

## EDUCATION

With Latinos comprising more than 25 percent of the public school student population, future U.S. economic competitiveness depends in great part on Latinos' educational attainment. While progress has been made, much work remains to be done.

### PRINCIPAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

#### PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF LATINOS AND LATINAS IN ALL LEVELS OF EDUCATION

- Ensure that the Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights advances policies, guidance, and enforcement to ensure equal access to education for all students regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, and immigration status.
- Require the Secretary of Education to publicly support the rights of all students to access education regardless of their immigration status, and affirmatively state that it would be against the law for a school to call immigration enforcement on a student or a parent.

#### EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

- Institute universal pre-school and expand existing Head Start programs, including Migrant and Seasonal Head Start.



#### ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

- Assess all students annually with valid culturally and linguistically competent assessments disaggregated by race and ethnicity.
- Establish goals to reduce student achievement gaps across multiple measures and require remedies focused on reducing student achievement gaps.
- Hold schools accountable for the progress of all students, and all groups of students.
- Provide greater resource equity to address academic disparities.
- Expand Latino-serving programs to meet the increased Latino student population, including the migrant education program and language instruction for students with limited English proficiency.
- Ensure that every child has the resources they need to succeed, including every tool that students need for distance learning during the COVID-19 crisis.

## HIGHER EDUCATION

- Strengthen financial aid programs.
- Increase funding for Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) and college preparatory programs.
- Ensure for-profit institutions meet gainful employment standards.
- Incentivize community colleges to transfer more students of all backgrounds to four-year institutions.
- Enact the Dream Act and guarantee that Dreamers, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients, and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders have equal access to federal, state, and institution-level financial aid opportunities.
- Ensure non-U.S. citizen students have equal access to admissions and in-state tuition if they are otherwise eligible but for their immigration status.
- Expand Latino-serving programs to meet the increased Latino student population including federal TRIO programs, Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR-UP), Title IV, Part A, Special Programs for Migrant Students (High School Equivalency Program (HEP), and the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), and grants to HSIs.

### SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE

- Reform overly harsh school discipline policies that lead to suspension, expulsion, or criminalization.

## TEACHERS, COUNSELORS, AND ADMINISTRATORS

- Strengthen the requirements for the cultural and linguistic competency of teachers and administrators (including appropriate assessments and certifications), support teacher preparation programs at Minority-Serving Institutions (which prepare most teachers of color), and encourage the hiring and retention of Latinos in higher education.

## VETERANS EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

- Launch a proactive awareness campaign about G.I. Bill benefits for Latinos who enlist in the armed forces, their families, and those veterans already in college.

## TITLE IX PROTECTIONS

- Advance policies and guidance that ensure equal access to education for all students who experience sexual harassment; that protect the health, safety, and well-being of survivors; and ensure that protections from discrimination based on sex also include individuals who experience discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.



## EDUCATION

In 2020, Latinos will make up 28 percent of students in public schools, a number projected to rise to 30 percent by the end of the decade. White students are no longer the majority; they make up 47 percent of students in public schools, a number projected to fall to 44 percent by the end of the decade.<sup>39</sup> Ensuring Latino students receive high-quality education will be the key to ensure America has a prosperous twenty-first century. But over the past few years, the Latino community has seen a rise in incidents of hate against Latino students based on their race, ethnicity, and immigration status. These incidents of hate interfere with their Constitutional rights to access education.

“Go back to Mexico.” “You don’t belong here.” “You’re not a real American.” These are the most common hate slurs directed at Latino students in school, although the vast majority of Latinos in schools are American citizens.<sup>40</sup> Over the past few years, hate speech against Latinos and perceived immigrant students has risen sharply both in college<sup>41</sup> and in K-12 public schools.<sup>42</sup> All levels of government must do what they can to end hate speech, bullying, and harassment against Latinos, immigrant students, and other protected classes. In the past few years, we have also seen some states attempt to enact policies

that would discriminate against immigrant students and citizens with immigrant parents. These policies attempt to deny them college admissions, in-state college tuition, and financial aid benefits based solely on their immigration status or the immigration status of their parents. These discriminatory practices must be expressly prohibited by legislation and investigated as discrimination by the Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

At the time of publication, the COVID-19 crisis continues to unfold. Despite the best efforts of educators and many others, it is proving difficult to provide high-quality online instruction for many Latino students due to lack of electronic devices, connectivity, digital curricula specifically designed for English Learners, and language access for parents and guardians. As policymakers address the COVID-19 crisis and its aftermath, they must work to ensure all students receive a high-quality education at all levels. Relief funds must be targeted where there is the most need, including low-income students, English learners (ELs), students with disabilities, families impacted by the digital divide, Latinos and other students of color, and Hispanic-Serving Institutions and other Minority-Serving Institutions.

### PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF LATINOS AND LATINAS IN ALL LEVELS OF EDUCATION

Over the past few years, while hate speech, bullying, and harassment of Latino students has been on the rise, the Department of Education has rolled back and rescinded many protections for Latino students, and even considered eliminating the Office of English

Language Acquisition, the office responsible for coordinating language instruction for the 10 percent of public school students who are English learners, 78 percent of whom are Latino.<sup>43</sup> The Department of Education must fulfill its mission to protect the rights

of all students, regardless of their actual or perceived race, ethnicity, English language proficiency, immigration status, disability status, survivor status, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, or income. Congress must also use its oversight authority to ensure that the Department of Education prioritizes protecting these rights.

In 2018, Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos incorrectly opined that it was “a school decision...a local decision” whether schools could call immigration authorities on a student or a family that were suspected to be

undocumented. However, the law is clear: any public school that denies a child an education by reporting them to immigration authorities has violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Constitution. Nevertheless, it took DeVos 14 days and six separate questions from Senator Murphy for her to retract that statement in a public hearing.<sup>44</sup> This kind of apathy or ignorance is unacceptable. Going forward it must be a high priority of the Department of Education to actively defend the rights of actual or perceived immigrant students, and students with mixed-status families.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Fulfill the mission of the Department of Education to protect the rights of all students, regardless of their actual or perceived race, ethnicity, English language proficiency, immigration status, disability status, survivor status, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, or income.
- Strengthen the role of the Office of English Language Acquisition within the Department of Education, and the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics, and resist efforts to eliminate them.
- Issue a strong public statement from the Secretary of Education supporting the rights of all students to access education regardless of their immigration status. This should support the related May 8, 2014 guidance, and should affirmatively state that it would be against the law for a school to call immigration enforcement on a student or a parent.<sup>45</sup>
- Withdraw any attempts to roll back Title IX protections for survivors of campus sexual misconduct and transgender students.
- Ensure that the Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights:
  - prioritizes claims of bullying and harassment against Latino students, immigrant students, and other protected classes;
  - advances policies and guidance that ensure equal access to education for all students who experience sexual harassment, and that protect the health, safety, and well-being of survivors;
  - investigates claims of discrimination, bullying, and harassment against LGBTQ students;
  - enforces claims of differential treatment against Latinos and other groups that can be enforced by the disparate impact regulations implementing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;
  - prioritizes the investigation of systemic issues, in addition to individual cases; and
  - reinstates guidance on:

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- protections against discrimination for transgender students,
- protections for survivors of campus sexual misconduct,
- the nondiscriminatory administration of school discipline,
- the complaint handling process for students with disabilities and students of color, and
- promoting diversity in K-12 schools and higher education.



## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Latinos are the racial or ethnic group least likely to be enrolled in early childhood education, according to a 2019 study by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.<sup>46</sup> This study found among three- and four-year-old children enrolled in preschool, Latinos trailed behind other groups at 41 percent enrollment, as compared to 51 percent

of African American children, and 49 percent of non-Hispanic White children. Without an academically robust high-quality early childhood education, Latino children will start elementary school behind their peers and be less prepared to move up the education ladder to academic and career success.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Institute universal preschool that meets national standards.
- Increase financial support for Head Start, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, Early Head Start, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- Ensure that Migrant and Seasonal Head Start provides after-school and daytime activities for children to prevent them from being pulled into farm labor.
- Support schools of education and teacher colleges to establish teacher education programs in culturally and linguistically competent early childhood instruction, which addresses the educational and developmental needs of Hispanics and EL students and increases the ability of school officials to communicate effectively with limited English proficiency parents.



## ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

In 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law, reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). First enacted more than fifty years ago in 1965, ESEA is a civil rights bill written to ensure equal access to quality education. Within those fifty years, the Latino community has grown from roughly 3 percent of the nation to 18 percent today nationwide, and 28 percent of students in public schools. Hispanic-Serving School Districts (HSSDs) are school districts that enroll 25 percent or more Hispanic students. In 2016, there were 3,471 HSSDs in the nation. Nine of the ten largest school districts in the nation are Hispanic-Serving School Districts. The growth of the Hispanic population is highlighted by a projected doubling of public-school enrollment

from 7.7 million in 2000 to 15.2 million in 2027. Hispanics are the only group that is expected to experience these unprecedented rates of growth in public elementary and secondary schools. It is because of this growth in the Latino community that students of color are no longer the minority, but the new majority of students in our nation's public schools.

ESSA pushes much of the burden to ensure equal access to education to state and local governments. The Department of Education must issue strong federal regulatory guidance, and states must ensure vigorous implementation and enforcement, in implementing ESSA consistent with the law and with NHLA's policy recommendation outlined below.

### POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Require states, districts, and schools to collect, and make available annually, disaggregated data on student subgroup and overall school progress.
- Ensure data is collected and reported on subgroups of students, that the data is cross-tabulated by race, income, EL status, and disability status.
- Ensure that data collection allows students with more than one race or ethnicity — such as Afro-Latinos, Asian American Latinos, and Indigenous Latinos — to correctly report each of their heritages.
- Ensure all students have access to:
  - high academic standards that are statewide and prepare students for college and a career;
  - curricula that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, and aligned to a state's college- and career-ready standards;
  - culturally and linguistically appropriate assessments of student academic performance, based on multiple measures of student academic performance, not an isolated, high-stakes test; and
  - ensure that at least one major component of assessment must be objective and generalizable across states, and all components of assessment must be objective and generalizable within a state.
- Ensure that systems are accountable for the performance of students by:

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- assessing all students with valid and reliable statewide annual assessments, including students with disabilities except for the most cognitively disabled one percent, and English-learners exempt only in their first year in the country;
- including performance goals to reduce student achievement gaps, which must aim toward equity of outcomes at all levels of achievement, not simply to an established competency floor; and
- requiring proven remedies and interventions that reduce student achievement gaps.
- Ensure that every child has the resources they need to succeed by requiring intervention where there are disparities in access to educational resources, including access to high-speed internet and electronic devices, such as laptops and tablets, that can be used for distance learning.
- Enact policies prohibiting harassment, discrimination, and bullying, particularly against students based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or actual or perceived immigration status.
- Support policies that eliminate funding of law enforcement officers in schools that increase the detention of Latinx students, ELs, and LGBTQ students and promote alternatives including counseling, peer-to-peer accountability mechanisms, and family support through federal funding.
- Enforce Title IX protections for all persons regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, to ensure that all students are free from discrimination and have access to bathrooms that correspond with their gender identity.
- Support policies that promote LGBTQ inclusion in high school athletics, including the participation of transgender people in sex-segregated sports.
- Support policies that further research the impact of implicit bias and the discriminatory application of school policies such as dress codes and codes of conduct to girls and LGBTQ youth.
- Expand Latino-serving programs to meet the full needs of the community, including:
  - accountability, data, and parental involvement (Title I, Part A); and
  - the Migrant Education Program (Title I, Part C).
- Ensure states set rigorous proficiency targets for the English language proficiency of ELs, and ensure that their assessments are culturally and linguistically competent, and aligned to state college and career-ready standards.
- Ensure that English proficiency for English-learners is a significant portion of every state's accountability system. Cross-tabulate data by race, gender, EL status, student with disability status, and economic disadvantage so that disparities can be better identified, and interventions can be better tailored to the needs of the involved student groups.
- Ensure that state plans do not diminish accountability for any subgroup of students, and that accountability applies to all groups of students protected by ESEA, including racial and ethnic subgroups, ELs, students with disabilities, and the economically disadvantaged.
- Ensure states collect and report data in a manner that does not mask student subgroup performance or rob school officials

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of the ability to narrowly tailor improvement interventions to where they are most needed.

- Ensure that schools, districts, and states are held accountable for the performance of all students in all schools, not just the lowest-performing schools.
- Ensure that state and local plans do not disrupt standing Office for Civil Rights (OCR) settlements with particular districts within those states. Pilot test the feasibility for states and districts to collect and report subgroup data within the larger EL category, including recently arrived ELs, long-term ELs, former

ELs, and interrupted ELs.

