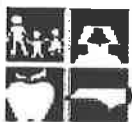


Report to the Commission on
Improving the Academic
Achievement of Minority and
At-Risk Students and the
Joint Legislative Education
Oversight Committee on the
*Guidelines for Local Task Force on Closing the
Achievement Gap*

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Guidelines for Local Task Force On Closing the Achievement Gap

Section 8.28 (d) of HB 1840 requires the State Board of Education to develop guidelines to enable the formation of a local task force in each local school administrative unit. The purpose of the task force is to advise and work with the local board of education and administration on closing the gap in academic achievement and on developing a collaborative plan for achieving that goal.

The following guidelines are established for forming the local task force:

1. Establish the task force under the auspices of the Office of the Superintendent.
2. Identify key stakeholders in the community who should be contacted about serving on the task force.
3. Consider the following criteria for task force members. Candidates should be willing to
 - a. commit to improving the education of all children, especially those who are underachieving.
 - b. attend all task force meetings and take an active role in discussions and activities.
 - c. listen to the ideas, suggestions, and comments of other task force members as well as community members.
 - d. keep other members of the school/community informed of the work of the task force.
 - e. participate in any training for the task force members such as consensus building, problem-solving, and/or group dynamics.
 - f. seek actively data-driven solutions to improving the achievement of all students.
4. Select task force members that are representative of community demographics (race/ethnic, gender, and socio-economic diversity). Members may be chosen from the groups listed below:
 - a. parents;
 - b. school personnel (administrators, teachers, instructional support personnel, exceptional children personnel, second language specialists, etc.);
 - c. local board of education members;
 - d. Department of Social Services;
 - e. Department of Mental Health;
 - f. Health Department;
 - g. Juvenile Services;
 - h. Housing Authority;
 - i. Employment Security Commission;

- j. law enforcement;
 - k. Communities in Schools (if present in the LEA);
 - l. Chamber of Commerce;
 - m. local businesses;
 - n. community organizations such as Civic Club, Lions' Club, Rotary Club, etc.;
 - o. communities of faith (Ministers' Council);
 - p. media representatives;
 - q. representatives of higher education (community colleges, colleges/universities in the area).
 - r. fraternities/sororities/community groups that provide services to children;
 - s. students; and
 - t. others as represented in the community.
5. Appoint a secretary for the task force who will be responsible for recording all aspects of the meeting and distributing it to the LEA public information officer for public dissemination.
 6. Solicit a task force member to serve as chair of the group.
 7. Convene an organizational meeting of task force members.
 - a. Define the charge to the task force.
 - b. Establish operational procedures.
 - c. Decide on roles and responsibilities of task force members.
 - d. Decide on training that may be needed for the task force.
 - e. Determine what information/data the task force will need.
 - f. Define the communication process and person(s) responsible.
 - g. Establish a policy statement for the LEA on closing the achievement gap. Address why closing the achievement gap is important to the entire community.
 8. Plan and schedule presentations on information/data needed by the task force. Ensure that all data are disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status. Examples may include, but are not limited to, state test data, discipline statistics, teacher-student ratio, attendance data (both students and faculty), faculty composition by race/gender/ethnicity, and/or professional preparation of educators.
 9. What strategies/programs set aside a specific meeting to analyze and synthesize data and information. Use these data to identify the problem(s) with student achievement. Prioritize the problem(s).

10. Define critical questions.
 - a. What programs/strategies are in place to address student achievement needs? What criteria are used to determine their effectiveness? Are they effective? If not, how can they be revised to be more effective?
 - b. Where are the gaps in services?
 - c. What information is needed to determine research-based programs/strategies to address the gaps?
 - d. Which programs/strategies were implemented in other environments with similar needs and demographics?
 - e. What was/were the key(s) to the effectiveness of these programs/strategies?
 - f. What are the budgetary requirements of these programs?
 - g. Which programs/strategies can be implemented to impact student achievement? Prioritize.
 - h. How will program effectiveness be evaluated?
11. Decide on subcommittees/task teams to research answers to the critical questions, and make assignments (with timelines).
12. Present findings of each subcommittee to the full task force.
13. Decide on an implementation plan, benchmarks and periodic monitoring process.
14. Develop a report to the school and community that includes the implementation plan, benchmarks and the monitoring process. Provide appropriate translations, as needed.
 - a. post on LEA website,
 - b. include tabloid in local newspaper(s),
 - c. mailings to parents,
 - d. presentations to community groups,
 - e. broadcasts on local access cable and radio stations, and
 1. host a community forum/summit.
15. Plan for continued operation and activities of the task force.
 - a. hold interim discussion groups,
 - b. gather, review and analyze progress reports/data and status towards meeting benchmarks,
 - c. revise implementation plan as needed, and
 - d. maintain ongoing communication.

Closing the Achievement Gap 2000-2001 Implementation Plan

Priority	Implementation Strategies	Person(s) Responsible	Resources Required	Benchmarks	Checkpoint Dates	Status

**Five Year Costs for
Closing the Achievement Gap Task Force**

Line Item	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Year Five
Printing (\$500 per LEA for 117 LEAs)	8,500.00	8,500.00	8,500.00	8,500.00	8,500.00
Professional development for task force members (\$5,00.00 per LEA for 117 LEAs for first year, \$1,000 per LEA for each subsequent year)	585,000.00	117,000.00	117,000.00	117,000.00	117,000.00
Mailing (\$500.00 per LEA per year for 117 LEAs)	58,500.00	58,500.00	58,500.00	58,500.00	58,500.00
Travel for task force members [20 task force members per LEA for 117 LEAs. Includes participation in the Closing the Achievement Gap state conference and other mileage (\$150.00 per member for travel to schools)]	1,287,000.00	1,287,000.00	1,287,000.00	1,287,000.00	1,287,000.00
Communication and publicity (\$1,000.00 per LEA for 117 LEAs)	117,000.00	117,000.00	117,000.00	117,000.00	117,000.00
TOTAL	2,056,000.00	1,588,000.00	1,588,000.00	1,588,000.00	1,588,000.00
GRAND TOTAL FOR FIVE YEARS: \$8,408,000.00					

