## GAP AREA: Students with disabilities (SWDs) are more likely to be assigned to inexperienced teachers

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By meeting Massachusetts’s moral imperative to provide **all students with equitable access** to excellent educators, schools can also close gaps in educational outcomes.

## I. [Use additional data](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/equitableaccess/resources/templates-otherdata.docx)

* Analyze Student Learning Experience (SLE) [detailed reports](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edwin/gateway/slereport-supp.html) comparing rates of assignment of SWDs to inexperienced teachers, by subject taught.
* Review percent of teachers hired by mid-summer, and by start of school year, disaggregated by school, particularly special education teachers.
* Compare retention rates of teachers, disaggregated by school and by teachers’ years of experience.
* Compare retention rates and years of experience in inclusion, substantially separate, and other classrooms.
* Review teacher exit interviews, if available.

## II. [Ask self-assessment/ stakeholder engagement questions to explore root causes](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/equitableaccess/resources/templates-rootcauseanalysis.docx)

* Are inexperienced teachers concentrated in specific schools or courses?
* Are SWDs less likely to be enrolled in some courses, such as advanced courses or certain electives? Do such courses have less experienced teachers?
* How effective are the district’s less-experienced teachers, especially those teaching SWDs?
* Do teacher recruiting/hiring practices and timelines vary across schools, and could this be a root cause of differences in student-teacher assignment? Are family/community members involved in hiring committees?
* Do retention rates vary by school or by other teacher characteristics? If retention rates for effective educators are lower than desired, why do teachers leave?
* Do experienced special education teachers switch to other program areas? If so, why?

## Resources

* [Planning guide](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/guidebook/JobEmbedGuide.docx) for job-embedded PD on inclusive practice, and the [Master Schedule Review](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/guidebook/8b-masterschedreview.docx) from the [Guidebook for Inclusive Practice](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/guidebook/)
* [Guidance on enhancing partnerships with Educator Preparation Programs](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/equitableaccess/partnerships.pdf)
* [District advisory](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/advisories/DistrictPipeline.docx) on educator pipeline development
* [Slides](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/equitableaccess/leveraging-partnerships.pdf) & [recording](https://youtu.be/_ss_jbeHPXE) of webinar on strategically leveraging partnerships with educator preparation programs
* [Profiles](http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/search/search.aspx?leftNavId=11238) and Edwin Analytics (EV901) reports on the preparation programs that supply your novice teachers
* Results of principals [surveys](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/surveys/) on the quality of individual preparation programs
* [Keeping Quality Teachers](https://www.wested.org/online_pubs/li-05-01.pdf) summarizes best practices for retention of effective teachers and provides self-assessment tools, with a focus on special educators
* [Mentoring & induction](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/mentor/resources.html) resources from [districts](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/mentor/resources.docx) and DESE, including guides to retaining teachers in [hard-to-staff positions](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/mentor/hard-to-staff-roles.docx), such as special educators
* [Strategy overviews and tools](http://wgee.org/best-practices/promising-practices-by-district/) from districts working to improve retention and induction

## III. [Develop strategy starting points](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/equitableaccess/resources/templates-strategies.docx) & [monitor progress](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/equitableaccess/resources/templates-progress.docx)

* Target high performing educator preparation

programs for recruitment of teachers and student teachers, to improve the effectiveness of novice teachers of SWDs.

* Strategically screen and assign student teachers (prospective hires) to develop skills in working with SWDs in your district; place prospective content teachers in inclusion classrooms.
* Strengthen the design, evaluation, and continuous improvement of induction and mentoring program, to meet new teachers’ needs and promote retention; include a focus on training to meet the needs of SWDs.
* Provide opportunities for [teacher leadership](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/leadership/) and collaborative decision-making to attract and/or retain experienced, effective teachers of SWDs.  
  Implement teacher surveys to learn how to improve teacher job satisfaction and retention

**Guides for other gap areas**

* Develop a clear process for monitoring progress, with short-term and long-term metrics.