

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## 2SSB 5973

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**C 468 L 09**  
Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Closing the achievement gap in K-12 schools.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Kauffman, McAuliffe, Oemig, Shin, Hobbs, Kohl-Welles and Kline).

**Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education**  
**Senate Committee on Ways & Means**  
**House Committee on Education**  
**House Committee on Education Appropriations**

**Background:** The 2008 Legislature commissioned five studies, by way of 2SHB 2722 (2008), and four provisos in the 2008 supplemental operating budget, that analyzed the differences in academic achievement and educational outcomes among various subgroups of students. These differences are referred to as the achievement gap. The commissioned studies drew from research, best practices, and personal, professional, and cultural experiences and came up with various recommendations to close the achievement gap.

**Summary:** An Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (Committee) is created to synthesize findings and recommendations from the 2008 studies into an implementation plan, and recommend policies and strategies in specified areas to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB), and the State Board of Education to close the achievement gap. The Committee is comprised of six legislators, a representative of federally recognized tribes in Washington to be designated by the tribes, and four members appointed by the Governor in consultation with the state ethnic commissions and representing African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islander Americans. The Governor and the tribes are encouraged to designate members with school experience. Staff support for the Committee is provided by the Center for the Improvement of Student Learning. The Committee reports annually to the Legislature on the strategies to address the achievement gap and improvement of education performance measures for groups of students.

All student data-related reports required of OSPI must be disaggregated by at least the following subgroups: White, Black, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian,

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Pacific Islander/Hawaiian Native, Low Income, Transitional Bilingual, Migrants, Special Education, and students covered by Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act.

PESB, in consultation with the Committee, must identify model standards for cultural competency and make recommendations to the legislative education committees regarding the strengths and weaknesses of those standards. "Cultural competency" includes 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.

OSPI must identify school districts that have the largest achievement gaps and should receive priority for assistance in advancing cultural competency skills. PESB provides assistance to the identified districts to develop partnerships with teacher preparation programs to offer alternative route certification programs and to recruit paraeducators and other individuals in the local community to become certified as teachers. A partnership grant program proposed by an identified district receives priority for alternative route partnership grants. To the maximum extent possible, PESB must coordinate the Recruiting Washington Teachers program with the alternative route programs.

OSPI must take actions to secure federal funds to support data collection and other model programs.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	30	18	
House	98	0	(House amended)
Senate	33	15	(Senate concurred)

**Effective:** July 26, 2009