Remote”</b>
FRPL rate	91.9%-100%	0%-16.4%	60.4% (average)
*Avg. poverty rate of community	30.7%	7.1%	18.4%
* % Minority (Students)	86.38%	16.62%	3.6%
* % Minority (Teachers)	41.9%	4.5%	0.9%
* Discipline Incident Rate	2.2%	0.4%	0.6%
Avg. years of experience	9.97	13.72	12.1
*Adjusted average salary	\$49,733.95	\$59,794.06	\$48,219.20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1st yr teachers w/ Bacc.</li> </ul>	\$39,591.88	\$40,912.19	\$41,951.42
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1st yr teachers w/ Mast.</li> </ul>	\$44,063.90	\$45,165.05	\$46,213.38
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers w/ 5 years experience or less</li> </ul>	\$41,980.00	\$44,965.85	\$43,068.49
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers w/ 6-10 years experience</li> </ul>	\$48,040.22	\$52,194.48	\$47,630.17
* Retention Rate	77.8%	89.6%	84.3%
*Absent 10 days or more	30.2%	31.5%	17.5%
% First Year Teachers	15.4%	6.8%	13.9%
% Teachers with less than three years experience	26.9%	8.9%	15.0%

1st Yr Teachers assigned a mentor	78.6%	92.4%	97.5%
<b>Measure</b>	<b>Highest 5% FRPL of schools (110 schools) Students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch</b>	<b>Lowest 5% FRPL of schools (110 schools) Students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch</b>	<b>Most Rural School Buildings (315 schools) NCES Urbanicity Classification *"Rural: Remote"</b>
Avg overall preparation: First Year teacher response 1-5 scale (%)	3.87 (90.1%)	4.45 (99.2%)	4.24 (97.8%)
Avg overall preparation: Principal response 1-5 scale (%)	3.66 (87%)	4.30 (97.6%)	3.94 (93.4%)
*% Less than Fully Qualified	15.6%	5.3%	13.9%
• Elementary	16.0%	6.0%	11.3%
• Secondary	20.6%	6.2%	16.5%
*Effective Index: Overall teacher impact	78.8%	84.7%	81.2%
Student Performance: ELA Proficiency	24.2%	68.8%	54.1%
Student Performance: Math Proficiency	26.5%	66.0%	50.7%

To assist with interpreting the data contained in the chart, the following definitions are offered:

**\*Rural: Remote:** census defined rural territory that is more than 25 miles from an urbanized area and also 10 miles from an urban cluster

**\*Average poverty rate of community:** The estimated percentage of persons in the ZIP code in which the school is physically located who fall below the poverty threshold identified by the U.S. Census Bureau. A person's income and family size determine poverty status. The Census Bureau's methodology uses the 1982 federal poverty threshold, adjusted by the average inflation over the last twelve months leading up to the Census Bureau's interviews. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

\***Minority:** percent non-white

\***Discipline rate:** the number of incidents divided by the number of students (incident is when a student is removed from the regular classroom half (1/2) a day or more

\***Adjusted average salary:** Uses an index developed by the National Center for Education Statistics called the “Comparable Wage Index” (CWI) to adjust teacher salaries. While not a true cost-of-living adjustment, the basic premise of the CWI is that all types of workers—including teachers—demand higher wages in areas with a higher cost of living; by measuring systematic differences in the cost of labor, the CWI therefore accounts for much of the uncontrollable variation in education expenditures, such as teacher salaries.

\***Retention rate:** percent of teachers retained from 2013 to 2014

\***Absenteeism:** A teacher is absent if he or she is not in attendance on a day in the regular school year when the teacher would otherwise be expected to teach students in an assigned class. This includes both days taken for sick leave and days taken for personal leave. Personal leave includes voluntary absences for reasons other than sick leave. Does not include administratively approved leave for professional development, field trips or other off-campus activities with students.

\***Less-than-fully qualified:** Teacher meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Is teaching on a provisional certificate,
- Is teaching on a temporary authorization certificate, or
- Is lacking the necessary credential to be considered appropriately certificated for at least one teaching assignment

\***Effective Index:** An average overall rating of the general collective effectiveness of the teachers in a school

These data suggest that the learning experience of students in schools with high percentages of FRPL students, rural schools and schools with low numbers of FRPL students is quite different. Specifically, higher percentages of FRPL and rural students appear to learn from less experienced, unqualified, out-of-field or less effective teachers at higher rates than occurs in schools with lower numbers of FRPL students.

