

JANUARY 2023

CLOSING THE OPPORTUNITY GAP IN WASHINGTON'S PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM



BY THE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY GAP
OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY
COMMITTEE (EOGOAC)

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Executive Summary

The Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (EOGOAC) is a bicameral, bipartisan legislative and community workgroup committed to closing racial opportunity gaps in Washington’s K-12 public education system. The term “opportunity gap” refers to systemic inequity in education that structurally disadvantages certain demographics of students (e.g., students of color, low-income students, and students with disabilities). The EOGOAC’s 2023 report provides policy and strategy recommendations for decreasing pervasive racial disparities in education.

The order in which the recommendations are presented in this report do not imply a hierarchy of priority or a sequence of steps. Since its creation in 2009, the EOGOAC has made recommendations representing a holistic approach toward closing the opportunity gap. The recommendations in this report follow in that tradition and are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

Table of Recommendations

Note: Some recommendations are in truncated form. See report section for full recommendation.

Recommendations	Audience			
	OSPI	School Districts	Legislature	Others
1. Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention of Educators of Color				
1A. The EOGOAC recommends that state agencies including Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC), and Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) work in partnership with the Washington Education Association (WEA) and the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) to support the work of 2-year colleges to encourage diverse recruitment of students into the teaching profession.	✓			✓
1B. The EOGOAC recommends that the Washington State School Directors’ Association (WSSDA) provide additional training and coaching, beyond required cultural competency training, for school board directors on how to lead crucial conversations related to complex subjects such as equity initiatives implementation of cultural competency, diversity, equity, and inclusion (CCDEI) standards, funding distribution, social emotional learning (SEL), and ethnic studies.		✓		✓
1C. The EOGOAC recommends that the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) work with the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP) to train principal mentors of color, as well as continued support of other projects to recruit, hire, and retain educators and other leaders of color.	✓			✓

Recommendations	Audience			
	OSPI	School Districts	Legislature	Others
1D. The EOGOAC recommends that the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) monitor the success of Grow Your Own and alternative route programs in supporting students of color to attain licensure and hold them to the same standards as colleges of education.				✓
1E. The EOGAOC recommends that school districts review their disaggregated educator workforce data and complete the workforce secondary trauma checklist to determine what additional supports are needed for educators of color in order to address the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and to improve retention of educators of color.		✓		
2. Attendance and Truancy				
2A. The EOGOAC recommends that the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) update the cultural competency, diversity, equity and inclusion (CCDEI) standards for educator and administrator preparation programs to include the development of skills to understand and address absenteeism from a place of cultural competency in consultation with communities of color.				✓
2B. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature allocate funding for the provision of stipends for Community Engagement Board (CEB) members who are eligible under the implementation guidelines of SB 5793 (2021-22) and staffing to support the CEB members and operations.			✓	
2C. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature authorize the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to write rules requiring any school district which establishes a Community Engagement Board (CEB) through a memorandum of understanding with a juvenile court to report to OSPI the annual disaggregated demographics of CEB members, actions taken, results, financial costs, a plan to evaluate this data, and to monitor for disproportionality.	✓		✓	
2D. The EOGOAC recommends that the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) work with community partners to develop template procedures for Community Engagement Boards (CEBs) to allow for all student/families to include a community advocate in proceedings.	✓			✓

Recommendations	Audience			
	OSPI	School Districts	Legislature	Others
2E. The EGOAC recommends that the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) monitor local education agency (LEA) truancy data for disproportionate student outcomes and referrals to the juvenile justice system. OSPI will develop a plan for assessing eligibility for grant funds based on disproportionality.	✓			
3. Measuring School Climate 3A. The EGOAC recommends that the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) add a measure of school climate to the Washington School Improvement Framework.	✓			
4. Antiracist Social Emotional Learning 4A. The EGOAC will continue to work with and monitor the Social Emotional Learning Advisory Committee (SELAC) to develop guidance on culturally responsive assessment of SEL implementation and monitoring, including student voice.				✓
5. Equitable Access to Graduation and Career Pathways 5A. The EGOAC recommends that the State Board of Education (SBE) and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) collaborate with the Ethnic Commissions and the Governor’s Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA) and community-based organizations focused on working with people of color and multilingual communities to develop and disseminate accessible information for families on graduation pathway options.	✓			✓
5B. The EGOAC recommends that the Legislature fund the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to create a statewide platform that is accessible to families and provides data to the state on implementation of the High School and Beyond Plan requirement.	✓		✓	
5C. The EGOAC recommends that the Legislature amend RCW 28A.655.270 to remove 8th grade Student Learning Plans, which are redundant to the High School and Beyond Plan, in order to focus system efforts on High School and Beyond Plans.			✓	
5D. The EGOAC recommends that the Work Integrated Learning Advisory Committee (WILAC) be continued in order to work with the EGOAC and Labor and Industries (L&I) to address barriers students of color face in accessing apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, including expanding opportunities in state government.			✓	

