

1 S.282

2 Introduced by Senator Clarkson

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Education; diversity, equity, inclusion

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to create an
7 Education Equity Team Pilot Project by 1 **creating the Equity Team Commission**
8 **2** **choose pilot project participants and oversee and support the work** of Equity
9 Teams created at the supervisory union or school district level. Equity teams
10 will focus on antiracism, diversity, equity, and inclusion by reviewing equity-
11 related policies and curriculum and will 3 **each receive a stipend of \$10,000.00**
12 to support their work.

13 An act relating to the Education Equity Team Pilot Project and Report

14 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:


15 Sec. 1. EDUCATION EQUITY TEAM PILOT PROJECT; REPORT

16 (a) Creation. There is created the Education Equity Team Pilot Project that
17 shall support equity work in schools by providing 4 stipends to up to five
18 5 supervisory unions or school districts to fund the work of equity teams.


19 (b) Equity Team Commission.

Summary of Comments on S-0282 As Introduced.pdf

Page: 1

 Number: 1 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:26:16 AM

 Number: 2 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:26:21 AM

 Number: 3 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:26:29 AM

 Number: 4 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:26:38 AM

 Number: 5 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:26:43 AM

1 (1) Creation. There is created the Equity Team Commission to oversee
2 the pilot project.

3 (2) Membership. The Commission shall be composed of the following
4 members:

5 (A) one ²student equity leader, appointed by the Governor;

6 (B) one representative from the ³social equity caucus, appointed by
7 the chair of the caucus;

8 (C) the Chair of the ⁴state Board of Education or designee;



















9 (D) the Director of the ⁵Office of Racial Equity or designee; and

10 (E) one member of the ⁶House Committee on Education, appointed by
11 the Speaker of the House.

12 (3) Powers and duties. The Commission ⁸shall identify up to five
13 supervisory unions or school districts to participate in the pilot project and
14 ⁹shall manage the distribution of stipends. The Commission ¹⁰shall provide open
15 ¹¹support to the Equity Teams created under the pilot project.

16 (4) Assistance. ¹³The Commission shall have the administrative,
17 ¹⁴chnical, and legal assistance of the Office of Racial Equity.

18 (5) Report. On or before ¹⁵September 1, 2025, the Commission shall
19 ¹⁶submit a written report to the General Assembly detailing the work of the
20 Equity Teams, ¹⁸demonstrating the learning that occurred and the shifts made as

-
-  Number: 1 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Sticky Note Date: 2/7/2024 9:28:13 AM
SEC is largely House members, and another seat is from the House. Will there likely be bicameral representation?
-
-  Number: 2 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:26:57 AM
-
-  Number: 3 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:27:03 AM
-
-  Number: 4 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:27:09 AM
-
-  Number: 5 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:27:12 AM
-
-  Number: 6 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:27:16 AM
-
-  Number: 7 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Sticky Note Date: 2/7/2024 9:49:16 AM
This likely requires a process that will take longer than outlined below. Will likely involve publicizing, soliciting proposals, translations, community consultation, info sessions, etc. First meeting is Aug '24, when school year is already starting. Need to consider timing and schools' capacity to engage this process. So if the work doesn't begin in earnest until midway through a school year, can they meaningfully finish it and give the results back to the Commission and have the Commission digest all 5 and create a report with a summary analysis and recommendations for the future of the program by Sept 1?
-
-  Number: 8 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:29:00 AM
-
-  Number: 9 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:29:03 AM
-
-  Number: 10 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:29:13 AM
-
-  Number: 11 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:29:16 AM
-
-  Number: 12 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Sticky Note Date: 2/7/2024 10:05:59 AM
This is massively understated. ORE (specifically EDRE) will effectively be doing all of the Commission's work. The Commission is directed to select districts and manage the distribution of stipends, but let's examine what that actually means: Managing distribution of funds means having to request, receive, review, relay, and return legal and tax documents. In this case, that will be needed for 25 people across the state. This also means collecting and approving receipts and invoices to validate those payments. People with banking issues, confusion over documents, lost invoices and receipts, etc will all need additional special attention/handholding. This is supposed to be the work of the Commission, but that is extremely unrealistic: A student member has school obligations, so that person's time is limited. Further, that person does not have access to SOV procurement processes or funds, so that person cannot meaningfully "manage" the distribution of state monies. The legislators, as far as EDRE can tell, also do not have the same authority to manage internal funds appropriated to ORE, so they will not be able to meaningfully manage those monies either. Further, due to the election cycles, the legislators will be "spending lots of time in the districts" at the latter half of this year, so we cannot assume wide availability for participation. The State Board is supported almost entirely by AOE, so if they don't even handle their own procurement needs, it is unreasonable to expect them to manage the pilot's procurement needs. There is likely invisible back-end work being offloaded onto AOE via this seat. This leaves EDRE "or designee," but ORE only has 2 staff whose roles can absorb this because their portfolios include education work. Neither of them is contracted to perform grant management work, so having them perform this work raises questions regarding job classification and workload appropriateness. These two staff are also on point to cover topics that include education, housing, infrastructure, training, workforce, health equity, communications, policy, and more. It is unrealistic to expect them to be able to manage stipends for as many as 25 individuals, plus the administrative and technical needs associated with that support. This will all fall on EDRE. Next, the Commission is supposed to provide "open support" to the equity teams. It is unclear what this means, and it is unclear how this will be practically achieved if three members communicating might trigger or violate open meeting laws.
-
-  Number: 13 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:29:23 AM
-
-  Number: 14 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:29:26 AM
-
-  Number: 15 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:32:07 AM
-
-  Number: 16 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:32:10 AM
-
-  Number: 17 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Sticky Note Date: 2/7/2024 9:32:41 AM
Whose learning? What kind of shifts?
-
-  Number: 18 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:32:20 AM
-

