
Education Committee

HB 1659

Brief Description: Creating the joint select committee on equitable opportunity for all.

Sponsors: Representatives Santos, McCoy, Pettigrew, Kenney, Hunter, Chase, Dickerson, Simpson and Upthegrove.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates a joint select committee on equitable opportunity for all.
- Directs the joint select committee to study efforts underway for the implementation of action items recommended by the Multi-Ethnic Think Tank and to report back to the Legislature.

Hearing Date: 2/9/05

Staff: Sydney Forrester (786-7120).

Background:

The federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires schools and school districts receiving federal Title I funding to report on the percentage of students who reach state standards in reading and mathematics. Districts must monitor their progress toward federal improvement goals through results on the fourth, seventh, and tenth grade Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) in reading and mathematics. In addition to measuring the progress of students as a whole, schools and districts must measure and report on the progress of students in various demographic subgroups. The subgroups include students who fall into categories labeled Black, White, Asian, American Indian, Hispanic, low-income, special education, and limited English proficient. The federal law includes a graduated series of school improvement and corrective action steps districts and the state may take in Title I schools and districts if students in any subgroup do not make adequate progress toward the goals over a number of years.

Minority students comprise a growing percentage of the student population in Washington, in part due to the rising number of immigrants to the state. In 2000 the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, through its community outreach office, coordinated the Multi-Ethnic Think Tank. The Think Tank represented an alliance of the African American, American Indian/Alaska Natives, Asian Pacific Islander American, Hispanic, and low socio-economic communities. The work of the Think Tank produced a set of recommended action steps aimed at raising the academic achievement of students in these populations.

Summary of Bill:

The joint select committee on equitable opportunity for all is created for the purpose of evaluating what efforts exist to implement the action steps recommended by the Multi-Ethnic Think Tank in its 2002 position paper. The committee will consist of two members from each caucus in the House and Senate representing the committees on education and juvenile justice issues. In its review of implementation efforts the committee will consult with stakeholders representing communities of color, special education, and others.

By September 1, 2006, the committee will report its findings to the Legislature and must recommend a reasonable timeframe for full implementation. The implementation recommendations must be prioritized based on existing efforts and the resources necessary for full implementation.

The committee will be staffed by senate committee services and the office of program research and members will be eligible for per diem and travel expenses.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.