- Ensure that any requests to waive elements of ESEA do not disrupt standing Office for Civil Rights (OCR) settlements with particular districts within those states, or waive any recommendations described above.



## SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE

Within many schools, Latinos are disproportionately suspended, expelled, and referred to law enforcement. These exclusionary discipline practices are directly contrary to the goal of equal access to education for all students. While this “school-to-prison pipeline” is not unique to the Latino community, it has a disproportionate impact on the Latino community (especially on the

LGBTQ Latino community). For instance, criminalization of simple disciplinary matters could send a student to prison, but if that child is an immigrant, it could bar that child from ever receiving temporary or permanent status and may make that child eligible for deportation. Criminal convictions can also bar a child from ever obtaining federal financial aid to go to college.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- End the practices of suspension, expulsion, zero-tolerance policies, the criminalization of truancy, and involuntary school transfers.
- Collect data on suspension, expulsion, involuntary school transfers, and in-school arrests by groups of students, including students who may have more than one race or ethnicity such as Afro-Latinos, Asian American Latinos, Indigenous Latinos, Latinos with disabilities, and Latinos who are ELs.
- Address disparities on suspension, expulsion, involuntary school transfers, and in-school arrests between racial and ethnic groups, ELs, and students with disabilities and students in the LGBTQ community.
- Require that school resource officers be equitably distributed between schools, not concentrated in schools that predominantly serve low-income students and students of color.
- Ensure that teachers are trained on classroom management as an alternative to suspension, expulsion, and the criminalization of in-school behavior.
- Repeal prohibitions on federal financial aid for persons convicted of a crime.



**HIGHER EDUCATION**

The Department of Education projects that Latino student college enrollment will increase by 26 percent by 2026, but Latino college completion rates lag far behind those of other groups.<sup>47</sup> Only 17.2 percent of Hispanic adults had at least a bachelor’s degree, compared to 53.9 percent of Asians, 38.1 percent of Non-Hispanic Whites and 24.3 percent of African Americans.<sup>48</sup> Current demographics, employment, and education data for Hispanics document the national need for more significant investment to assure academic access and success throughout the PK-20 pipeline for the country’s nearly 60 million Hispanic Americans (including 3.3 million in Puerto Rico) and the 3.5 million Hispanics in higher education.

Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) are at the forefront of efforts to increase educational access and success for the nation’s Latinos. As of the 2017-18 academic year, there are 523 HSIs in 25 states, DC, and Puerto Rico that represent

over 15 percent of all higher education institutions yet serve 66 percent of all Hispanic undergraduate students. One main challenge HSIs face as they address their critical role is persistent underfunding relative to every other degree-granting institution. According to the Department of Education, HSIs, on average, received \$3,117 per student from all federal revenue sources, compared to \$4,605 per student for all degree-granting institutions, just 68 cents on the federal dollar received by other institutions to educate a disproportionately low-income student population. Furthermore, since 2009, HSIs have seen an annual increase of 30 new HSIs per year. While federal funding has continued to increase in the last four years, sadly, the funding has not kept pace with the explosive growth of HSIs. While HSIs are currently located in half of the states in America, it is only a matter of time before their presence is seen in nearly every state in the United States.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Strengthen financial aid programs to make college affordable by:
  - decreasing the interest rates on federal student loans to a low fixed rate;
  - making Pell Grant funding mandatory, increasing Pell Grant caps, and indexing those caps to inflation;
  - increasing income protection allowances, and matching them to inflation to better determine financial need;
  - providing small-dollar emergency grants for students;
  - streamlining and simplifying the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA);
  - simplifying the procedure for migrant, foster, and homeless applicants to complete and file their financial aid applications;
  - making financial aid information available to limited English proficient parents and students;

