

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.

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

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.
19
20
21

22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
23

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;

36 (ii) One (1) of the Governor's appointees shall be



1 an Hispanic who has demonstrated a commitment to education;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

36 (2) The new appointee shall serve for the remainder of the

1 unexpired term.

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

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

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

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

10 ~~(2)(3)~~ No meetings shall be held outside the State of Arkansas.

11 ~~(3)(4)~~ A majority of the members of the commission shall
12 constitute a quorum for the purpose of transacting business.

13 ~~(4)(5)~~ All actions of the commission shall be by a majority vote
14 of the full membership of the commission.

15 (g) The commission shall:

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

20 (A) Economically disadvantaged students; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

36 (1) Relevant training for commission members in research-based

1 strategies to close the achievement gap; and

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

7 (3) Travel reimbursements for meetings;

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

9 (5) Printing and copying costs.

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

- 12 (1) Understanding children of poverty;
- 13 (2) Successful strategies with students of poverty;
- 14 (3) Teacher preparation for student diversity;
- 15 (4) Response to language diversity;
- 16 (5) Methods of hiding the achievement gap;
- 17 (6) Success stories;
- 18 (7) Obstacles to overcome in closing the achievement gap;
- 19 (8) Alternative intervention strategies for closing the
- 20 achievement gap;
- 21 (9) Leadership challenges in closing the achievement gap;
- 22 (10) The role of parents, families, and caregivers in closing
- 23 the achievement gap;
- 24 (11) Parental and community diversity;
- 25 (12) The relationship of school to environment and student;
- 26 (13) The role of school and class size in achievement;
- 27 (14) Conditional barriers to student access to additional
- 28 learning opportunities; and
- 29 (15) The profile of underachieving students.

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

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

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

36 (B) Members of the commission may receive expense

1 reimbursement in accordance with § 25-16-902, to be paid ~~by the department to~~
2 ~~the extent that money is available~~ with funds allocated by the state for that
3 purpose.

4
5 /s/ Blount
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36