Recommendations	Audience			
	OSPI	School Districts	Legislature	Others
5E. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature require Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to examine their local graduation pathway data for analysis of evidence of disproportionalities in equitable access for students of color.		✓	✓	
6. Mastery Based Learning				
6A. The EOGOAC supports HB 1308 - expanding pathways to include a performance-based pathway.			✓	
6B. The EOGOAC recommends that the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) update the content standards for preparation of educators and administrators to include the skills to deliver mastery-based learning in classrooms and schools.				✓
6C. The EOGOAC recommends that the State Board of Education (SBE) and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) collaborate on culturally responsive communication efforts, including focus groups with communities of color, to disseminate accessible information on mastery-based learning.	✓			✓
7. Engagement with Communities of Color				
7A. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature provide additional resources to the Ethnic Commissions and the Governor’s Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA) in order to support working directly with state agencies on community engagement.			✓	
7B. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature fund the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to develop and implement a formal process of direct consultation with the Ethnic Commissions, Governor’s Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA), and other state agencies in order to strengthen relationships with communities of color.	✓		✓	
7C. The EOGOAC supports potential future legislation that requires diverse student representation on local school boards.		✓	✓	
8. Research on “the gap”				
8A. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature fund updated opportunity gap studies that are community led by the Ethnic Commissions and the Governor’s Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA), focus on challenges, progress and best practices, and include examples of success and recommendations for future work.			✓	

Recommendations	Audience			
	OSPI	School Districts	Legislature	Others
9. Data Disaggregation				
9A. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature require all agencies which report data to the Education Data & Research Center (ERDC) to collect and report disaggregated student race and ethnicity categories and subcategories as described in RCW 28A.300.042 Sec. (1).			✓	
9B. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature require all agencies who work with students and families to collect and report disaggregated student race and ethnicity categories and subcategories as described in RCW 28A.300.042 Sec. (1).			✓	
9C. The EOGOAC recommends that the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) reconvene the Race and Ethnicity Student Data Task Force to review the initial reported data, make recommendations on updates to the data collection and to guide reporting.	✓			
9D. The EOGOAC recommends that the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) use data disaggregated by student race and ethnicity subcategories in all reports from the agency, including Report Card.	✓			
10. Students of Color in Foster Care and Students Experiencing Homelessness				
10A. The EOGOAC recommends that the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) with input from the community, develop and annually update a cross-agency action plan to address the academic needs of students in foster care, with an emphasis on the specific needs of students of color.	✓			✓

Background on Committee

Unique in structure and purpose, the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (EOGOAC) was established in 2009 by [Second Substitute Senate Bill 5973](#)² and is charged by [RCW 28A.300.136](#)³ to:

*“synthesize the findings and recommendations from the five 2008 Achievement Gap Studies into an implementation plan, and to recommend policies and strategies to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Professional Educator Standards Board, and the State Board of Education.”*⁴

Recommendations by the EOGOAC must, at a minimum, encompass the following areas:

- Supporting and facilitating the engagement of and outreach to parents and communities of color.
- Enhancing the cultural competency of current and future educators and the cultural relevance of curriculum and instruction.
- Expanding pathways and strategies to prepare, recruit, hire, and retain diverse teachers and administrators.
- Recommending current programs and resources that should be redirected to narrow the opportunity gap.
- Identifying data elements and systems needed to monitor progress in closing the gap.
- Making closing the opportunity gap part of the school and school district improvement process.
- Exploring innovative school models that have shown success in closing the opportunity gap.

In summary, the EOGOAC’s explicit purpose is to monitor and make recommendations to close the opportunity gap **for students of color** in Washington, recognizing intersecting identities and experiences that add additional systemic challenges. The EOGOAC submits recommendations in the form of annual reports to the Legislature, the Governor, the House and Senate Education Committees, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB), and the State Board of Education (SBE).

Although the EOGOAC focuses specifically on the K-12 education system, committee members are unanimous in their belief that learning is a continuum. From early childhood to higher education, equitable opportunities for students of color must exist in all facets of the education system.

Governance and Structure

The EOGOAC Operating Protocols document, which outlines the policies and procedures of the committee related to membership, finances, decision making protocols, meeting conduct, and communications, can be found on [their website](#).

² Washington State Legislature Second Substitute Senate Bill 5973, *Closing the achievement gap in order to provide all students an excellent and equitable education* (2009). Retrieved from: <http://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/biennium/2009-10/Pdf/Bills/Senate%20Passed%20Legislature/5973-S2.PL.pdf>

³ Washington State Legislature RCW 28A.300.136, *Educational opportunity gap oversight and accountability committee-Policy and strategy recommendations* (2009). Retrieved from <http://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.300.136>

⁴ Ibid.

Committee Membership

Section 4 of RCW 28A.300.136 states the EOGOAC shall be composed of the following members:

- The chairs and ranking minority members of the House and Senate Education Committees, or their designees.
- One additional member of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House and one additional member of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate.
- A representative of the Office of the Education Ombuds (OEO).
- A representative of the Center for the Improvement of Student Learning (CISL) in the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- A representative of federally recognized Indian tribes whose traditional lands and territories lie within the borders of Washington State, designated by the federally recognized tribes.
- Four members appointed by the Governor in consultation with the state ethnic commissions, who represent the following populations: African-Americans, Latino/a Americans, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islander Americans.