## **Section 4: Strategies for Eliminating Equity Gaps**

### **Categories of Root Causes**

The data described suggest that rural schools and schools with a high percentage of FRPL students are taught by inexperienced, unqualified, out-of-field and less than effective teachers at a greater rate than those students in schools with a low percentage of FRPL and more urban-located students. One of the key gaps in the quality of the educational experience for students occurs as a result of the inability to secure (through recruitment and retention) qualified and effective teachers and principals in areas that are “difficult to staff” (i.e. high concentrations of poverty, high minority concentrations, location, grade level, and/or content area). In initial discussions regarding this issue, possible categories of root causes were offered:

- Environmental causes
  - Working conditions
  - Stress of accountability and testing
  - Poverty/community culture
- Institutional
  - Lack of preparation to teach in challenging conditions
  - Insufficient numbers of qualified candidates in particular content areas and grade levels
  - Placement does not emphasize difficult to staff areas
- Workforce Issues
  - Teacher preference
  - Incentives for teaching in difficult to staff areas

In discussions with stakeholders, the complexity and challenge of identifying root causes emerged. In particular, within these root causes, a number of additional root causes were identified. A very complete understanding of the nature of the problem will assist as discussions continue on strategies.

### **Categories of Strategies**

In continued discussions and reflections on possible ways to address the inequity that exists in the educational experience for students in Missouri related to the causes listed above, the following categories of strategies were explored:

- Environmental causes
  - Collect data on working conditions

- Increase community support
  - Wrap around services
- Establish professional learning communities
- Improve conditions in difficult to staff settings
  - Smaller class size
  - Increased opportunities for professional collaboration
  - More opportunities for teacher leadership
  - Expand support for educators
    - Mentoring
      - Pay for cooperating teachers
    - Increased opportunities for professional collaboration
    - Ways to improve teaching and leadership skills
      - Growth-based evaluation system
      - Professional learning tied to educator needs
  - Incentives to teach in difficult to staff settings
    - Salary increases
      - Both starting salary and salary expectations
      - Support with housing or compensation
    - Incentive programs for retention in areas of inequity
- Institutional
  - Develop a template for training teachers to succeed in challenging settings
  - Increase the pipeline through particular higher education programs and urban centers
  - Fund prospective teachers to enroll in teacher preparation
  - Expand year-long internship program
  - Develop loan forgiveness programs
- Workforce Issues
  - Incentives to teach in difficult to staff settings
    - Significant salary increases

- Both starting salary and salary expectations
- Support with housing or compensation
  - Incentive programs for retention in areas of inequity
- Encourage “grow your own” programs
- Explore the use of technology for increasing distance learning

## Potential Strategies

Recruiting into and retaining qualified and effective teachers and leaders into difficult to staff areas (i.e. location, grade level, content area, etc.) is the key issue in regards to addressing inequity issues in the state. The following general areas are explored in greater detail as a process for identifying possible strategies for implementation:

1. The existing process of teacher candidates recommended for certification does not appear to address critical areas of need (i.e. grade levels, content areas, geographic location, etc.) resulting in less-than-qualified teachers working with students. This might possibly occur as a result of teacher education programs that fail to recruit for critical-needs areas and to assess accurately the candidates’ ability to be successful teaching in these areas. Possible strategies to address this issue might include:
  - Teacher education programs develop and use an effective process for recruiting the right people (i.e. a potential to be effective) as future teachers. This might include the use of an entry level screening tool that ensures a candidate has a standardized level of content knowledge and possesses work styles consistent with effective teachers.
  - Develop a process to ensure that teacher candidates possess the necessary content knowledge to be successful as a teacher. This would require that the approval process for teacher education programs be based in part on an accurate assessment of whether program completers possess the necessary content knowledge for their area of certification.
  - Develop a process to ensure that teacher candidates possess the necessary pedagogical skills to be successful as a teacher. This would require that the approval process for teacher education programs be based in part on an accurate assessment of whether teacher candidates possess necessary pedagogical skills to be successful teachers.
  - Develop a statewide recruiting strategy for placing teacher candidates in areas of critical need (i.e. grade levels, content areas, geographic location, etc.). This would include a systematic, comprehensive campaign to attract and effectively prepare teacher candidates to be successful in critically needed content areas, grade levels and geographic locations.

