

Wilson Area School District EQUITY PLAN

LEAs that choose to accept federal dollars are required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act to develop an equity plan for how they place teachers in schools and classrooms to ensure that their lowest-achieving 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 plan should include:

- 1. An LEA Equity Worksheet providing school data on the following:***
 - School accountability status
 - School poverty percentage
 - School minority percentage
 - Teachers' HQT status
 - Teacher experience percentage
- 2. A general summary of findings that show where possible inequities exist.***
- 3. A data report on core academic subject teaching vacancies that are difficult to fill with highly qualified teachers, by LEA, school, and grade level.***
- 4. As part of its application for Title I funds, LEAs are required to provide an assurance that through the implementation of various strategies, poor and minority students are not taught at higher rates than other students by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of field teachers (§1112(c)(1)(L)). Provide a brief description of strategies and use of funds the LEA is implementing to fulfill this assurance?***
- 5. How will the LEA determine whether or not the strategies are effective?***

Equity Plan

Wilson Area School District Teacher Equity Plan 2016-17 School Year

Wilson Area School District
LEA Name

September 7, 2010
Date

August 15, 2016
Revised Date

Mr. David Wright, Director of C & I
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1. LEA EQUITY WORKSHEET: Enter LEA data from the 2016-2017 school year for the following elements:

- School name
- School accountability status
- School poverty percentage
- School minority percentage
- Number and percentage of highly qualified teachers
- Number and percentage of non-highly qualified teachers
- Number and percentage of “not new teachers” (one who has taught in a public school for three or more full academic years).
- Number and percentage of “new teachers” (one who has taught in a public school for less than three full academic years).

EQUITY PLAN WORKSHEET

LEA: Wilson Area School District

LIST of SCHOOLS	School Improvement Status	% of Poverty	% of Minority	# and % of HQ Teachers (classroom)		# and % of non-HQ Teachers		Teacher Experience		
								# of "not new teachers"	# of "new teachers"	% of new teachers
Wilson Area High School		45%	36 %	48	100%	0	0%	39	9	19%
Wilson Area Intermediate School		52%	39 %	47	100%	0	0%	41	6	13%
Avona Elementary School		59%	44 %	17	100%	0	0%	15	2	12%
Williams Township Elementary School		23%	23 %	19	100%	0	0%	17	2	11%
Wilson Borough Elementary School		65%	51 %	26	100%	0	0%	23	3	12%
Wilson Area School District		49%	38 %	157	100%	0	0%	135	22	14%

2. Provide a general summary of findings outlining where possible inequities exist. Address these areas as they specifically relate to LEA data:

- School name
- School accountability status
- School poverty percentage
- School minority percentage
- Number and percentage of highly qualified teachers
- Number and percentage of non-highly qualified teachers
- Number and percentage of "not new teachers" (one who has taught in a public school for three or more full academic years).
- Number and percentage of "new teachers" (one who has taught in a public school for less than three full academic years).

The percentages of new teachers distributed among the district's school buildings range from 11% to 19%, with an average of 14%. Poverty percentages among the schools range from a high of 51% to a low of 23%. We are proud to report that all of the teachers assigned to all of our schools are considered highly qualified. Avona and Wilson Borough Elementary Schools are the only schools designated for Title I services.

During the course of the past three years, the majority of our teacher vacancies have resulted from retirements. Our data indicate that none of our buildings are particularly difficult to staff or subject to high rates of staff turnover. New teachers at the elementary, middle, 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, maintaining School District class sized guidelines, and the needs of our students. The district consistently monitors the experience levels of our teachers at each of our three elementary schools to ensure that our Title I students are not taught with a disproportionate number of "new" teachers. The District has the authority to reassign teachers to ensure that all students are provided with the highest quality education provided by highly qualified teachers. New teachers are assigned at the middle and high school levels to the buildings in which the vacancies for which they are applying occur.

It is noteworthy to mention that elementary students in grades K-5 are very carefully placed in classes and that the 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.

In summary there are no indications that inequity exists among our school buildings. One hundred percent 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 schools have 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 long-term employees of the Wilson Area School District.

3. Collect and report data on core academic subject teaching vacancies that are difficult to fill with highly-qualified teachers, by LEA, school, and grade level.