Table I. Committee Members

Name	Representing
Dr. James Smith	Commission on African American Affairs
Frieda Takamura	Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs (Asian American)
Fiasili Savusa	Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs (Pacific Islander)
Dr. Randy Nuñez	Commission on Hispanic Affairs
Bill Kallappa	Governor’s Office of Indian Affairs
Carrie Basas/Erin Okuno	Governor’s Office of the Education Ombuds
Representative Alex Ybarra	House of Representatives
Representative Lillian Ortiz-Self	House of Representatives
Representative Sharon Tomiko Santos	House of Representatives
Chief of Staff Tennille Jeffries-Simmons	CISL - Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Senator Bob Hasegawa	Senate
Senator Lisa Wellman	Senate

Table II. Committee Member Alternates

Name	Representing
Dr. Tyson Marsh	Commission on African American Affairs
Brianne Ramos	Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs (Asian American)
Lydia Faitalia	Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs (Pacific Islander)
Michael Peña	Commission on Hispanic Affairs
Yordanos Gebreamlak	Governor’s Office of the Education Ombuds
Maria Flores	CISL - Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Committee Co-Chairs

Section 7 of RCW 28A.300.136 states the chair or co-chairs of the committee shall be selected by the members of the committee. The committee co-chairs for 2022 include:

- Representative Lillian Ortiz-Self
- Fiasili Savusa

Committee Staff

Section 7 of RCW 28A.300.136 also states staff support for the committee shall be provided by the Center for the Improvement of Student Learning (CISL) at the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. Committee staff include:

- Maria Flores, Executive Director, CISL
- Heather Rees, Research and Policy Program Manager, CISL

Additional support provided by:

- Andrew Nelson, Research Analyst, CISL
- Devin Noel-Harrison, Research Analyst, CISL
- Lauren Gilmore, Research Analyst, CISL

Introduction

Looking back at 2022 and forward to 2023, it is clear to the committee that the long-term impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is only beginning to be measured and understood. School closures and remote learning resulted in serious learning loss that needs to be addressed for years to come. Significant disruptions to the preparation and certification of new educators and loss of many great educators from the field will only make recovery more difficult.

As we move from pandemic to endemic spread of illness, COVID-19 will continue to do the most harm to our most vulnerable communities. Now is the time for increased examination and analysis to determine what the system needs to do to rectify the situation of increased gaps for student of color. The events of the past several years went a long way in highlighting and exacerbating previously existing gaps, such as the need for universal access to the internet, racist sentiments demonstrated through anti-Asian attacks, and backlash to the Black Lives Matter movement.

The resulting trauma hit students and communities of color particularly hard. Emotional recovery will be necessary for academic recovery; they are not separate. For this reason, the committee is committed to continued consciousness raising around anti-racist and trauma informed approaches to social emotional learning (SEL).

Throughout all recommendation areas of this report, two key and consistent points are highlighted:

1. The impacts and ongoing challenges of the pandemic on every area related to closing gaps for students of color, and
2. The importance of disaggregating student data by sub-ethnic and sub-racial categories in order to understand the full spectrum of individual experiences and systemic impact.

These two lenses are essential for understanding all of the work and recommendations of the EOGOAC.

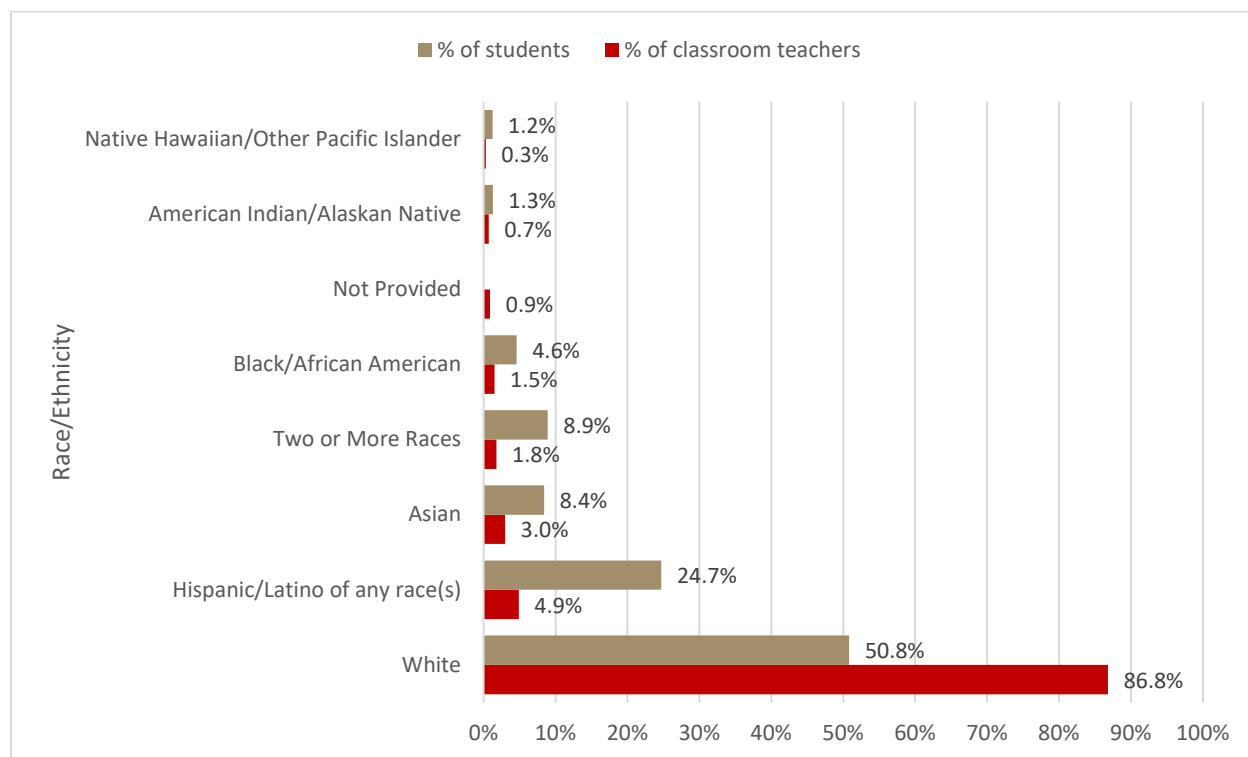
Recommendations

1. Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention of Educators of Color

