
SENATE BILL 5973

State of Washington

61st Legislature

2009 Regular Session

By Senators Kauffman, McAuliffe, Oemig, Shin, Hobbs, Kohl-Welles, and Kline

Read first time 02/11/09. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 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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