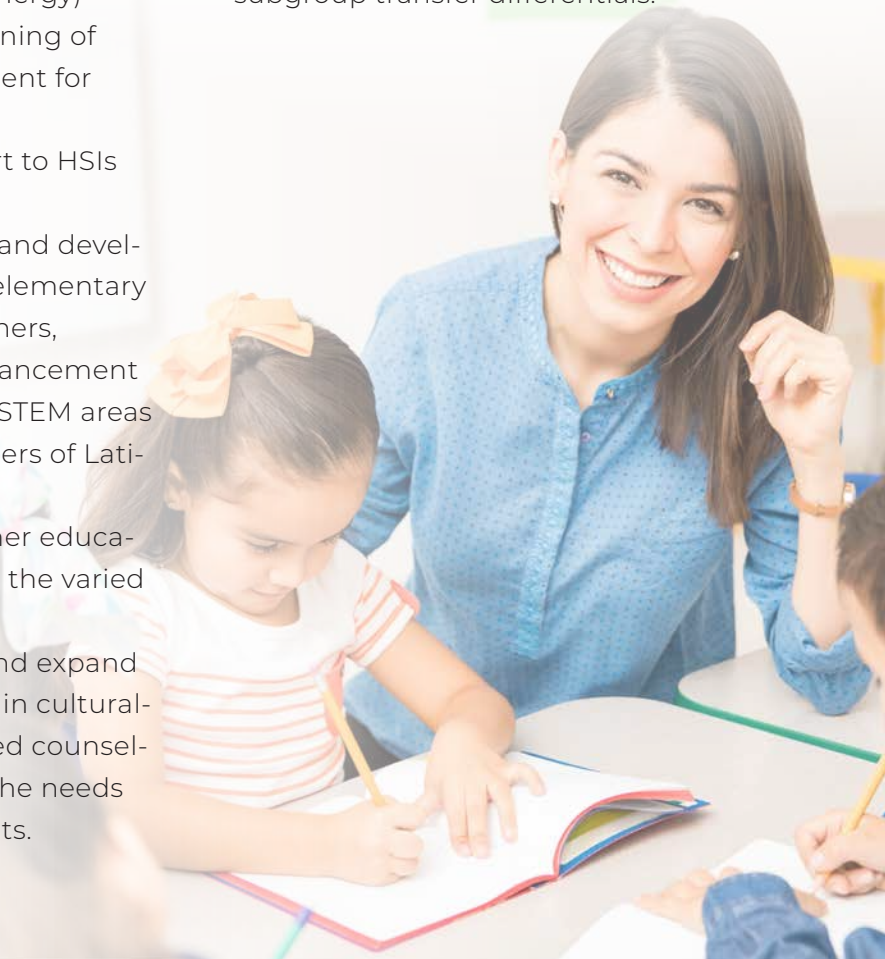
- requiring the Department of Education to partner with institutions to standardize financial aid award letters and terminology;
- improving and promoting informational tools;
- establishing grants to provide high-quality and evidence-based college counseling;
- allowing educational loans to be discharged in bankruptcy;
- expanding teacher loan forgiveness programs to cover the full cost of their education after five years;
- expanding income-based repayment by:
  - giving all borrowers the option to pay back their educational loans at 10 percent of their discretionary income,
  - waiving accrued interest for former Pell grant recipients, and
  - reducing the marriage penalty to 50 percent of the combined household adjusted gross income for married borrowers;
- implementing fully student loan debt forgiveness programs in current law including Public Service Loan Forgiveness, and Teacher Loan Forgiveness;
- expanding student loan debt forgiveness programs by:
  - creating a new public service loan repayment plan for borrowers who are working toward the public service or teacher loan forgiveness programs, which would be based on income-based repayment but whose payments would be 5 percent of discretionary income, and under which unpaid interest would not accrue, and
    - increasing the amount forgiven by the Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program; and
  - restoring access to federal financial aid for current and formerly incarcerated potential students.
- Protect the rights of non-U.S. citizen students to access higher education by:
  - defending against discriminatory admissions policies that deny access to institutions of higher education based solely on an applicant's immigration status, or the immigration status of a parent;
  - protecting the rights of students to access in-state tuition, if they would otherwise be eligible were it not for their immigration status; and
  - guaranteeing Dreamers, DACA recipients, and TPS holders equal access to federal, state, and institution-level financial aid opportunities.
- Improve completion rates for Latinos across all institutions by:
  - establishing evidence-based grant programs that improve completion rates;
  - creating grant programs to provide first-generation, DACA, TPS, and undocumented students with culturally competent academic and non-academic support services;
  - developing grant programs for equity audits;
  - disaggregating post-secondary data by race, ethnicity, income, and student enrollment status while ensuring the data collected can be cross-tab-

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ulated and will provide accurate data on students with more than one race or ethnicity such as Afro-Latinos, Asian American Latinos, and Indigenous Latinos; and