Background

The EGOAC continues to monitor the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on educators and other school leaders of color. As noted in the [2022 annual report](#), teachers of color have also been affected by the increase in hate crimes against Asians, the Black Lives Matter movement, and the fight against critical race theory and anti-racism curriculum from the public. The EGOAC is concerned that an increase in educators of color leaving the field may increase the already significant disparities between student and educator race/ethnicity demographics.

Figure 1. Race/Ethnicity of Classroom Teachers and Student SY2020-2021.⁵



In addition to hiring and retaining current educators of color, efforts must be targeted to recruitment and retention in educator preparation programs as well. The EGOAC finds that students often leave preparation programs due to financial hardships related to living expenses, materials, and childcare, as well as tuition and financial assistance programs that are often difficult to find and navigate. Future educators of color need to know that they will be supported in their preparation both financially and by programs that offer culturally responsive curriculum and instructors.

School building and district leadership need tools such as mentorship and networking to recruit, hire, and retain educators of color. Increasingly, they must also be prepared to support diversity, equity and

⁵ Data retrieved from OSPI Report Card 1/3/2023 <https://washingtonstaterreportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/>. At time of reporting, most recent student data available is SY21-22 and most recent educator data available is SY20-21. SY20-21 for both students and educators are displayed here. Sub-ethnic and sub-racial categories are not available for educators therefore federal race categories are used.

inclusion (DEI) initiatives in complex and challenging discussions with the public. Board members need the skills to be confident and comfortable having these critical conversations.

Recommendation 1A. The EOGOAC recommends that state agencies including Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC), and Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) work in partnership with the Washington Education Association (WEA) and the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) to support the work of 2-year colleges to encourage diverse recruitment of students into the teaching profession.

Recommendation 1B. The EOGOAC recommends that the Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA) provide additional training and coaching, beyond required cultural competency training, for school board directors on how to lead crucial conversations related to complex subjects such as equity initiatives, implementation of cultural competency, diversity, equity, and inclusion (CCDEI) standards, funding distribution, social emotional learning (SEL), and ethnic studies. The training should be developed with community-based organizations with expertise in communication on the identified topics and working with communities of color and school boards.

Recommendation 1C. The EOGOAC recommends that the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) work with the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP) to train principal mentors of color, similar to the Nakia Academy, as well as continued support of other projects to recruit, hire, and retain educators and other leaders of color, including the Native Educator Cultivation Program and Regional Leaders of Color Project.

Recommendation 1D. The EOGOAC recommends that the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) monitor the success of Grow Your Own and alternative route programs in supporting students of color to attain licensure and hold them to the same standards as colleges of education.

Recommendation 1E. The EOGAOC recommends that school districts review their disaggregated educator workforce data and complete the [workforce secondary trauma checklist](#) to determine what additional supports are needed for educators of color in order to address the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and to improve retention of educators of color.

Future Work

In coming years as the PK-12 system seeks to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, the EOGOAC will continue to monitor the many policy aspects that impact the experiences of educators of color including but not limited to:

- [Program standards](#)
- Residency programs
- Program fees
- Implementation of [HB 1139 \(2019-20\)](#)
- The paraeducator pipeline
- Alternative and grow-your-own programs
- Certification and certification renewal requirements.

2. Attendance and Truancy

Background

Truancy and attendance continue to be a high-impact area where the development and implementation of laws, policies, and procedures have long-lasting implications for students of color. Historically, truancy laws and attendance policies have been implemented in a punitive and biased manner against communities of color, contributing to the school to prison pipeline and negatively impacting trust between schools and communities. During the high-point of COVID-19, remote learning challenged the implementation of “traditional” attendance policies and brought educators and administrators into the homes of students and families where the need for individualized supports was clear. Progressive reform efforts should be focused on implementation that honors cultural practices and addresses root causes through social emotional learning (SEL), school climate and multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS).

As changes have been made at the state-level, (see [HB 1113](#) – 2021-22 Concerning school attendance), teachers and administrators need the corresponding tools to address absenteeism in a **culturally responsive way**. Educator preparation programs must include the development of the skills to understand and address absenteeism from a place of cultural competency, including understanding one’s own bias.

While the EOGOAC supports the use of Community Engagement Boards (CEB) to address truancy, we lack the necessary data about implementation and membership to know if they are having an impact and further, to monitor for disproportionality in patterns of actions. CEBs must reflect the composition of the community, include smaller nonprofits, tribal representatives, and student voice. This should be supported by the availability of an advocate, chosen by the family, to assist in navigating the process.

All parties must keep at the forefront of the process the aim, not to punish students or parents for non-compliance, but to ensure the constitutional, positive right to basic education.

