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HOUSE BILL 2147

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State of Washington                      61st Legislature                      2009 Regular Session

By Representatives Lias, Pettigrew, Quall, McCoy, Chase, and Kenney

Read first time 02/11/09. Referred to Committee on Education.

1            AN ACT Relating to closing the achievement gap in order to provide  
2 all students an excellent and equitable education; adding a new section  
3 to chapter 28A.300 RCW; and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.**    The 2008 legislature commissioned five  
6 studies of the differences in academic achievement and educational  
7 outcomes among various subgroups of students. These persistent and  
8 troubling differences are commonly referred to as the achievement gap.  
9 The commissioned studies drew from research, best practices, and the  
10 personal, professional, and cultural experiences of the many  
11 individuals who participated in them. The study recommendations are  
12 numerous and varied, encompassing short-term and long-term strategies  
13 for systemic change. In order to continue the work of the studies,  
14 maintain a sense of urgency, and monitor progress toward the goal of  
15 equitable educational opportunities and outcomes for all children, the  
16 legislature intends to establish an ongoing achievement gap advisory  
17 committee within the office of the superintendent of public  
18 instruction.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    A new section is added to chapter 28A.300

2    RCW to read as follows:

3        (1)(a) The achievement gap advisory committee is established within  
4    the office of the superintendent of public instruction, composed of at  
5    least eighteen members each appointed for two-year terms as follows:

6        (i) Three members appointed by the commission on African-American  
7    affairs;

8        (ii) Three members representing African immigrants appointed by the  
9    commission on African-American affairs;

10       (iii) Three members appointed by the commission on Hispanic  
11    affairs;

12       (iv) Three members appointed by the governor's office of Indian  
13    affairs;

14       (v) Three members representing Asian Americans appointed by the  
15    commission on Asian Pacific American affairs; and

16       (vi) Three members representing Pacific Islander Americans  
17    appointed by the commission on Asian Pacific American affairs.

18       (b) The superintendent of public instruction may appoint up to five  
19    additional members, also for two-year terms. The members of the  
20    committee shall select the chair of the committee for a one-year term.  
21    There is no limitation on the number of terms a member may serve if  
22    reappointed.

23       (c) The committee may create temporary subcommittees to examine  
24    particular topics in greater depth.

25       (d) Members of the committee shall serve without compensation but  
26    must be reimbursed as provided in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

27       (e) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall  
28    provide staff support for the committee.

29       (2) The purpose of the achievement gap advisory committee is to  
30    advise the superintendent of public instruction, the professional  
31    educator standards board, and the state board of education on effective  
32    measures to close the achievement gap, to foster public accountability  
33    for achieving excellence and equity in public education, and to promote  
34    a greater sense of urgency and priority for doing so. The committee  
35    has the following responsibilities:

36       (a) Establish key indicators and benchmarks to measure progress in  
37    closing the achievement gap, and advise the office of the

1 superintendent of public instruction on the data collection and  
2 analysis necessary to track the indicators;

3 (b) Identify current programs and resources that have the potential  
4 to narrow the gap and make recommendations for their effective  
5 utilization;

6 (c) Offer advice on how to improve communication and coordination  
7 among programs aimed at narrowing the achievement gap;

8 (d) Advise the office of the superintendent of public instruction  
9 and the professional educator standards board on effective professional  
10 development programs and practices that increase cultural competence,  
11 family and community engagement, and instruction for struggling  
12 students;

13 (e) Advise the office of the superintendent of public instruction,  
14 the professional educator standards board, and the state board of  
15 education on effective methods of recruiting and retaining diverse  
16 teachers and school administrators; and

17 (f) Advise the office of the superintendent of public instruction  
18 and the state board of education on making closing the achievement gap  
19 a central goal of all school improvement programs and plans.

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