

The Office of the Education Ombudsman

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The Office of the Education Ombudsman

The Office of the Education Ombudsman (OEO) resolves complaints and disputes between parents, students and K-12 schools.

The state-wide agency was created by the Washington State legislature in 2006. It is the only agency of its kind in the nation.

OEO advocates for fair processes for public school students.

OEO's mission is to promote equity in education and support the ability of all elementary and secondary students to fully participate and benefit from the Washington public education system.

Functions

In 2006 House Bill 3127 established the agency's functions as:

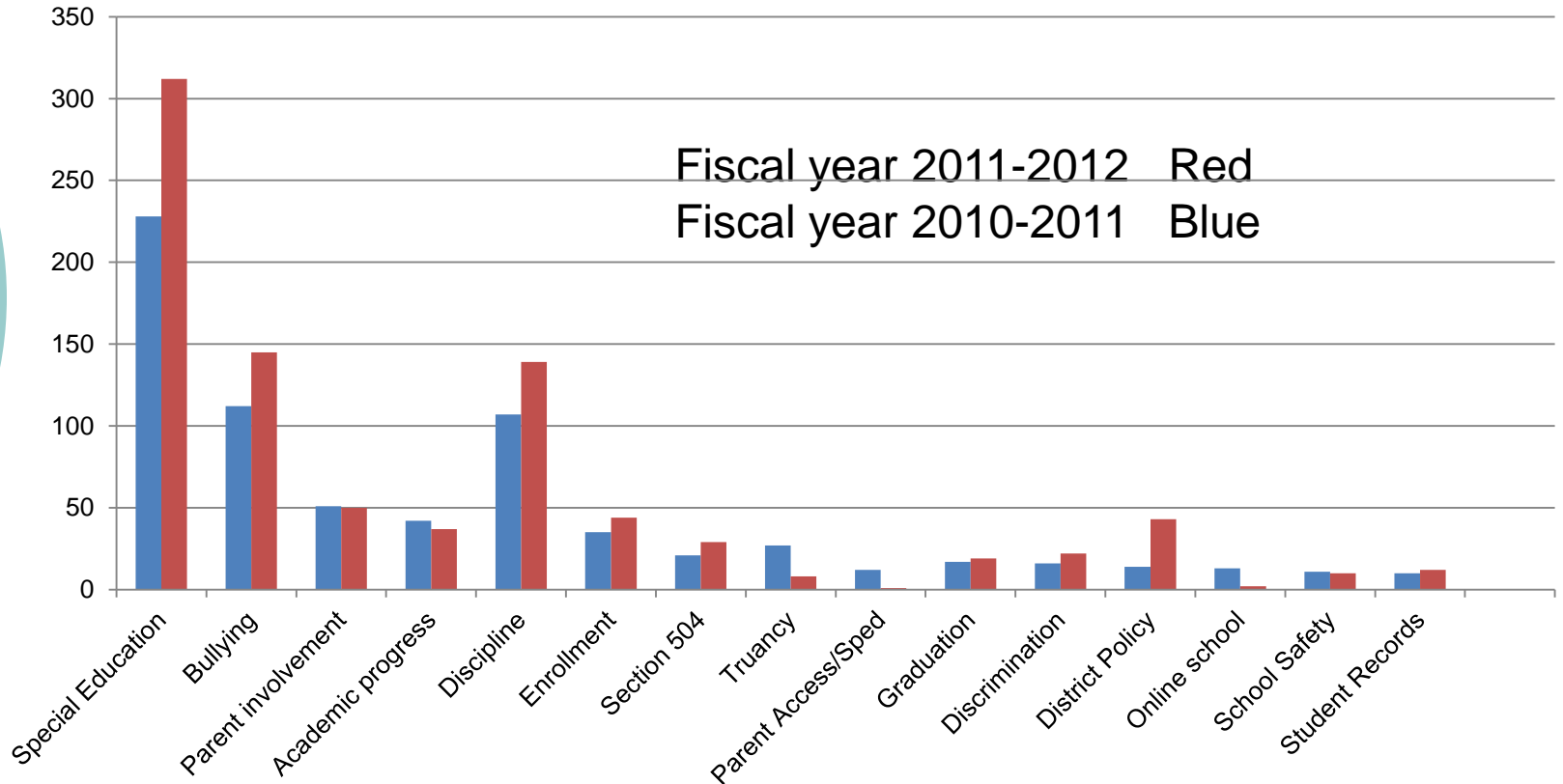
- Facilitate the resolution of complaints made by parents and students with regards to public schools.
- Identify strategies to increase family engagement in education.
- Identify strategies to contribute to the closing of the achievement gap.
- Collect data and make policy recommendations to public officials.

In 2010 House Bill 2801 designated OEO as:

- the lead state agency to provide anti-bullying/harassment/intimidation resources and tools to Washington parents and students.

Top 15 complaint issues

Complaints received from school districts around the State



In FY 11-12 OEO worked with 153 school districts and intervened in nearly 1,000 complaint cases. The second most frequent complaint issue was bullying. 7% of the bullying cases were related to cyberbullying.

HIB Cases

- OEO has seen a steady increase of HIB cases in the last 5 years. The number of HIB cases rose by 24% from Fiscal Year 2009-2010 to Fiscal Year 2010-2011.
- The severity and frequency of bullying cases alarmed OEO and the agency sounded the alarm to the legislature and OSPI which resulted in legislation.
- Out of the 148 bullying cases OEO handled last fiscal year, 19% involved physical attacks and 6% cyber bullying.