Recommendation 2A. The EOGOAC recommends that the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) update the cultural competency, diversity, equity and inclusion (CCDEI) standards for educator and administrator preparation programs to include the development of skills to understand and address absenteeism from a place of cultural competency in consultation with communities of color.

Recommendation 2B. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature allocate funding for the provision of stipends for Community Engagement Board (CEB) members who are eligible under the implementation guidelines of [SB 5793 \(2021-22\)](#) and staffing to support the CEB members and operations.

Recommendation 2C. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature authorize the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to write rules requiring any school district which establishes a Community Engagement Board (CEB) through a memorandum of understanding with a juvenile court to report to OSPI the annual disaggregated demographics of CEB members (including race/ethnicity and agency representation), actions taken, results, financial costs, a plan to evaluate this data, and to monitor for disproportionality.

Recommendation 2D. The EOGOAC recommends that the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) work with community partners to develop template procedures for Community Engagement

Boards (CEBs) to allow for all student/families to include a community advocate in proceedings. Community advocates are chosen by the family, not school district staff, to help to navigate the system, and do not replace a student's guardian.

Recommendation 2E. The EOGOAC recommends that the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) monitor local education agency (LEA) truancy data for disproportionate student outcomes and referrals to the juvenile justice system. OSPI will develop a plan for assessing eligibility for grant funds based on disproportionality.

Future work:

- Review the Washington State School Director's Association's (WSSDA) Excused and Unexcused Absence model policies and procedures (3122 and 3122P) for cultural competency.

3. Measuring School Climate

Background

School climate is a way of describing the overall culture of a school that includes domains such as emotional and physical safety, engagement, mental and physical health, and physical and instructional environment.⁶ The measurement of school climate is important to the work of the EOGOAC because it seeks to capture the often disregarded experiences of students and families of color which are historically left out of institutional measures of school success. When done in a culturally competent way, measuring school climate can lift up student voice in order to address the needs of every student. The EOGOAC notes that the importance of this measure necessitates that development be done carefully and with deliberate consultation with students, families, and educators.

Recommendation 3A. The EOGOAC recommends that the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) add a measure of school climate to the Washington School Improvement Framework (WSIF). A measurement instrument should be developed in partnership with the State Board of Education (SBE) and OSPI, which is not based on old institutional knowledge, but instead informed by perspectives of the community.

Future work:

- Monitor the use of school climate data to improve outcomes for students of color.

4. Antiracist Social Emotional Learning

Background

Social emotional learning (SEL) is not defined by a particular curriculum or content area but is a process through which "...individuals build awareness and skills in managing emotions, setting goals, establishing relationships, and making responsible decisions that support success in school and in life."⁷ The EOGOAC recognizes that SEL is an essential part of individual development that also has the potential to address the societal harms caused by racism. However, SEL that is not asset-based and does not include understanding of race, privilege and bias will do more harm than good for historically marginalized

⁶ Presentation - Assessing School Climate: Implementation Considerations Michael Gilson, Nicole Fossos-Wong, & Jason Kilmer <https://padlet.com/cisl/EOGOAC/wish/2387323212>

⁷ Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (n.d.). *Social Emotional Learning (SEL)*. <https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/resources-subject-area/social-emotional-learning-sel>

students. Antiracist social emotional learning “...takes a view that recognizes and values the diverse social and emotional skills students bring with them to the classroom. Further, it relates students’ individual social and emotional struggles to their lived experience with racial injustice and social inequity.”⁸

Development and implementation of antiracist SEL requires robust conversations with communities of color, including students, at the school district level (see [Recommendations 7A and 7B](#)). Currently, the state lacks the monitoring tools necessary to report on the implementation of SEL, including its impacts on students and communities. The need to monitor progress is separate from and exclusive of assessment of the SEL skills of individual students.

SEL implementation is the task of every adult in the education system to support the social and emotional development of the child through a team-based model of wrap-around supports. Staff need personal antiracist SEL development and professional skills around power, privilege, and unconscious bias. Lastly, classroom teachers need the flexibility and discretion to balance SEL and academic learning objectives in the limited time frame of the school day.

Recommendation 4A. The EOGOAC will continue to work with and monitor the Social Emotional Learning Advisory Committee (SELAC) to develop guidance on culturally responsive assessment of SEL implementation and monitoring, including student voice.

Future work:

- Continue to work with and review the work and annual report of the Social Emotional Learning Advisory Committee (SELAC) to ensure the materials are culturally responsive.

