



East Allegheny School District

Equity Plan

Current Implementation Status as of
2023 – 2024 School Year

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Revised

LEAs that choose to accept federal dollars are required by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act to develop an equity plan for how they place teachers in schools and classrooms to ensure that their poor and minority students are not being taught at a disproportionate rate by teachers who are inexperienced (in PA, "experienced" means 3 or more years of teaching), who are teaching out of field, or who are not HQ under NCLB.

Local Education Agencies (LEA) are required to address the issue of equity through district plans describing actions the LEA will implement outlining specific uses of Title I, Title II, and other funds to support the planned actions.

The mission of the East Allegheny School District, a K through 12th grade organization, is to provide all students programs of excellence that instill a passion for life-long learning while preparing them for the challenges of tomorrow. The East Allegheny School District will enhance students' self-esteem, help them discover and maximize their individual potential, and guide each to dignity, appreciate, respect, and accept human diversity.

Our vision is that equity in East Allegheny Schools is achieved when each student gains the requisite skills and knowledge needed to access meaningful opportunities beyond K-12 education.

Title II-A of Every Student Succeeds Act requires that all students, including poor and minority, have equitable opportunities with respect to quality instruction, teachers' instructional experience, class size, and teachers' ability to meet the diverse learning needs of all students. East Allegheny School District's Equity Plan is developed to insure the provision of equity for poor and minority students. The district's Title II-A funds are utilized to support equity needs as they are identified in the area of class size reduction.

Annual Needs Assessment

The District's annual needs assessment is designed to identify areas of need and address the equity components. A number of sources of information detail how the district addresses a) equitable access to highly qualified teachers b) equity in teacher experience c) equity in teacher training d) equity in class sizes, and e) recruitment and retention of highly qualified teachers. These include student test scores, new programs to be implemented, High Q data for certified personnel, anticipated shortages in certificate areas, and teacher evaluation data. Prioritized needs for the district include: 1) professional learning for novice teachers, 2) highly qualified teachers at schools in *AYP Warning* schools, and 3) class size reduction.

This equity plan focuses on the collaboration of all stakeholders including central office administrators, school administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, parents and business partners. The needs assessment and planning process addresses equitable access of all students to highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals, equity in teacher experience, equity in teacher training to meet the diverse needs

of all learners, equity in class sizes, and recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers which results in full equity for all students, regardless of the demographics of the students served.

The LEA addresses class size equity by analyzing the individual class sizes within each school. If inequities are identified, the principal, along with central office administrators, will determine if students need to be moved to another class within the school to make the class sizes equitable or if a teacher must be hired to correct the discrepancy within the school. All initiatives are designed to assist in meeting our goal of providing a quality education for all children.

One of the most important factors in increasing student achievement is a highly qualified teacher. Every student Succeeds Act requires all teachers of core academic areas to be highly qualified. The District actively recruits highly qualified teachers. Teachers are recruited by posting vacancies on-line, in local and regional newspapers, PDE Educators and by advertising on the District's website. If it would become necessary to hire a teacher who is not highly qualified, a Highly Qualified plan is developed and closely monitored to ensure the teacher meets the plan's goal for obtaining appropriate certification within the first year of employment. Such teachers would be notified of this obligation as a pre-condition of an offer of employment.

All students deserve access to instruction by teachers who have equivalent experience. New and inexperienced teachers are placed throughout the system to ensure that low income and minority students are not taught more frequently than other students by inexperienced teachers. The Title I comparability report is used, as well as data from teacher assignments, to help in analyzing and monitoring that minority and low income students are not taught at higher rates than other students by inexperienced and unqualified teachers.

District Plan

The District's goal is equitable access for all students to the best instruction possible, provided by highly qualified teachers who are able to meet the diverse learning needs of all students. East Allegheny School District is committed to the following:

1. Implement best practices in all classrooms to improve the achievement of all students
2. Differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students
3. Recruit and retain highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals in core academic areas
4. Provide all students access to instruction by teachers who have equivalent teaching experience
5. Maintain comparable class sizes in all schools regardless of student demographics

East Allegheny School District's Equity Plan provides data on the following:

- School Accountability status

- School poverty percentage
- School minority percentage
- Teachers' HQT status
- Teacher experience percentage
- A general summary of finding
- A data report on core academic subject teaching vacancies that are difficult to fill with highly qualified teachers, by school and grade level.

During the course of the past five years, the vast majority of our teacher vacancies have resulted from retirements. Our data indicates that none of our buildings are particularly difficult to staff or subject to high rates of staff turnover. New teachers at the elementary and high school levels are assigned to the buildings in which the vacancies occur. At the elementary level, people are reassigned among grade levels in accordance with a number of factors, including the optimal grade level for a teaching assignment for a particular candidate or currently employed teacher, the seniority of other teachers at a particular grade level in a building, and teacher personality as it relates to the culture of the school building. New teachers are assigned at the junior and high school levels to the buildings in which the vacancies for which they are applying occur.

Elementary students in grades K-6 are very carefully placed in classes and that process is not at all random. Classrooms are heterogeneously grouped with careful consideration to a student's achievement levels, gender, ethnicity, economic status, special needs, and other criteria. Building principals meet with teachers of sending and receiving grades and carefully consider each student's placement on an individual basis. Care is given to match each student with a compatible teacher both in terms of personality and of instructional strengths and with classmates whose personalities would provide the best environment in which a particular student might be successful.

