A Comparative Analysis: Ensuring Equitable Access to Excellent Educators

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On July 7, 2014 Secretary Arne Duncan announced the launch of the “Excellent Educators for All Initiative”

A continuation of the 2006 ESEA Title 1 requirement, plans were due on July 1, 2015

The United States Department of Education recently showed that across the country minority students are more likely to be taught by teachers who are not fully certified, and by teachers who are in their first year of teaching.
This study compares the plans from the District of Columbia to state of Maryland, a neighboring state – parts of which have been dubbed “Ward 9” - who’s education system has been consistently ranked in the top 5 in the nation since 2009 and Virginia – who’s education system also ranks highly consistently.

The District of Columbia received an equity rating of “F” while Maryland earned “B-” and Virginia earned a “C+”.

This analysis seeks to elucidate reasons for the differences in equity scores with this neighboring state.
Literature Review:


Virginia Department of Education. Virginia’s Plan to Ensure Excellent Educators for All Students. June 2015. Web. 5.10.16
State plans from Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia that were submitted to the US Department of Education are being critiqued and compared to elucidate factors that may contribute to the increasing achievement gap related to the inequity in excellent educators in DC.

Data analysis, analysis of collection methods, Root Causes analyses, strategies for eliminating equity gaps, and suggested solutions are compared between the two state education agencies.
## The Problem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage of Schools Meeting All AMOs</th>
<th>Percentage of Schools Meeting Reading/English AMOs</th>
<th>Percentage of Schools Meeting Mathematics AMOS</th>
<th>Percentage of Schools Meeting Federal Graduation Indicator AMO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Schools</strong></td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High-poverty schools</strong></td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>76.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low-poverty schools</strong></td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>91.4</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>77.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gap</strong></td>
<td><strong>39.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>17.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>28.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.8</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>High-minority schools</strong></td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>67.8</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Low-minority schools</strong></td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td>69.3</td>
<td>85.3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gap</strong></td>
<td><strong>31.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>29.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>24.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>17.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The US Department of Education revised requirements from an ESEA renewal to an ESEA request removing the equity plan requirement and adding later for all states due June 1, 2015. The request for flexibility thus became part of the renewal of the Every Student Succeeds Act of 1965. For accountability purposes, many states began planning for the renewal in 2006 or 2009 and could use much of the work done during that time for the flexibility request. As such, data from stakeholder engagement and data collected by LEA’s in accordance with the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) and the Education and Secondary Education Act of 2001, No Child Left Behind have been used for this study.
Why are we here today?

Maryland
- Equity Rating
  - B-
- Experienced growth in highly qualified teachers from 2004-2014 (75% to 95%)
- 97% effective or highly effective

District of Columbia
- Equity Rating
  - F
- No data submitted
- No data submitted

Virginia
- Equity Rating
  - C+
- Experienced growth in highly qualified teachers in high-poverty, high minority schools
- Math: High Poverty schools showed more Appropriate Content Endorsements than low poverty schools
Structure for Today’s Talk

- Discuss DC’s findings and plan for educator equity
- Discuss Maryland’s plan for educator equity
- Discuss Virginia’s plan for educator equity
- Compare the results of each district’s plan
- Recommendations for ways to move forward
Why are we here today?

DC sought to answer two major questions.

1. What gets in the way of having the best teachers placed at high-need schools?

And

1. What gets in the way of keeping the best teachers who are currently in high-need schools in their current placements?
Results: Root Causes

Teacher Pipelines
1. Teacher Preparation
2. Licensure

Working Conditions
1. [Principal] Leadership
2. [Teacher] Support
3. Evaluation and Compensation

Highlights:
- Trauma, Urban, Social-emotional challenges, behavioral issues interference
- Dual certified, arts (less emphasized)
- Performance in/outside DC is not a factor in licensure (ele.ed specialist in high school).
- Retention – biggest issue raised by personnel
- Differentiation in leadership; differentiation in supports, differentiation in evaluation and compensation.
Deeper Dive: Working Conditions

Root Cause: School has to have a strong principal with a clear vision, rigorous standards, and a “raising the bar approach.” (staff morale and collaboration)

Teachers who feel unsupported and isolated, including from decision-making LEAVE. (competition vs. collaboration)

Behavior Problems, lack of planning time, disorganized work environment

Strong leadership intentionally creating processes such as: clear behavior code that is consistently followed, structured planning time, clear procedures for start, end and class changes, thoughtful work environment that allow teachers to maximize instruction.
Deeper Dive: Working Conditions

- **Root Cause:** Teachers may need additional non-instructional supports (e.g., social-emotional, family engagement)
  - Teachers who receive high levels of support are LESS LIKELY to leave

- High conflict interactions with parents w/o administration’s support
- Support beyond that of first year teachers
Deeper Dive: Differentiated Evaluation and Compensation

**Root Cause:** Perception that evaluation system does not adequately take into account the challenges of high-need schools.