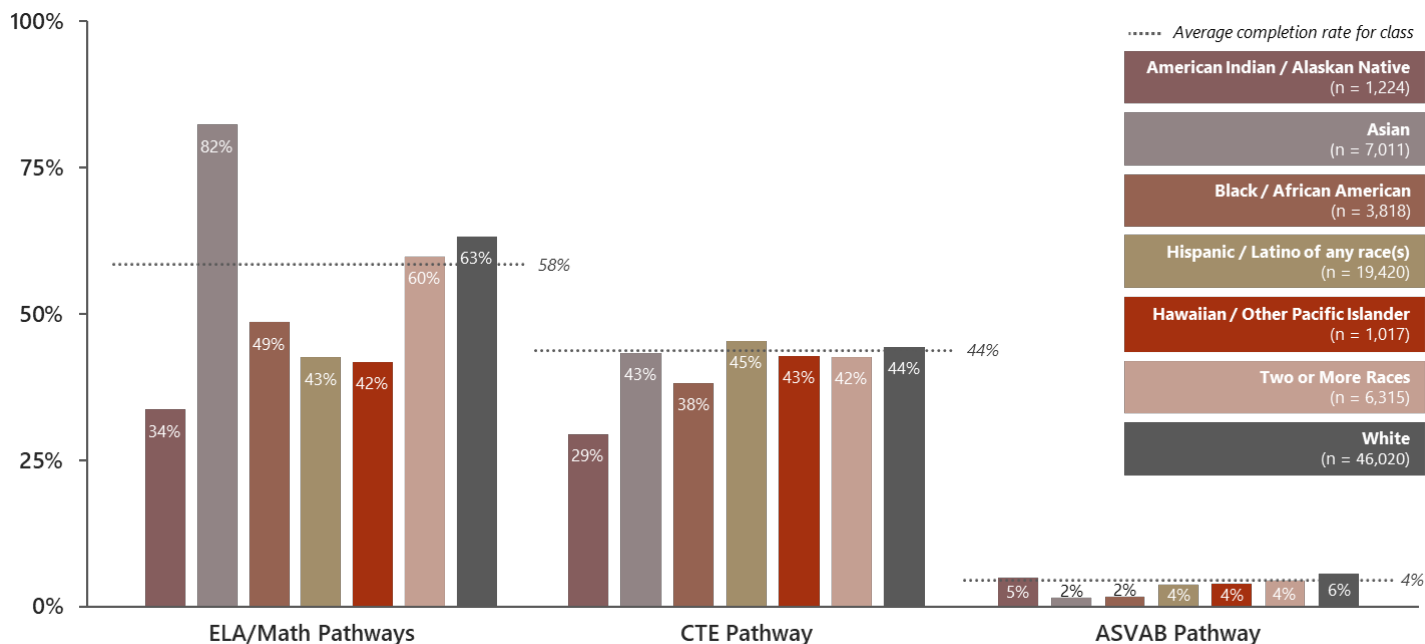
⁸ Caven, M. (2020, July 27). Why we need an anti-racist approach to social emotional learning. Education Development Center. <https://www.edc.org/blog/why-we-need-anti-racist-approach-social-and-emotional-learning>

5. Equitable Access to Graduation and Career Pathways

Background

In addition to the [Graduation Requirement Emergency Waivers](#) related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Washington State requirements for graduation have undergone many recent changes, resulting in a flexible but complicated system of graduation pathways.⁹ The EGOAC finds that there has been a lack of clear communication to families about pathway options, which along with other barriers has resulted in inequitable access to graduation pathways.

Figure 2. Percent of Students Completing Graduation Pathways by Race/Ethnicity - Class of 2021¹⁰



Barriers to pathways can include financial obstacles such as cost of test and dual credit fees, transportation, living expenses and supplies, language barriers for families, and lack of disaggregated student data. Additional research is needed in several areas to address barriers including the needs and opportunities for students of color in the class of 2024, outcomes for students of color who did not graduate, and disparities as a result of the implementation of Core 24. Lastly, there remains a need for a mastery-based learning pathway option.

Recommendation 5A. The EGOAC recommends that the State Board of Education (SBE) and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) collaborate with the Ethnic Commissions and the Governor’s Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA) and community-based organizations focused on working with people of color and multilingual communities to develop and disseminate accessible information for families on graduation pathway options.

⁹ See [Graduation Pathways Quick Reference Class of 2023](#)

¹⁰ Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. (2023). *Graduation pathways display for 2020-21 four year cohort*. [Data set].

Recommendation 5B. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature fund the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to create a statewide platform that is accessible to families and provides data to the state on implementation of the High School and Beyond Plan requirement.

Recommendation 5C. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature amend RCW [28A.655.270](#) to remove 8th grade Student Learning Plans, which are redundant to the High School and Beyond Plan, in order to focus system efforts on High School and Beyond Plans.

Recommendation 5D. The EOGOAC recommends that the Work Integrated Learning Advisory Committee (WILAC) be continued in order to work with the EOGOAC and Labor and Industries (L&I) to address barriers students of color face in accessing apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, including expanding opportunities in state government.

Recommendation 5E. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature require Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to examine their local graduation pathway data for analysis of evidence of disproportionalities in equitable access for students of color.

Future work:

- Investigate other barriers that prevent students of color from continuing their post-secondary education.

6. Mastery Based Learning

Background

The EOGOAC continues to support the creation of a mastery-based education system as a comprehensive approach to provide each and every student the opportunity to be successful in the modern world. Effective Mastery-based Learning (MBL) must be focused through an equity lens on post-secondary success, no matter what that looks like. The impact on students of color and closing the opportunity gap must be a key outcome measure of the State Board of Education's [Mastery-based Learning Collaborative](#).

Recommendation 6A. The EOGOAC supports HB 1308 - expanding pathways to include a performance-based pathway

Recommendation 6B. The EOGOAC recommends that the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) update the content standards for preparation of educators and administrators to include the skills to deliver mastery-based learning in classrooms and schools.

Recommendation 6C. The EOGOAC recommends that the State Board of Education (SBE) and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) collaborate on culturally responsive communication efforts, including focus groups with communities of color, to disseminate accessible information on mastery-based learning.