There are no indications that inequity exists among our school buildings. The District assures that 100% of District teachers are highly qualified and those with three or less years of experience are evenly distributed among our school buildings. None of our buildings has a particularly high rate of teacher turnover; in fact the vast majority of our teacher vacancies in any given year result from the retirement of professional employees.

List of Schools	Subject	Grade(s)	# of Vacancies filled by Non-HQT Teachers
Logan Elementary School	N/A	Grades K – 6	0
East Allegheny Jr./Sr. H.S.	N/A	Grades 7 - 12	0

The Strategies the District implements to ensure that poor and minority students are not taught at higher rates than other students by inexperienced, unqualified and/or out of field teachers.

East Allegheny School District firmly believes that the single-most influential factor in the academic success of our students is the classroom teacher. In accordance with this belief, we consider the recruitment, interviewing, and selection processes to be of vital importance among the many administrative functions that we perform each year. We do not hire a non-highly qualified teacher to serve in any capacity when there are highly-qualified alternative candidates. In the event that we would need to fill a position for which there are no highly-qualified candidates, we will hire a candidate with an emergency certificate. Candidates are only hired with emergency certification once defined, a time-bound plan for them to become highly qualified is articulated with them. We have no teachers employed who are not highly qualified at the current time. Recruitment of top candidates is a district priority that is advanced by district administration and approved by our school board each year. As a matter of routine, all professional vacancies are posted in our district buildings, advertised in our local newspaper, and posted on our district website.

Future Strategies

1. Advertising
Explore on-line job fairs targeting hard-to-fill areas
2. Work with local colleges and universities to have opportunities for our administrators, principals and teachers to visit student teachers and discuss the benefits of working in the East Allegheny School District.
3. Maintain an ongoing database of prospective teachers and educational specialists. Continuing the use of PA-Educators.
4. Evaluate and interview student teachers. Encourage student teachers when finished with assignment to gain necessary certification to be a substitute within the East Allegheny School District.
5. Initiate the hiring process as soon as we are aware of a vacancy or opening. With the ability to access student teachers and have a database of potential candidates from recruiting fairs we are in a position to interview early and offer jobs in a very timely manner.
6. Continue working to align our system of recruitment, hiring, induction, supervision and professional development.

Description of how Title I, Title IIA, and other funds are used to support recruitment and retention of highly-qualified teachers in all schools.

East Allegheny commits the majority of our Title I funds each year to the salaries and benefits of our highly-qualified Title I math and reading specialists at Logan Elementary who qualify for Title I funding. Through these funds we are able to support and maintain four full-time staff members that may not be possible for us to support in any other way given the current economy and budget crisis.

Title IIA funds are used to support the salary of one full-time educator in an effort to reduce class sizes at the elementary level.

The District will determine whether or not the strategies are effective by the following:

Highly-qualified status is monitored by the Superintendent and District staff on an ongoing basis (ex: certification checks, Act 48 compliance, etc.) and especially at the time that a new teacher is hired.

The exercise of revisiting and revising this Equity Plan on an annual basis will serve as an opportunity for final review of the strategies enumerated above. In conjunction with these reviews we will identify and remediate any of our activities that prove to be ineffective. Furthermore, ongoing classroom visitations and observations, both formal and informal, by our building-level administrators and federal program co-coordinator will provide evidence of the effectiveness of our teachers. Led by the superintendent, monthly meetings of the administrative team will serve as a forum for discussion of our findings, and for our formulation of any remedial action plan that we may subsequently need to develop to address observed deficiencies.

Success will also be determined by analyzing the data yearly to determine the following data points:

- Number of teachers resigning each year and moving to another school district
- Number of interviews conducted in areas of difficulty in finding highly qualified teachers
- Number of teachers interested in student teaching or completing an internship in the East Allegheny School District.
- Continuously analyze district data to determine percentage of new teachers in schools with a lower socioeconomic status and the student achievement in those schools

EAST ALLEGHENY SCHOOL DISTRICT ASSURANCES RELATED TO HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS:

- All teachers will be assigned to teach a grade level(s) and subject(s) for which the teacher holds proper Pennsylvania Certification and for which the teacher has been deemed highly qualified.
- East Allegheny has established procedures for developing individual teacher plans that provide for clear and direct communication between the District and individual teachers.
- East Allegheny will notify, annually at the beginning of the school year, parents of each student attending each school that receives Title I Part A funds that the parents may request and the LEA will provide, in a timely manner, information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's teachers in accordance with Section 1111(h)(6)(A).
- East Allegheny will ensure that each school that receives Title I, Part A funds provides to each parent timely notice that the parent's child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified. [See Section 1111(h)(6)(B)(ii)] (NOTE: Letters must be sent when the student is assigned to a non highly qualified teacher. If a teacher change during the school year results in a student's class being taught by a non-highly qualified teacher, parents of each student in the class must be notified no later than the date by which students have been taught for four consecutive weeks.)
- East Allegheny has incorporated the states "Procedures for Hiring a Teacher that is Not Yet Highly Qualified" and will fully implement those procedures when it is necessary to hire a teacher who is not highly qualified for the grade level(s) and/or subject(s) the teacher is assigned to teach.
- East Allegheny has policies and procedures to prohibit use of Title I Part A funds to pay the salary of any new paraprofessionals, except under certain limited cases as described in Section 2141(c)(2).

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Definition of "highly qualified" teacher. |
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East Allegheny has policies and procedures to prohibit use of Title II Part A funds to pay the salary of any teacher who does not meet the NCLB and state