Evaluation system does not control for unique challenges

- Teachers cite: Academic gains for below-grade-level students (ex. 2nd grade reading level to 4th grade reading level for a 9th grader)
- Differentiation in the classroom observation system – does not account for the different challenges high-need schools face.
OSSE decides to:
1. “Address emerging root causes identified within the planning process; and”
2. “Create a framework to further explore root causes in more depth.”

DCPS IMPACTplus

Not working: previous slide shows that this evaluation system is not fair to high-need schools making teachers ineligible to receive the incentive. Further other factors are still in play. Notably, no data to support teachers moving to high-need schools once attaining “highly-effective” at low-minority, low-poverty schools.
Promotion in DCPS

- IMPACT Data is heavily considered when teachers apply for other positions in the district

- **NOT Working:** Again, root cause analysis determined that staff in high need schools need a different evaluation tool to control for the unique populations. Unfair to allow individuals who, using the current unfair evaluation tool, cannot demonstrate effectiveness to be denied positions of leadership when in-fact they likely posses the leadership skills necessary to drive success in the lowest-performing schools.
Strategies for Success “?”

- Separations in DCPS
  - Firing teachers

- DCPS Leadership Initiative for Teachers (LIFT)
  - Promising – 5 stage career ladder allowing teachers to stay in the classroom
  - Mirrors what some other successful, more equitable states and districts have implemented
Recommendations:

- DCPS should collect more data, organize their data, and analyze the actual data that the policy addresses.

- Results from the focus groups were compelling. Teachers and principals alike agree that a differentiated leadership, support, evaluation and compensation be utilized at high-poverty schools. A comprehensive program for these schools is what LEA and DCPS should be working towards.

- It is recommended that DC move beyond IMPACT to solve inequity issues in DCPS. Further, IMPACT actually seems to exacerbate the problem of increasing educator inequity. IMPACT should be suspended in the lowest performing schools until a more equitable evaluation system can be implemented.
As a result of Maryland’s data collection (record keeping), planning, and implementation, they have seen an increase in the number of highly qualified teachers from 2004-2014.

- 75% in 2004 to 95% in 2014*
- In 2013-2014 – roughly 97% of teachers were rated as effective or highly effective
- Notably: No equity gaps were noted in unqualified teachers when the state compared minority with non-minority quartiles.
- New teachers were more likely to be found in high poverty and high minority schools

Caveat: It is not clear if these teachers are in high poverty, high minority schools*
Results: Maryland
What do Educators see as causes of inequity?

- Differences in resources
- Differences in salaries
- Mentor teacher (HP vs LP)
- Geography
- Belief students can’t learn
- Institutional racism
- Teacher turn over
- Insufficient preparation
- Cultural diversity in the teacher workforce
- High poverty teacher prep programs
Results: Maryland
Suggested Solutions

- Dual courses like ESOC and Early Childhood
- Infusing ESOL strategies into teacher prep programs
- Applying sanctions for hiring out-of-field teachers
- Bonuses and incentives (credits)
- Differentiation in class sizes
- Revising the transfer policy
- Defining mentoring programs more clearly
- More PD on differentiating instruction
Teacher quality stipend for National Board Certification

- Idaho – leadership bonuses
- Kansas – bolster mentorship opportunities
- Nebraska – promote access to distance learning programs
  - USDE State Plans & Klein, 2015
Results: Maryland’s Newly Suggested Solutions

- Question and analyze answers to Title IIA monitoring regarding the use of funds to address teacher effectiveness.
- Add expectation to Title IIB (MSP) grant partnership requirement to address educator equity issues in high-minority and high-poverty school partnerships.
- Apply credit for personalized PD for inexperienced teachers.
- Participate in scale-up activities (Maryland’s Multiple Systems of Support) required of high-minority and high-poverty schools.
Results: Virginia’s 2006 Strategies

Categories:
- Data Systems
- Teacher Preparation
- Recruitment and Retention
- Professional Development
- Working Conditions
- Policy Coherence

Initial Plan and Strategies:
- Middle School Math Teacher Corps
- Technical Training and Assistance Centers for SPED
- Virginia’s Tiered Systems of Support
  - RTI, PBIS, Content Literacy Continuum
- Summer Content Teaching Academies
- Math and Science Partnership Grants
- And more...
Results: Virginia’s Data

Table 2.1: Highly Qualified Teachers According to Poverty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Data from 2006 Initial Plan</th>
<th>2013-2014 Data</th>
<th>Degree of change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>96.8</td>
<td>98.8</td>
<td>+2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-Poverty Elementary Schools</td>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>+2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Poverty Elementary Schools</td>
<td>98.5</td>
<td>99.3</td>
<td>+.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gap</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-Poverty Secondary Schools</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>+4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Poverty Secondary Schools</td>
<td>98.1</td>
<td>99.1</td>
<td>+1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gap</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>-3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.2: Non-Highly Qualified Teachers According to Poverty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-Highly Qualified Data from 2006 Initial Plan</th>
<th>Non-Highly Qualified 2013-2014 Data</th>
<th>Degree of change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>+2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-Poverty Elementary Schools</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>+2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Poverty Elementary Schools</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>+.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gap</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-Poverty Secondary</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>+4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Poverty Secondary Schools</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>+1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gap</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>-3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results: Virginia’s Findings

Virginia is the only one of the three LEA’s that reported overall state-level highly qualified teacher increases; including within high-poverty and high-minority schools.