Future Work:

- The EOGOAC will continue to monitor the implementation of mastery-based learning in collaboration with the State Board of Education with a specific focus on equitable outcomes for students of color.

7. Engagement with Communities of Color

Since its inception, the EOGOAC has served as a one-of-its-kind, bipartisan, bicameral, legislative committee providing perspectives and recommendations to the state on behalf of communities of color. However, with limited membership, budget and staffing, the EOGOAC cannot be present in every conversation. The EOGOAC has observed an ever increasing need for engagement with communities of color both at the state and local levels. This work must become a routine and expected part of the work of governing, not an add-on or tokenization of these communities. Despite the removal of explicit barriers to participation and input from communities of color, systemic barriers still exist. Therefore, explicit efforts must be made to engage with our communities.

At the state level, this can look like deliberate inclusion and collaboration with the Ethnic Commissions and the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA). As the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) and other state agencies reach out to work collaboratively (see [Recommendation 5A](#)), the Ethnic Commissions and GOIA will need additional resources to manage the requests.

Regarding the many local-level issues addressed in this report, the EOGOAC has noticed a lack of robust communication between school districts and students and families of color. Following the lead of the State Board of Education¹¹, local school districts should also include voting student board members.

Recommendation 7A. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature provide additional resources to the Ethnic Commissions and the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA) in order to support working directly with state agencies on community engagement.

Recommendation 7B. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature fund the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to develop and implement a formal process of direct consultation with the Ethnic Commissions, Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA), and other state agencies in order to strengthen relationships with communities of color.

Recommendation 7C. The EOGOAC supports potential future legislation that requires diverse student representation on local school boards.

Future Work:

- Explore having regular meetings with the leadership of the Ethnic Commissions and the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA) to update them on work of the committee and to hear feedback and concerns related to the communities they serve.

¹¹ Washington State Legislature Substitute Senate Bill 5497, *Extending voting authority to student members on the state board of education*. (2022). Retrieved from: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=5497&Initiative=false&Year=2021>

8. Research on “the gap”

Background

In 2009, the EOGOAC was created by [RCW 28A.300.136](#) to synthesize the findings and recommendations from the five 2008 Achievement Gap Studies into an implementation plan. The 10 recommendation categories identified across all achievement gap studies, form the backbone of the focus areas of the EOGOAC. A reboot of the original studies with a renewed focus on looking at the current data and examples of best practices and strategies that are working to close the gap, would help to provide the EOGOAC and community partners with the information needed to focus the work of the EOGOAC for the next ten years.

This year, the EOGOAC hosted discussion with representatives of the Ethnic Commissions and Governor’s Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA) in order to identify desired guiding values and features of the proposed studies. The following are results from those conversations.

What: Five new studies should be commissioned, one for each of the communities represented. The studies should include an analysis of what progress has been made, what there is left to do, examples of tangible successes, a crosswalk to past recommendations from the EOGOAC and recommendations to schools, districts, and state agencies for future work.

Why: The individual research questions of these studies should be determined by the represented communities with the overall goals of assessing where we have been, where we are, where we go next in a way that accurately portrays how communities see themselves and how they envision the future work.

Who: Each study should be guided independently by the Ethnic Commissions and GOIA/Tribal Leaders Congress. Contracted researchers should have in-state expertise with multi-disciplinary backgrounds.

When: Studies should be funded for the 2023-25 biennium, with reports due in 2024 (for 2025 session). Funding would start July 1, 2023, with work beginning once the budget is confirmed.

How: Studies should be driven by the community, holding central the values of pride in community and lived experience, solidarity with all communities of color, and trust. Researchers must build trust with

The 2008 Achievement Gap Studies

- [A Plan to Close the Achievement Gap for African American Students](#) (by the Center for the Improvement of Student Learning)
- [Asian Americans in Washington State: Closing Their Hidden Achievement Gaps](#) (Submitted to the Washington State Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs)
- [Understanding Opportunities to Learn for Latino Students in Washington](#) (Submitted to the Washington State Commission on Hispanic Affairs)
- [Growing Presence, Emerging Voices: Pacific Islanders and Academic Achievement in Washington](#) (Submitted to the Washington State Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs)
- [From Where the Sun Rises: Addressing the Educational Achievement of Native Americans in Washington State](#) (Submitted to the Governor’s Office on Indian Affairs)

the community in a way that recognizes past harm and ways that research has historically exploited communities of color.

Studies should use a mixed-methods approach with member-checking, that includes narratives of students, education workforce and the business community with the deliberate inclusion of immigrants and refugees of color.

Between all projects, research teams should partner with each other and share best practices. The EOGOAC, as a receiver of the reports will be available to provide feedback on the process and elevate the reports to the community.

Recommendation 8A. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature fund updated opportunity gap studies that are community led by the Ethnic Commissions and the Governor’s Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA), focus on challenges, progress and best practices, and include examples of success and recommendations for future work.

9. Data Disaggregation

Background

In 2016, [HB 1541](#) required school districts to begin collecting and reporting student-level data that included expanded subracial and subethnic categories. These categories were recommended by the [Race and Ethnicity Student Data Task Force](#) and adopted by the Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) Data Governance group. Following a long roll-out, the 2022-23 school year is the first year that this data is required to be collected and reported to the state. As the EOGOAC continues to monitor the results of this collection and appropriate use of the disaggregated data, especially for COVID-19 pandemic recovery, periodic checks will be needed on the organization of the categories and implementation.