Developing a system to ensure that teacher candidates being prepared through the state's teacher education programs address the areas of critical need will provide school district/LEAs with candidates who possess the necessary content knowledge and pedagogical skills to be successful in the areas, grade levels and content areas in which they are hired to teach.

2. Recruitment of effective educators is a challenge in schools with high numbers of FRPL students and in rural locations. A result of this is that teachers are sometimes hired and placed in teaching duties for which they may not be fully qualified. Difficult to staff locations might attract more candidates if the following is available:
  - A comprehensive process is in place for inducting and socializing new hires into the broader system. This would provide set structures and processes to ensure an adequate level of support.
  - A culture characterized by discipline and focus on academics is in place. A culture characterized by structure and routine is necessary for creating a school culture conducive to learning.
  - Intentional planning to identify candidates with a high potential for being successful. This would include a systematic process for reviewing applications and conducting interviews.
  - Development and implementation of strategies that provide incentives as a way to attract candidates. This might require the use of funds to offer incentives to potential candidates.

Developing a process to attract candidates to school locations/communities that are difficult to staff will increase the quality of newly hired candidates. These candidates will more likely be qualified for the duties they are assigned and have a higher potential for success.

3. Rural schools and schools with a higher percentage of students eligible for FRPL must have a system to develop the capacity of all educators by improving and increasing their effectiveness in skills necessary for high levels of student learning. This is based on a belief that all educators can improve their skills and that improving student learning depends on this. Characteristics of school systems with a system for improving teacher practice include:
  - Evaluation systems that are founded on a theory of action based on growth and improvement. Evaluation systems that do this are built on current research on the importance of a growth mindset and use of student growth measures.
  - There is intentional and deliberate alignment of the local evaluation process to the Essential Principles of Effective Evaluation. The leadership and governance ensures a process of effective evaluation across the system.
  - Professional learning opportunities address the areas of need identified through the evaluation process. The evaluation processes identifies the needs of the teachers

and a strategy developed and implemented for providing professional development to address these needs.

Developing a system for improving the skills of teachers and leaders ensures that the adults in the school system will be equipped to address the ever-evolving needs of the students. This requires the implementation with fidelity of a system aligned to the Essential Principles of Effective Evaluation.

4. Teachers play a prominent leadership role. Teacher leadership can have a significant impact on student learning, teacher retention, school culture, school improvement efforts, and education policy creation. This type of impact can address many areas of education inequity, and it is obvious that practicing teachers can play a vital role in addressing educational inequities in our schools.
  - Teacher leaders can play an important role in the most critical factor in improving student learning: instruction. When successful teachers reach out and share excellent instructional practice, all students learn at higher levels.
  - Teacher leaders should be active participants in crafting education policy. These policy decisions have direct implications for instruction and classrooms
  - Teacher leadership can strengthen teacher organizations, increase networking opportunities, and make connections with administrators and other stakeholders to advance quality instructional practice.
5. In rural schools and schools with a higher percentage of students eligible for FRPL, effective teachers must be retained at high levels. This likely will contribute to a lower percentage of first-year teachers hired to replace those who leave. A major reason this high degree of turnover occurs is that teachers in these schools work in a non-supportive environment. For the purpose of this plan, environments that are supportive and retain teachers at a higher rate may include some or all of the following:
  - There is a systematic mentoring process to ensure new teachers receive appropriate induction and socialization into the learning community. There are a set of structures and processes have been developed and implemented to ensure this takes place.
  - There is a competitive salary schedule. There is a priority to use funds to offer better salaries in order to keep more effective teachers and leaders.
  - Professional learning opportunities for teachers are specifically tied to particular needs. The evaluation processes identifies particular needs and a commitment to learning opportunities that address those needs.
  - The school culture has a focus on academics, opportunities for professional collaboration, and shared accountability for student learning. There is a clear vision of learning and effective leadership to implement the vision, including effectively communicating the vision to staff and building staff support.

- Leaders are effective because they establish a culture of learning and build consensus and ownership in all members of the staff to work collaboratively to achieve learning for all students. There is a comprehensive system for developing leadership skills, including a plan to address leadership turnover.
- The governance over these schools has an apparent focus on the efficient and effective education of students. There is training for board members to establish a clear and compelling focus.
- There is an intentional process for recognizing excellence and supporting growth for educators and students. There is structure and protocol for identifying and recognizing exemplary performance.