1 a result of such work. The report shall also include a recommendation on
2 expansion of the pilot project and any resources needed for such expansion.

3 (6) Meetings. The Director of the Office of Racial Equity or designee
4 shall call the first meeting of the Commission to occur on or before August 1,
5 2024. The Commission shall select a chair from among its members at the first
6 meeting. A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum. The
7 Commission shall meet quarterly once participating supervisory unions or
8 school districts have been chosen. The Commission shall cease to exist on
9 October 1, 2025.

10 (c) Equity Teams.

11 (1) Membership and purpose. A supervisory union or school district
12 chosen to participate in the pilot project by the Commission shall create an
13 equity Team to focus on antiracism, diversity, equity, and inclusion by
14 viewing equity-related policies and curriculum. Teams shall include an
15 equity coordinator or other school administrator, three students, and two
16 teachers. The superintendent shall appoint Team members.

17 (2) Stipends. Each Equity Team shall receive a \$10,000.00 stipend to
18 support its work. The stipend may be used for transportation reimbursement,
19 food and supplies for meetings, and other resources to support the work of the
20 Team. Students shall be reimbursed at the same rate as staff.



 Number: 1 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:32:59 AM

 Number: 2 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:33:05 AM

 Number: 3 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:33:07 AM

 Number: 4 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Sticky Note Date: 2/7/2024 10:06:15 AM

Open meeting laws will be triggered if just 3 people are e-mailing each other. If one of the five members is EDRE and EDRE is also providing the technical and admin support, then a conversation between EDRE serving in the support role with just two other members already is a quorum.

 Number: 5 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:33:24 AM

 Number: 6 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Sticky Note Date: 2/7/2024 10:13:44 AM


If the Commission meets quarterly, how are they meaningfully and actively supporting the work as required above? This will naturally place all the work on EDRE, with group input limited to no more than 1 member at a time (OML) and full meetings only quarterly.

 Number: 7 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 10:14:07 AM

 Number: 8 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Sticky Note Date: 2/7/2024 9:36:35 AM


So if the Sept 1 report contains a recommendation to expand the pilot and the group dissolves a month later, the Legislature will reconvene in January, potentially take up the recommendation to expand, and reconvene the Commission? Or something else?


 Number: 9 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:36:47 AM


 Number: 10 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:36:50 AM

 Number: 11 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Sticky Note Date: 2/7/2024 9:39:18 AM


Is this what the \$10,000 is supposed to cover? Does LEG have a sense of what activities this might entail and whether that is an appropriate stipend amount?

 Number: 12 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:38:07 AM

 Number: 13 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:38:11 AM

 Number: 14 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Sticky Note Date: 2/7/2024 9:40:06 AM

Using what criteria? Often, the students and faculty with most helpful input are those who are alienated from the school community and may not be on the Superintendent's radar for selection.

 Number: 15 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:38:01 AM


1 Sec. 2. APPROPRIATION

2 The sum of \$50,000.00 is appropriated to the Office of Racial Equity from
3 the General Fund in fiscal year 2025 to be used for stipends for the Education
4 Equity Team Pilot Project pursuant to Sec. 1 of this act.

5 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE


6 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.



 Number: 1 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Sticky Note Date: 2/7/2024 9:42:42 AM

This \$50k represents the entirety of the funding for this pilot, meaning there are no funds for Commission members to receive per diems or any other financial support for carrying out their work. Who will cover translations? Fee for space, supplies, food for public meetings? Grant management needs? Staffing the Commission?

 Number: 2 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:43:46 AM

 Number: 3 Author: Xusana.Davis Subject: Highlight Date: 2/7/2024 9:43:49 AM