Because the K-12 system is the only state system currently disaggregating ethnic/racial data to this extent, the ability to make connections to system inputs and outputs is limited. Alignment of disaggregated data across the systems would enable coordination in the closing of opportunity gaps.

Recommendation 9A. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature require all agencies which report data to the Education Data & Research Center (ERDC) to collect and report disaggregated student race and ethnicity categories and subcategories as described in [RCW 28A.300.042](#) Sec. (1).

Recommendation 9B. The EOGOAC recommends that the Legislature require all agencies who work with students and families to collect and report disaggregated student race and ethnicity categories and subcategories as described in [RCW 28A.300.042](#) Sec. (1).

Recommendation 9C. The EOGOAC recommends that the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) reconvene the Race and Ethnicity Student Data Task Force to review the initial reported data, make recommendations on updates to the data collection and to guide reporting.

Recommendation 9D. The EOGOAC recommends that the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) use data disaggregated by student race and ethnicity subcategories in all reports from the agency, including Report Card.

Future work:

- Review data collection through requested presentation from OSPI.

10. Students of Color in Foster Care and Students Experiencing Homelessness

Background

The economic challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic increased attention to the issues of houselessness and affordable housing, which are often also connected to child welfare cases. During school closures, students became disconnected from the support systems provided by our schools. Additional work with other agencies and communities is needed to fully understand how students and families of color have been impacted.

We do know that students and families of color are disproportionately impacted by these issues. According to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), in 2019, the student race/ethnicity groups with the highest percentage of homelessness were Black/African American (8.4%) followed by Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (7.6%) and American Indian/Alaska Native (7.4%).¹²

Due to the highly mobile nature of these students and families and the need for wrap-around services, collaboration between agencies and schools/districts is essential. They all must work together to not lose students of color between the systems.

Recommendation 10A. The EOGOAC recommends that the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) with input from the community, develop and annually update a cross-agency action plan to address the academic needs of students in foster care, with an emphasis on the specific needs of students of color.

The plan must include culturally responsive strategies to address the academic and social-emotional needs of students and identify measures for accountability and reporting which are aligned to the values and strategies identified by the work of the EOGOAC. A key goal of this plan is to increase the communication and coordination between agencies to support students in foster care.

Future work:

- Review the cultural responsiveness of agencies and educators in responding to and supporting students of color in foster care and experiencing homelessness.

¹² Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. (2019). Update: Homeless students data. <https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/homeless/pubdocs/2019-01-update-homeless-students-data.pdf>

Future Work

The EOGOAC has identified the following areas as needing attention from the committee in 2023 and beyond:

- Students of color in foster care, students experiencing homelessness, and incarcerated youth
 - Pay specific attention to the United States Supreme Court case challenging the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and the potential impact in Washington
 - Review the cultural responsiveness of agencies and educators in responding to and supporting students of color in foster care and experiencing homelessness.
- Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic
 - Updates from Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities
- Recruitment, hiring, and retention of educators of color
 - Monitor staffing shortage areas
 - Review data based on recently passed legislation
 - Review process for integration of Cultural Competency, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (CCDEI) Standards in preparation programs
 - Review data about bilingual educator pipelines
- Students of color in small and rural districts
 - How might their needs differ and what are the best ways to deliver supports
- Family and community engagement
 - Training opportunities for parents and families
 - Explore having regular meetings with the leadership of the Ethnic Commissions and the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA) to update them on work of the committee and to hear feedback and concerns related to the communities they serve.
- Explore inclusion of early learning in definition of basic education
 - Address the opportunity and achievement gaps early as possible
- Attendance and truancy
 - Review the Washington State School Director's Association's (WSSDA) Excused and Unexcused Absence model policies and procedures (3122 and 3122P) for cultural competency.
- Data collection
 - Monitor the use of school climate data to improve outcomes for students of color.
 - Review progress of sub-ethnic and sub-racial data collection.
- Social emotional learning
 - Continue to work with and review the work and annual report of the Social Emotional Learning Advisory Committee (SELAC) to ensure the materials are culturally responsive.
- Graduation and post-secondary success
 - Investigate other barriers that prevent students of color from continuing their post-secondary education.
- Mastery-based learning
 - The EOGOAC will continue to monitor the implementation of mastery-based learning in collaboration with the State Board of Education, with a specific focus on equitable outcomes for students of color.

Conclusion

The harsh realities of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis have shown a light on the many cracks in our social systems and their failure to produce equitable outcomes for all students. The EOGOAC intends to dig deep into the root causes of these issues outside of the classroom that impact students' academic achievement. It is unrealistic to expect schools and educators to overcome all the problems facing students of color; other systems also have a role. The education system is one part of the overall solution and is positioned to be the impetus for positive change for students of color.

Following over 10 years of this work, the completion of updated opportunity gap studies will result in a renewed look at the mandates and approach of the EOGOAC. They will provide an exploration of some of the positive changes and success stories that often do not get told. Year after year, the EOGOAC makes new recommendations and continues to advocate for many of the past recommendations, while always asking whether we, the state, has fulfilled its paramount duty to equitably educate all students, and the answer always shows us that our job is not done yet.