Core Academic Subjects and Grades with Teacher Vacancies that Cannot be Filled by Highly-Qualified Teachers			
List of Schools	Subject	Grades(s)	# of Vacancies Filled by Non-HQT Per Subject/Grade
Wilson Area High School	N/A	9-12	0
Wilson Area Intermediate School	N/A	5-8	0
Avona Elementary School	N/A	K-4	0
Williams Township Elementary School	N/A	K-4	0
Wilson Borough Elementary School	N/A	K-4	0

4. Provide a brief description of strategies the LEA is implementing 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.
- Describe how the LEA plans to implement a recruitment and retention program for highly-qualified teachers in all schools (i.e. identifying strategies to be used).

It is a firmly held belief of the Wilson Area School District that the single-most influential factor in the academic success of our students is the classroom teacher. In accord with this belief we consider the recruitment, interviewing, and selection processes to be of paramount 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 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 a defined, time-bound plan for the individual to become highly qualified is articulated. At the current time, we have no teachers employed who are not highly qualified.

Recruitment of top candidates is a district priority that is advanced by district administration. As a matter of routine, all professional vacancies are posted in our district buildings and on our district website. District administration uses career fairs and PAREAP to aid in identifying highly qualified teachers.

Our teacher interview process is fluid throughout the year as needs arise and is comprised of two rounds beyond the initial paper screening of candidates. During the first round, candidates are screened in a 45-minute interview with a committee at least two individuals with one being the building principal. The second round consists of an interview with at least two central office administrators that usually involve the superintendent as well as the teaching of a 10-minute mini-lesson. Significant time on the part of building- and district-level administrators is invested in the interview process each year. We feel that the results of our efforts are exemplary and well worth the commitment that we make to the hiring process.

Once new teachers join the district, significant efforts are made to further their continued professional development and retention. The district operates a very successful Teacher Induction program to support our newly-hired, teachers. Each inductee works closely with an experienced mentor teacher who provides continual guidance and support in strategies to ensure that poor and minority students are academically successful. Additionally, each inductee is afforded an opportunity to visit the classrooms of his/her colleagues at least two days a year to observe the use of best practices and to dialogue with teachers about implementation. All new teachers to our district participate in a two year professional induction program that targets areas such as classroom management, teacher observation procedures, use of technology, communicating with parents, research-based instructional strategies, data driven decision making, and other topics that are appropriate for the specific teacher and/or teaching assignment. All teachers are provided with additional professional development during the six professional in-service days with topic selection based on District professional development needs assessments and the Wilson Area School District Staff development committee. Teachers are also reimbursed for graduate course work in accordance with the terms of the agreement signed by the Wilson Area School District and the Wilson Area Education Association. Corresponding increments in salary are awarded for successful completion of qualified course work. The District also allocates funding to teachers for attendance at various professional conferences and workshops. It is expected that teachers who participate in these opportunities will report back to their school on the benefits derived from their attendance, and that they will share what they have learned with their colleagues. The district offers professional education opportunities for Act 48 credits to teachers who participate in various after school and summer workshops. These workshops are targeted to increase the pedagogical knowledge of our professional practitioners as well as to develop their content knowledge. Moreover, federal funding (Title IIA) partly supports the financial costs of ongoing professional development for our faculty and staff to maintain a highly-qualified designation and to continue to build upon content knowledge and use of best practices. An expectation from professional development is for an improvement in student achievement as measured by existing data.

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

We commit the majority of our Title I funds each year to the salaries and benefits of our highly-qualified reading specialists at our two Title I elementary schools. Through these funds we are able to support and maintain four full-time staff positions that would likely not be possible for us to support in any other way.

Title IIA funds are used for class-size reduction at one of our Title I schools, to help support professional development activities, and in teacher recruitment strategies such as attending teacher career fairs.

5. How will the LEA determine whether or not the strategies are effective?

Highly-qualified status is monitored meticulously by the superintendent and his staff on an ongoing basis (e.g. 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 formal 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, by the director of curriculum and instruction, and the director of student services will provide evidence of the effectiveness of our teachers. Led by the superintendent monthly administrative cabinet 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. Student achievement data will be one source of data used by the administrators in this process.

(*Please be sure to document the plan process, e.g., agendas, sign-in sheets, etc.)