

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5044

As of January 11, 2021

Title: An act relating to equity, cultural competency, and dismantling institutional racism in the public school system.

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

Sponsors: Senators Das and Wellman.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/13/21.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Adds equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism to existing cultural competency training for school board directors, district staff, and school staff.
- Requires the Legislature to allocate funding for three professional learning days for certificated instructional staff beginning with the 2020-21 school year.
- Directs school districts to prioritize one professional learning day to focus first on providing equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-racism, and cultural competency training.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Ailey Kato (786-7434)

Background: Standards for Cultural Competence. The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) adopted a set of standards for effective teaching. In developing the standards, PESB incorporated standards for cultural competency along the career

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continuum.

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.

Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee. In 2009, the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (EOGOAC) was created to synthesize the findings and recommendations from achievement gap studies and recommend policies and strategies to close the achievement gap.

Professional Development and Training. In 2016, the Legislature directed the creation of cultural competency professional development and training for different groups.

School Board Directors. The Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA), in consultation with other entities, developed a plan for creating and delivering 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 other entities, developed a content outline for professional development and training in cultural competency for school staff. Educational service districts (ESDs) and school districts are encouraged to use this professional development and training.

School Districts Identified for Improvement. Certain districts identified for improvement are strongly encouraged to provide the cultural competency professional development and training.

Professional Learning Days. Professional learning means a comprehensive, sustained, job-embedded, and collaborative approach to improve teachers' and principals' effectiveness in raising student achievement.

Beginning in the 2018-19 school year, the Legislature began phasing in funding for professional learning days for certificated instructional staff. At a minimum, the state was required to allocate funding for:

- one day in the 2018-19 school year;
- two days in the 2019-20 school year; and
- three days in the 2020-21 school year.

Summary of Bill: Professional Development and Training. Professional development regarding equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism is added to existing cultural competency training.

School Board Directors. WSSDA, in consultation with EOGOAC and other entities, must

develop a recommended list of available training programs. The training programs must consider various races, ethnicities, religions, disabilities, sexualities, and genders. The training programs 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.

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

School and District Staff. Subject to appropriations, OSPI, in collaboration with other entities, must add dismantling institutional racism to the content outline for professional development and training for school staff. The training program must include review of district data to identify disproportionate student outcomes and understanding of implicit bias and stereotype threat.

Beginning with the 2022-23 school year and subject to appropriations, ESDs and school districts must use 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.

School Districts Identified for Improvement. The statute that strongly encourages certain districts identified for improvement to provide cultural competency professional development and training is repealed.

Professional Learning Days. Beginning with the 2021-22 school year, the Legislature must allocate funding for three professional learning days for certificated instructional staff.

Each year, beginning with the 2021-22 school year, one professional learning day must be prioritized by school districts to focus first on providing equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-racism, and cultural competency training.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 6, 2021.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.