

1 State of Arkansas
2 84th General Assembly
3 Second Extraordinary Session, 2003
4

Call Item 4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1054

5 By: Representative C. Johnson
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7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO MAKE THE COMMITTEE ON CLOSING THE
10 ACHIEVEMENT GAP IN ARKANSAS A COMMISSION; AND FOR
11 OTHER PURPOSES.
12

Subtitle

13 AN ACT TO MAKE THE COMMITTEE ON CLOSING
14 THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP IN ARKANSAS A
15 COMMISSION.
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19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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21 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-15-1601 is amended to read as follows:

22 6-15-1601. Establishment of ~~committee~~ commission-Members.

23 (a) There is established a ~~committee~~ commission to be known as the
24 ~~Committee~~ Commission on Closing the Achievement Gap in Arkansas.

25 (b) The ~~committee~~ commission shall consist of twelve (12) members as
26 follows:

27 (1) Four (4) persons appointed by the Governor:

28 (A) One (1) of the Governor's appointees shall be a member
29 of the faculty of an historically black college in the state who has
30 demonstrated an interest in and commitment to working with disadvantaged
31 youth;

32 (B) One (1) of the Governor's appointees shall be an
33 Hispanic who has demonstrated a commitment to education;

34 (C) One (1) of the Governor's appointees shall be a
35 representative of business and industry in Arkansas; and

36 (D) One (1) of the Governor's appointees may be a



1 representative of health and human services or a public school teacher;

2 (2)(A) Four (4) persons appointed by the President Pro Tempore
3 of the Senate;

4 (B) One (1) of the President Pro Tempore's appointees
5 shall be a member of the faculty of an historically black college in the
6 state; and

7 (C) One (1) of the President Pro Tempore's appointees
8 shall be a minority who has demonstrated a commitment to education; and

9 (3)(A) Four (4) persons appointed by the Speaker of the House of
10 Representatives;

11 (B) One (1) of the Speaker of the House of
12 Representatives' appointees shall be a person who has experience with working
13 with children from low income families; and

14 (C) One (1) of the Speaker of the House of
15 Representatives' appointees shall be a minority who has demonstrated a
16 commitment to education.

17 (c)(1) Upon taking office, the members shall draw lots to determine
18 the length of their terms.

19 (2) The initial terms of office shall be staggered terms such
20 that:

21 (A) One (1) member appointed by each officer shall have an
22 initial term that expires in 2005;

23 (B) One (1) member appointed by each officer shall have an
24 initial term that expires in 2006; and

25 (C) One (1) member appointed by each officer shall have an
26 initial term that expires in 2007.

27 (3) Subsequent appointments shall be for a term of four (4)
28 years.

29 (d)(1) If a vacancy occurs in an appointed position for any reason,
30 the vacancy shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

31 (2) The new appointee shall serve for the remainder of the
32 unexpired term.

33 (e) The Governor shall designate one (1) of his or her appointees to
34 serve as chair for the first year. Thereafter, the ~~committee~~ commission
35 members shall annually elect a chair from among themselves.

36 (f)(1) The ~~committee~~ commission shall meet at times and places the

1 chair deems necessary but no fewer than four (4) times per calendar year.

2 (2) No meetings shall be held outside the State of Arkansas.

3 (3) A majority of the members of the ~~committee~~ commission shall
4 constitute a quorum for the purpose of transacting business.

5 (4) All action of the ~~committee~~ commission shall be by a
6 majority vote of the full membership of the ~~committee~~ commission.

7 (g) The ~~committee~~ commission shall:

8 (1) Develop a plan for the state designed to enable all public
9 school students to meet the state's student academic achievement standards
10 while working toward the goal of narrowing the achievement gaps in public
11 schools for the following subgroups:

12 (A) Economically disadvantaged students; and

13 (B) Students from major racial and ethnic groups;

14 (2)(A) Monitor the Department of Education's efforts to comply
15 with federal guidelines on improving the academic achievement of the
16 disadvantaged, specifically including, but not limited to, the No Child Left
17 Behind Act of 2001.

18 (B) Monitor the department's identification of population
19 groups to be motivated in closing the achievement gap efforts.

20 (C) The ~~committee~~ commission may expand the role and scope
21 of the ~~committee~~ commission to cover specific population groups as identified
22 by the department as target groups for closing the achievement gaps; and

23 (3) File a report with the chairs of the House Interim Committee
24 on Education and the Senate Interim Committee on Education, the Governor, and
25 the State Board of Education no later than November 1 of each year.

26 (h) The ~~committee~~ commission may study and address topics, including,
27 but not limited to:

28 (1) Understanding children of poverty;

29 (2) Successful strategies with students of poverty;

30 (3) Teacher preparation for student diversity;

31 (4) Response to language diversity;

32 (5) Methods of hiding the achievement gap;

33 (6) Success stories;

34 (7) Obstacles to overcome in closing the achievement gap;

35 (8) Alternative intervention strategies for closing the

36 achievement gap;

- 1 (9) Leadership challenges in closing the achievement gap;
- 2 (10) The role of parents, families, and caregivers in closing
- 3 the achievement gap;
- 4 (11) Parental and community diversity;
- 5 (12) The relationship of school to environment and student;
- 6 (13) The role of school and class size on the achievement;
- 7 (14) Conditional barriers to student access to additional
- 8 learning opportunities; and
- 9 (15) The profile of underachieving students.

10 (h)(1) The department shall provide meeting space and clerical support
 11 as needed by the ~~committee~~ commission.

12 (2)(A) Members of the ~~committee~~ commission shall serve without
 13 pay.

14 (B) Members of the ~~committee~~ commission may receive
 15 expense reimbursement in accordance with § 25-16-902, to be paid by the
 16 department to the extent that money is available.

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 18 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-15-1604(a) is amended to read as follows:

19 (a) The State Board of Education shall report annually to the Joint
 20 Interim Oversight Subcommittee on Educational Reform and the ~~Committee~~
 21 Commission on Closing the Achievement Gap in Arkansas on the numbers of
 22 students who have dropped out of school, been suspended, expelled, or placed
 23 in an alternative program.

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APPROVED: 1/7/2004