
Education Committee

ESSB 5044

Brief Description: Concerning professional learning, equity, cultural competency, and dismantling institutional racism in the public school system.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Das, Wellman, Darneille, Hasegawa, Hunt, Lovelett, Nguyen, Nobles, Robinson, Saldaña, Stanford and Wilson, C.).

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Revises the definition of, and model standards for, cultural competency to include antiracism.
- Adds equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism to existing cultural competency training and professional development programs for school board directors, district staff, and school staff.
- Directs school districts to prioritize one of three state-funded professional learning days to focus first on these topics.

Hearing Date: 3/11/21

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

Cultural Competency Definition and Model Standards. "Cultural competency" is defined as knowledge of student cultural histories and contexts, as well as family norms and values in different cultures; knowledge and skills in accessing community resources and community and parent outreach; and skills in adapting instruction to students' experiences and identifying cultural contexts for individual students. The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) has developed model standards for cultural competency and integrated these standards into

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principal, teacher, and paraeducator preparation and continuing education standards.

Cultural Competency Training and Professional Development. Legislation enacted in 2016 required the development of educator training programs aligned to the model standards for cultural competency and that include the foundational elements of cultural competence, focusing on multicultural education and principles of English language acquisition, including information regarding best practices to implement the tribal history and culture curriculum.

School Board Directors and Superintendents. The Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA), in consultation with other entities, developed a plan for the creation and delivery of cultural competency training for school board directors and superintendents.

School and District Staff. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), in collaboration with the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (EOGOAC), the PESB, colleges of education, and representatives from diverse communities and community-based organizations, developed a content outline for professional development and training in cultural competence for classified staff, certificated instructional staff, school administrators, and district administrators. Educational service districts (ESDs) and school districts are encouraged to use the professional development and training and provide opportunities for all school and district staff to gain knowledge and skills in cultural competence, including in partnership with their local communities.

In addition, the legislation encouraged specified school districts identified by federal or state law as needing improvement to provide cultural competence training to all staff.

Professional Learning. Professional learning is defined as a comprehensive, sustained, job-embedded, and collaborative approach to improving teachers' and principals' effectiveness in raising student achievement. The state provides school districts with funding to provide three professional learning days for teachers and other certificated instructional staff. Every other year, beginning with the 2020-21 school year, school districts must use one of the professional learning days to train school district staff on one or more of the following topics: Social-emotional learning, trauma-informed practices, recognizing and responding to emotional or behavioral distress in students, consideration of adverse childhood experiences, mental health literacy, antibullying strategies, and culturally sustaining practices. In addition, the 2020 Supplemental Operating Budget required one professional learning day to be used to train school district staff on racial literacy, cultural responsiveness, and stereotype threat for purposes of closing persistent opportunity gaps.

Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill:

Cultural Competency Definition and Model Standards. The definition of "cultural competency" is revised to mean antiracism standards, an equity framework, and culturally responsive instruction that acknowledges student cultural histories and contexts, as well as family norms and values in different cultures; knowledge and skills in accessing community resources and

community and parent outreach; and skills in adapting instruction to students' experiences, including students' with disabilities experiences, and identifying cultural contexts for individual students. The PESB, in consultation and collaboration with the EOGOAC, must identify and update model standards for antiracism, in addition to cultural competency.

Cultural Competency Training and Professional Development.

School Board Directors. The WSSDA, in consultation with the EOGOAC, the OSPI, and the PESB, must develop a recommended list of available equity, diversity, inclusion, antiracism, and cultural competency training for school board directors and post the recommended list online for parents and community members. The training programs identified must include the foundational elements of cultural competence, focusing on multicultural education and principles of English language acquisition, including information regarding best practices to implement the tribal history and culture curriculum. The training programs identified must instruct school board directors on dismantling institutional racism by examining school district policies with an equity lens, promoting racial literacy, understanding stereotype threat, and identifying disproportionate student outcomes by using district data. The content of the cultural competency training programs identified must be aligned with the model standards for cultural competency and training programs identified for equity, diversity, antiracism, and inclusion must consider various races, ethnicities, religions, disabilities, sexualities, and genders.

Beginning in the 2022-23 school year, the WSSDA must provide ongoing training through the use of its association dues to school board members using a training program from the recommended list.

School and District Staff. Subject to state funding, the OSPI, in collaboration other entities, must revise the content outline for professional development and training in cultural competence to include professional development and training in dismantling institutional racism. In addition to previously required content, the training program must include a review of district data to identify disproportionate student outcomes and understanding of implicit bias and stereotype threat. The OSPI must post the content outline online for parents and community members.

School districts and the ESDs must use this cultural competence and antiracism professional development and training to provide job-embedded, ongoing opportunities for all school and district staff to gain knowledge and skills in cultural competence, in cluding in partnership with their local communities.

Beginning with the 2022-23 school year and subject to state funding, school districts and the ESDs must use equity, diversity, inclusion, antiracism, and cultural competency training materials from the recommended list to provide job-embedded, ongoing training opportunities for classified staff, certificated instructional staff, certificated administrative staff, and the superintendent.

Professional Learning. Each year, beginning with the 2021-22 school year, one of the three state-funded professional learning day must be prioritized by school districts to focus first on

providing equity, diversity, inclusion, antiracism, and cultural competency training as established in the provisions described above.

Repealer. Provisions encouraging specified school districts identified by federal or state law as needing improvement to provide cultural competence training to all staff are repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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