

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

**Act 1002 of the Regular Session**

1 State of Arkansas  
2 86th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2007  
4

*As Engrossed: S3/29/07*

**A Bill**

HOUSE BILL 2514

5 By: Representatives Blount, T. Baker, E. Brown, Cash, Chesterfield, Davis, S. Dobbins, Flowers, Hardy,  
6 J. Johnson, W. Lewellen, Shelby, Walters  
7 By: Senators Brown, Crumbly, Wilkins, Steele  
8  
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**For An Act To Be Entitled**

11 AN ACT TO AMEND THE COMMISSION ON CLOSING THE  
12 ACHIEVEMENT GAP IN ARKANSAS TO PROVIDE TRAINING  
13 FOR COMMISSION MEMBERS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.  
14

**Subtitle**

15 AN ACT TO AMEND THE COMMISSION ON  
16 CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP IN ARKANSAS  
17 TO PROVIDE TRAINING FOR COMMISSION  
18 MEMBERS.  
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22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
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24 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-15-1601 is amended to read as follows:

25 6-15-1601. Establishment of Commission on Closing the Achievement Gap  
26 in Arkansas – Members.

27 (a) There is established a commission to be known as the "Commission  
28 on Closing the Achievement Gap in Arkansas".

29 (b) The commission shall consist of twelve (12) members representing  
30 the racial and ethnic diversity of Arkansas as follows:

31 (1)(A) Four (4) persons appointed by the Governor.

32 (B)(i) One (1) of the Governor's appointees shall be a  
33 member of the faculty of an historically black college in the state who has  
34 demonstrated an interest in and commitment to working with disadvantaged  
35 youth;



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

3 (iii) One (1) of the Governor's appointees shall be  
4 a representative of business and industry in Arkansas; and

5 (iv) One (1) of the Governor's appointees may be a  
6 representative of health and human services or a public school teacher;

7 (2)(A) Four (4) persons appointed by the President Pro Tempore  
8 of the Senate.

9 (B)(i) One (1) of the President Pro Tempore's appointees  
10 shall be a member of the faculty of an historically black college in the  
11 state; and

12 (ii) One (1) of the President Pro Tempore's  
13 appointees shall be a minority who has demonstrated a commitment to  
14 education; and

15 (3)(A) Four (4) persons appointed by the Speaker of the House of  
16 Representatives.

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

20 (ii) One (1) of the Speaker of the House of  
21 Representatives' appointees shall be a minority who has demonstrated a  
22 commitment to education.

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

25 (2) ~~The initial terms of office shall be staggered terms so~~  
26 ~~that~~ The term of office shall be for no more than four (4) years.

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

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

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

33 (3) ~~Subsequent appointments~~ Appointments shall be for a term of  
34 four (4) years.

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

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

3 (e)(1) The Governor shall designate one (1) of his or her appointees  
4 to serve as chair for the first year.

5 (2) Thereafter, the commission members shall annually elect a  
6 chair from among themselves.

7 (f)(1) The commission shall meet at times and places the chair deems  
8 necessary but no fewer than four (4) times per calendar year.

9 (2) Commission members shall attend all meetings with no more  
10 than one (1) unexcused absence.

11 ~~(2)(3)~~ No meetings shall be held outside the State of Arkansas.

12 ~~(3)(4)~~ A majority of the members of the commission shall  
13 constitute a quorum for the purpose of transacting business.

14 ~~(4)(5)~~ All actions of the commission shall be by a majority vote  
15 of the full membership of the commission.

16 (g) The commission shall:

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

21 (A) Economically disadvantaged students; and

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

23 (2) Monitor the Department of Education's efforts to comply with  
24 federal guidelines on improving the academic achievement of the  
25 disadvantaged, specifically including, but not limited to, the No Child Left  
26 Behind Act of 2001.

27 (3)(A) Monitor the department's identification of population  
28 groups to be motivated in closing the achievement gap efforts.

29 (B) The commission may expand the role and scope of the  
30 commission to cover specific population groups as identified by the  
31 department as target groups for closing the achievement gaps; and

32 (4) File a report with the chairs of the House Interim Committee  
33 on Education and the Senate Interim Committee on Education, the Governor, and  
34 the State Board of Education no later than November 1 of each year.

35 (h) At the discretion of the Commissioner of Education, the state  
36 shall provide resources necessary for the following:

1           (1) Relevant training for commission members in research-based  
 2 strategies to close the achievement gap; and

3           (2) Relevant technical experts to assist in drafting and  
 4 monitoring the Department of Education's efforts to comply with federal  
 5 guidelines on improving the academic achievement of the disadvantaged,  
 6 specifically including, without limitation, the No Child Left Behind Act of  
 7 2001;

8           (3) Travel reimbursements for meetings;

9           (4) Space and resources to conduct public forums; and

10          (5) Printing and copying costs.

11          ~~(h)~~(i) The commission may study and address topics, including, but not  
 12 limited to:

13           (1) Understanding children of poverty;

14           (2) Successful strategies with students of poverty;

15           (3) Teacher preparation for student diversity;

16           (4) Response to language diversity;

17           (5) Methods of hiding the achievement gap;

18           (6) Success stories;

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

20           (8) Alternative intervention strategies for closing the  
 21 achievement gap;

22           (9) Leadership challenges in closing the achievement gap;

23           (10) The role of parents, families, and caregivers in closing  
 24 the achievement gap;

25           (11) Parental and community diversity;

26           (12) The relationship of school to environment and student;

27           (13) The role of school and class size in achievement;

28           (14) Conditional barriers to student access to additional  
 29 learning opportunities; and

30           (15) The profile of underachieving students.

31          (j) The commission may fund a study on research-based and proven  
 32 strategies that close achievement gaps among racial, ethnic, and high-poverty  
 33 groups.

34          ~~(i)~~(1)(k)(1) The department shall provide meeting space and clerical  
 35 support as needed by the commission.

36           (2)(A) Members of the commission shall serve without pay.

1 (B) Members of the commission may receive expense  
2 reimbursement in accordance with § 25-16-902, to be paid by the department to  
3 ~~the extent that money is available~~ with funds allocated by the state for that  
4 purpose.

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6 /s/ Blount

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8 APPROVED: 4/3/2007  
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