The greatest increases were in high-poverty secondary schools.

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<td>High-Minority Schools</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>+2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Minority Schools</td>
<td>98.1</td>
<td>98.9</td>
<td>+.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gap</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>-2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The gap in inexperienced teachers persists.

Note: Virginia considers a teacher with less than 3 years experience an inexperienced teacher. DC says less than one year. MD ...
More Good News!

High Poverty Schools have more ACE than Low Poverty Schools!

Foreign Language and SPED did not fair as well.
Results: District of Columbia

- Selected effectiveness, as measured by IMPACT, and experience as key metrics.
- Used a unique definition for high poverty. DC defined high poverty schools as those schools with 25% or more of students who meet one or more of the requirements below.
  - Pupil funding
  - Homeless students
  - In DC foster care
  - Qualify for temporary assistance for needy families
  - Qualify for supplemental nutrition assistance program
  - High school students 1 or more years older than typical enroll age
DC chose not compare high-minority and low-minority schools. Below is a comparison of teacher effectiveness by school poverty level.
As with Maryland, no significant gaps were measured regarding access to experienced teachers.

DC identified four root causes to inequity:

1. Teacher prep program misalignment
2. Inadequate teacher supply – cited as a major root cause
3. Teacher Licensure
4. Working Conditions (several issues fall under this category)

Lots of evidence documenting leadership and support as the most important factor in retention of highly effective teachers in high-poverty schools in the District of Columbia. Also lots of strategies suggested to ameliorate problems.
DCPS is placing its strategy in the bowels of IMPACT.

How has IMPACT affected the DCPS teaching force?
Are more highly effective and effective teachers staying and teaching in high poverty and high minority schools?

Is IMPACT Effective?
Longitudinal Analysis of the Effectiveness of DCPS Teachers

Table III.1. Dismissals of teachers in DCPS, by school year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent dismissed</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent ineffective</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent minimally effective</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers dismissed</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of teachers</td>
<td>3,378</td>
<td>3,315</td>
<td>3,270</td>
<td>3,264</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Mathematica calculations based on administrative data from DCPS.

Notes: Under IMPACT, teachers who earn an ineffective rating in one year or a minimally effective rating for two consecutive years are dismissed. Teachers could be dismissed for consecutive minimally effective ratings beginning in year 2.

Whereas the percentages and counts in the columns for years 1 through 3 reflect teachers who were actually dismissed by DCPS, those in year 4 reflect only teachers’ eligibility for dismissal. In years 1 through 3, DCPS dismissed all eligible teachers.

Figure III.1. Percentage of teachers who left DCPS, by dismissal criteria eligibility and school year

Source: Mathematica calculations based on administrative data from DCPS.

Notes: Under IMPACT, teachers who earn an ineffective rating in one year or a minimally effective rating for two consecutive years are dismissed. Teachers could be dismissed for earning consecutive minimally effective ratings beginning in year 2.
A closer look

DCPS retained over 80% of teachers classified as effective or highly effective.

The rates remained the same over years 1, 2, and 3.

- 68-71% - Effective
- <25% – Highly Effective
Retention rates of the most effective teachers in DCPS were above 80% and did not change across the three years of IMPACT analyzed.

Teachers who left after year 3 were more effective than the teachers who left after year 1.

New hires were less effective than core DCPS teachers.

Teachers who remain become more effective (especially newer teachers)

Teachers who leave DCPS also become more effective over time.

Conclusion: Retention is the key
Effective teachers are leaving at significantly higher rates than Ineffective and Minimally effective teachers are being IMPACT'ed out.

Figure III.3. Numbers of teachers retained and not retained in DCPS, by effectiveness category and school year

Source: Mathematica calculations based on administrative data from DCPS.
Notes: IMPACT ratings are from the specified school year. Teachers are considered to have exited DCPS if they do not receive an IMPACT rating in the subsequent school year.
Impact is not retaining any more teachers
Impact is getting rid of ineffective teachers
How does this ensure equitable educators are teaching high poverty, high minority schools?

It does not.
Recommendations:

DCPS should collect more data, organize their data, and analyze the actual data that the policy addresses.

It is recommended that DC move beyond IMPACT to solve inequity issues in DCPS. Further, IMPACT actually seems to exacerbate the problem of increasing educator inequity. IMPACT should be suspended in the lowest performing schools until a more equitable evaluation system can be implemented.

Results from the focus groups were compelling. Teachers and principals alike agree that a differentiated leadership, support, evaluation and compensation be utilized at high-poverty schools. A comprehensive program for these schools is what LEA and DCPS should be working towards.
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Questions & Comments