



LATINO EDUCATION AGENDA

National Principles

Latinos represent the fastest-growing share of the U.S. labor force, yet tend to be concentrated in occupations that require less education and where wage growth is slowest. Lower levels of educational attainment among Latinos constitute an impediment to our economic growth.

While the Latino high school completion and college enrollment rates are improving, significant gaps in academic achievement between Latino children and their non-Latino peers remain at all stages of a student's educational journey. Education is supposed to be the great equalizer; that has not been the case for Latino children.

If we, as a nation, are going to meet the demands of the 21st century global economy, we must ensure that all Latino children have the education and skills necessary to maintain our competitive advantage in the world.

Decisions about educating Latino students must include the voices of those closest to our students: Latino educators. Latino educators have identified the following three principles as critical to closing both the opportunity and achievement gaps and ensuring Latino success in education and beyond.

IMPROVE ACCESS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE)

High-quality ECE is essential to improving a young child's cognitive, behavioral, and social emotional development. The evidence suggests that the positive impacts of attending preschool may be stronger for Latino children. Unfortunately, Latino children have lower rates of participation in ECE programs than white or black children. Research shows that persistent barriers to access explain these gaps.

How we are going to fix it:

- Improve access and outreach to Latino families regarding high-quality ECE;
- Meet the needs of working parents by providing access to ECE beyond traditional hours;
- Support the ECE workforce, including by providing training and certification of Latino providers - creating pathways for family care providers; and disseminating best practices for bias training and educating young English learners;
- Increase federal investments in high-quality ECE programs, including the Child Care and Community Block Grant Program, Head Start, Early Head Start, Preschool Development Grants, and IDEA infant and toddler and preschool services.

ADDRESS THE PIPELINE FOR DIVERSE TEACHERS AND LEADERS

Educators of color serve as positive role models for all students, and can help improve academic outcomes and school experiences for children of color. Latino students represent more than 25% of public school students in the U.S.; Latino teachers, however, make up just 8% of the teacher population and less than 3% of education leadership. This gap is exacerbated by the challenges associated with retaining teachers of color, who leave the classroom at higher rates than their peers.



How we are going to fix it:

- Support Grow Your Own programs that recruit and prepare local community members, including high school students, to enter the teaching profession and teach in their communities;
- Improve educator preparation by providing educator candidates with intensive supports e.g., mentors, job placement services, and counseling;
- Address recruitment and retention, including:
 - Providing financial incentives to make careers in education more attractive and available to candidates of color;
 - Ensuring local innovative placement and retention policies address the challenges identified by educators of color, including districts taking responsibility for a culturally-responsive learning environment;
- Invest in and improve educator preparation programs at Hispanic Serving Institutions;
- Establish teacher residency programs - providing teacher candidates with the opportunity to learn and hone their skills alongside an effective educator in high-need schools.

INCREASE COLLEGE ACCESS AND IMPROVE COLLEGE COMPLETION

Individuals who earn a bachelor's degree or higher have lower unemployment rates and earn more than their peers without such degrees. While we have seen significant growth in college enrollment and completion for Latino students in recent years, Latino students still face major gaps in completion rates, both at the associate's and bachelor's degree levels.

Latino students are significantly more likely to enroll in certificate or associate's degree programs. Forty-five percent of Latino students must take remedial courses when they enter college. Latino students are the least likely racial group to transfer to a four-year college and complete a bachelor's degree within six years.

While student loan debt is increasing for Latino students, the burden of student loan debt is disproportionately borne by those who start but don't complete college.

How we are going to fix it:

- Increase access to student aid by increasing Pell grants and indexing to inflation; simplifying FAFSA;
- Reform remediation by starting developmental coursework in high school; increasing access to dual enrollment/Advanced Placement; and accelerating learning as opposed to remediating learning;
- Focus on college completion - federal and state support for higher education should incentivize college completion and come with accountability for completion;
- Increase funding for Hispanic Serving Institutions to improve completion rates;
- Start career exposure and planning early - provide work-based learning opportunities, such as internships, apprenticeships, service learning, shadowing, mentorships;
- Remove barriers to postsecondary education for students without documentation.