Developing structures that address these contributing factors would establish an environment that is supportive, where there are higher levels of retention and a lower percentage of first-year teachers.

As these strategies are further developed, resources will be identified for implementing the strategies. This will likely include a commitment of both fiscal and human resources where appropriate and possible. (MORE TO BE ADDED HERE)

#### **Section 5: Ongoing Monitoring and Support**

Once strategies have been developed that address the root causes based on the data presented in the plan, a mechanism for monitoring will be developed. This will include a regular assessment of the progress being made on each of the strategies. Progress will be determined by monitoring benchmarks for each of the strategies and analyzing changes in the data set.

Ongoing monitoring will occur that will include continual review of the plan and adjustments as necessary. In particular, adjustments might be necessary for strategies that don't appear to be having an impact. These adjustments might include additional support of some kind. Monitoring progress will also signal a possible expansion of strategies that are having an impact.

The data gathered through the monitoring process can be used in providing progress updates to stakeholders. Examples of groups that will be updated on the progress of the plan might include the State Board of Education, the Education Partners group, school districts and their personnel, etc.

(MORE TO BE ADDED HERE)

#### **Section 6: Conclusion**

(MORE TO BE ADDED HERE)

**Appendix A: Stakeholder Meeting Agendas**

**Missouri Equitable Access Planning Meeting**

**December 11, 2014**

**Missouri Department of Education**

**205 Jefferson Street**

**Jefferson City, Missouri**

**Meeting Agenda**

- 10:00-10:30 a.m. **Introductions and Context-Setting**
- 10:30-11:15 a.m. **Root Cause Analysis Discussion**
- 11:15-11:25 a.m. **Break**
- 11:25–12:25 p.m. **Working Lunch to Continue Discussion of Strategies**
- 12:25-1:45 pm **Stakeholder Engagement**
- 1:45-2:00 pm **Recap and Next Steps/Timeline for Completion**
- 2:00 p.m. **Adjourn**

**Education Partners**

**November 24, 2014**

**Agenda**

1. Waiver
2. MAP
3. Work Groups
4. Equity Plan
5. Other

## Appendix B: Missouri's Educator Equity Work Plan

Target date	Activity Description	Responsibility of...
10/20/14	Develop a work plan to direct the development of the Equity Plan	Educator Quality MO Dept. of Ed.
10/31/14	Gather input on logic model/work plan from development team at convening Gather input from national facilitators (Ila Deshmukh Towery, Ellen Sherratt)	Members D.C. convening National researchers
11/15/14	Incorporate input from the panel of experts/team into logic model/work plan Draft an initial data set to identify educational inequity Finalize edited parts to be reviewed by the Department's Education Partners	Educator Quality MO Dept. of Ed.
11/24/14	Convene the Department's Education Partners group Share initial draft of the data set, root causes, strategies; solicit input Gather input from education partners to clarify sections V and VI	MO Dept. of Ed. Professional Organizations
11/24/14 to 12/3/14	Compile responses from Education partners group Begin initial draft of sections II, III and IV Prepare presentation for the State Board of Education	Educator Quality MO Stakeholders State Board of Ed
12/4/14	Present overview and gather initial input from the State Board of Education	Educator Quality
12/11/14	Second convening of the Education Partners Meeting is facilitated by Ila Deshmukh Towery and Ellen Sherratt	Dept, Prof Orgs National Facilitators
12/18/14	With Area Supervisors: overview, data set and root causes and strategies Prepare for Dec 19 submission to US ED	Educator Quality Area Supervisors
12/19/14	Submit initial draft to the US Department of Education	Educator Quality
By 2/15/15	Host focus groups with districts that experience educational inequity Continue to gather input from the Education Partners group	Dept, Area Supervisors school personnel
3/15/15	Reconvene Education Partner group to share input from school districts Incorporate input from constituents of each Education Partner group Share input and feedback with the State Board of Education	MO Dept. of Ed. Prof Organizations State Board of Ed
4/1/15	Post draft of Equity Plan for 30 day public comment period	Dept, public
5/1/15	Begin final draft of all sections using input from all stakeholders	Educator Quality
6/1/15	Submit final Equity Plan to the US Department of Education	Educator Quality