

RCW 28A.300.136 Educational opportunity gap oversight and accountability committee—Policy and strategy recommendations. (1) An educational opportunity gap oversight and accountability committee is created to synthesize the findings and recommendations from the 2008 achievement gap studies into an implementation plan, and to recommend policies and strategies to the superintendent of public instruction, the professional educator standards board, and the state board of education to close the achievement gap.

(2) The committee shall recommend specific policies and strategies in at least the following areas:

- (a) Supporting and facilitating parent and community involvement and outreach;
- (b) Enhancing the cultural competency of current and future educators and the cultural relevance of curriculum and instruction;
- (c) Expanding pathways and strategies to prepare and recruit diverse teachers and administrators;
- (d) Recommending current programs and resources that should be redirected to narrow the gap;
- (e) Identifying data elements and systems needed to monitor progress in closing the gap;
- (f) Making closing the achievement gap part of the school and school district improvement process; and
- (g) Exploring innovative school models that have shown success in closing the achievement gap.

(3) Taking a multidisciplinary approach, the committee may seek input and advice from other state and local agencies and organizations with expertise in health, social services, gang and violence prevention, substance abuse prevention, and other issues that disproportionately affect student achievement and student success.

(4) The educational opportunity gap oversight and accountability committee shall be composed of the following members:

- (a) The chairs and ranking minority members of the house and senate education committees, or their designees;
- (b) One additional member of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of the house and one additional member of the senate appointed by the president of the senate;
- (c) A representative of the office of the education ombuds;
- (d) A representative of the center for the improvement of student learning in the office of the superintendent of public instruction;
- (e) A representative of federally recognized Indian tribes whose traditional lands and territories lie within the borders of Washington state, designated by the federally recognized tribes; and
- (f) Four members appointed by the governor in consultation with the state ethnic commissions, who represent the following populations: African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islander Americans.

(5) The governor and the tribes are encouraged to designate members who have experience working in and with schools.

(6) The committee may convene ad hoc working groups to obtain additional input and participation from community members. Members of ad hoc working groups shall serve without compensation and shall not be reimbursed for travel or other expenses.

(7) The chair or cochairs of the committee shall be selected by the members of the committee. Staff support for the committee shall be provided by the center for the improvement of student learning. Members of the committee shall serve without compensation but must be

reimbursed as provided in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060. Legislative members of the committee shall be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120.

(8) The superintendent of public instruction, the state board of education, and the professional educator standards board shall work collaboratively with the educational opportunity gap oversight and accountability committee to close the achievement gap. [2016 c 162 s 3; 2013 c 23 s 49; 2011 1st sp.s. c 21 s 33; 2010 c 235 s 901; 2009 c 468 s 2.]

Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 21: See note following RCW 72.23.025.

Finding—2010 c 235: See note following RCW 28A.405.245.

Findings—Intent—2009 c 468: "(1) The legislature finds compelling evidence from five commissioned studies that additional progress must be made to address the achievement gap. Many students are in demographic groups that are overrepresented in measures such as school disciplinary sanctions; failure to meet state academic standards; failure to graduate; enrollment in special education and underperforming schools; enrollment in advanced placement courses, honors programs, and college preparatory classes; and enrollment in and completion of college. The studies contain specific recommendations that are data-driven and drawn from education research, as well as the personal, professional, and cultural experience of those who contributed to the studies. The legislature finds there is no better opportunity to make a strong commitment to closing the achievement gap and to affirm the state's constitutional obligation to provide opportunities to learn for all students without distinction or preference on account of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or gender.

(2) The legislature further finds that access to comprehensive and consistent data that is disaggregated in the smallest units allowable by law is important in closing the achievement gap. Policymakers and educators need as much information as possible not only about students' academic progress, but also about other factors across multiple disciplines that affect student performance.

(3) A consistent and powerful theme throughout the achievement gap studies was the need for cultural competency in instruction, curriculum, assessment, and professional development. Cultural competency forms a foundation for efforts to address the achievement gap, and more work is needed to embed it into the public school system.

(4) Therefore, following the priority recommendations from the achievement gap studies, the legislature intends to:

(a) Provide resources to support parent and community involvement and outreach efforts by public schools, including such items as additional notices and communication to parents, translations, translators, parent and community meetings, and school events within the community. The legislature encourages school districts to consult with the office of the education ombudsman [ombuds] in developing plans for parent and community involvement and outreach;

(b) Require that teachers demonstrate cultural competency in the classroom and with students at each level of state teacher

certification, and provide additional opportunities for professional development in cultural competency for current teachers;

(c) Create local alternative routes to teacher certification for paraeducators and individuals in the communities surrounding schools and school districts that are struggling to address the achievement gap;

(d) Reexamine the study recommendations regarding data and accountability and identify ways for the education data system to address these needs; and

(e) Sustain efforts to close the achievement gap over the long term by creating a high profile achievement gap oversight and accountability committee that will provide ongoing advice to education agencies and report annually to the legislature and the governor."

[2009 c 468 s 1.]