

Date of Hearing: May 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 2202 (Muratsuchi) – As Amended April 13, 2026

Policy Committee: Education Vote: 9 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill establishes the Closing the Achievement Gap Commission as an advisory body to the State Board of Education (SBE), with 14 members, as specified, to advise the SBE on existing policies and practices related to closing the achievement gap and make recommendations for improving state support for local educational agencies (LEAs) in closing the achievement gap using the Closing the Achievement Gap State Operations and Support Plan.

The bill requires the commission to annually report to the Legislature, the SBE, and the California Department of Education (CDE), beginning December 1, 2028, with recommendations and proposed actions to support LEAs in closing the achievement gap.

FISCAL EFFECT:

Ongoing General Fund costs of approximately \$1.1 million for the CDE to staff and support the commission.

The Legislative Analyst's Office recently warned of General Fund structural deficits of around \$35 billion per year in the 2027-28 fiscal year and ongoing.

COMMENTS:

1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

Despite billions in targeted funding, performance for our most vulnerable subgroups, including Black, Latino, and low-income students, as well as foster and homeless youth, remains stubbornly low. The current fragmented approach has failed to move the needle at the pace our students deserve. We cannot continue to identify disparities year after year without a coordinated, state-level strategy to eliminate them. AB 2202 establishes the Closing the Achievement Gap Commission to move the state from a culture of monitoring to a culture of action.

2) **Background.** Much research conducted on the academic outcomes of different subgroups demonstrates persistent disparities in achievement for Black or African American students and Latino students compared to White and Asian students, commonly known as the "achievement gap." Results from California's standardized testing of students in English

Language Arts (ELA) and math on the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) in 2025 demonstrated only 32.8% and 38.8% of Black or African American and Latino students, respectively, met or exceeded targeted benchmarks for ELA, compared to 61.8% and 74.4% for White and Asian students, respectively. Similarly, 2025 CAASPP math results demonstrated 20.1% and 25.7% of Black or African American and Latino students, respectively, met or exceeded targeted benchmarks for math, compared to 51% and 70.3% for White and Asian students. The statewide average for each assessment was 48.8% for ELA and 37.3% for math. Therefore, while the state has made several policy attempts to help LEAs meet the unique and diverse needs of their respective student populations, through legislation such as the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), Local Control Accountability Plans, the LCFF Equity Multiplier, and the Statewide System of Support, the achievement gap persists. By creating the commission and having it leverage the Closing the Achievement Gap State Operations and Support Plan, the California School Boards Association (CSBA), sponsors of the bill, claim this bill, in conjunction with three other pieces of legislation discussed in comment #3, would “focus and align the state’s policy, fiscal and operational efforts to support schools and establish a new level of shared accountability between state entities and local educational agencies for closing achievement gaps.”

- 3) **Related Legislation.** AB 2149 (Garcia), of the current legislative session, requires the Legislative Analyst’s Office to assess and report on the state’s progress in closing pupil academic achievement gaps, including recommendations for actions the state can take to meet its performance targets to be established pursuant to AB 2225 (Patel), of the current legislative session. AB 2149 is on Assembly third reading.

AB 2225 (Patel), of the current legislative session, establishes a working group to develop a Closing the Achievement Gap State Operations and Support Plan. AB 2225 is pending hearing in this committee.

AB 2514 (Ransom), of the current legislative session, requires the working group and Closing the Achievement Gap State Operations and Support Plan established by AB 2225 (Patel), of the current legislative session, to include recommendations for the development of a State of the Achievement Gap Dashboard. AB 2514 is pending hearing in this committee.

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