- making cross-tabulations of that data available.
- Support state-level measures that allow long-tenured graduates of a state's high schools to qualify for in-state tuition in that state, regardless of their immigration status.
- Regulate for-profit institutions that receive federal financial aid, in which Hispanic students are disproportionately enrolled, to ensure that they provide students with a quality education that adequately prepares them for gainful employment and does not overburden the students with loan debt by:
  - codifying the 80/20 rule;
  - codifying the borrower defense repayment rule; and
  - codifying the gainful employment rule.
- Increase funding for college preparation programs that assist low-income students and students of color to gain access to higher education opportunities, including federal TRIO programs, Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR-UP), Title IV, Part A, Special Programs for Migrant Students (High School Equivalency Program (HEP), and the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP).
- Fund fully Title V of the Higher Education Act (HEA), which gives undergraduate and graduate support to Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs).
- Support passage and enactment of the Hispanic Educational Resources and Empowerment (HERE) Act, which supports partnerships and collaboration between HSIs and school districts that educate the majority of Latino students to facilitate the transition between secondary and post-secondary education.
- Support the development of a Capital Financing Program for HSIs at the Department of Education for a total amount of \$10 billion in secured loans and accrued interest as part of the program.
- Incentivize universities to enroll groups of students commensurate with the demographics of the state.
- Incentivize universities to hire and retain faculty that represent the demographics of the state since it has been shown that Latino/a/x are tenured at lower rates than other racial and ethnic counterparts yet provide substantial support to campus communities and support to Latina/o/x students.
- Increase federal resources for PK-12 schools and teacher preparation programs to recruit a diverse teaching body, and train student teachers in cultural and linguistic competency and intersectionality with diverse student bodies, including LGBTQ students, as well as incorporating STEM and the arts into PK-12 curricula.
- Institute mandatory funding for Technology Partnership Programs (TPPs) at Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs).
- Incentivize universities to encourage students to pursue careers in STEM, including having culturally competent career counselors.
- Expand support to schools of education at HSIs to increase the number of Latino elementary and secondary school teachers.

- Support the creation of a capacity-building program at HSIs to be housed within pertinent federal agencies (e.g., U.S. Department of Commerce; U.S. Department of Defense; U.S. Department of Energy) to support the training and retraining of faculty and curriculum development for STEM education.
- Increase federal and state support to HSIs to:
  - provide advanced training and development in STEM areas for elementary and secondary school teachers,
  - expand the number of Advancement Placement (AP) courses in STEM areas in schools with large numbers of Latino students,
  - promote awareness of higher education options for students in the varied STEM fields, and
  - support HSIs to enhance and expand counseling programs to train culturally and linguistically prepared counselors capable of addressing the needs of Hispanics and EL students.
- Measure, monitor, and incentivize community colleges to transfer higher proportions of students to 4-year institutions successfully, and to eliminate subgroup transfer differentials.



## TEACHERS, COUNSELORS, ADMINISTRATORS

Numerous studies show that students benefit from both teacher diversity and having teachers that are their same race or ethnicity. However, while 28 percent of children in public schools are Latino, only 8 percent of teachers are Latino. This massive gap requires direct action to quadruple the

number of Latino teachers. This will require a dramatic investment in, and support for the teacher preparation work at Minority-Serving Institutions, which prepare most teachers of color. It will also require expanding teacher loan forgiveness programs, scholarships that fund teacher release time to attend degree-

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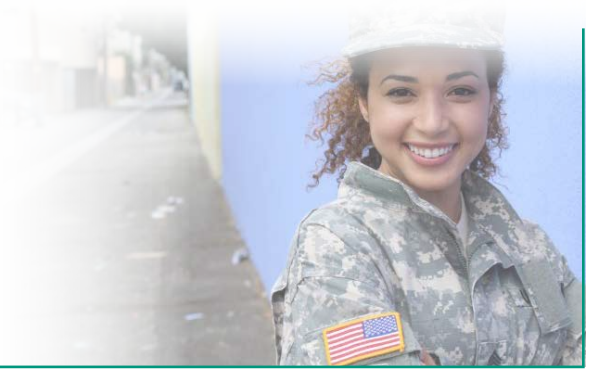
related classes (including costs of child care, transportation, and substitutes), and providing systemic support for these teachers through every step of their careers. These investments and supports must be for all levels of teaching from early childhood, to elementary and

secondary, to higher education. Additionally, regardless of their racial or cultural background, all teachers must be culturally and linguistically competent and prepared for the diversity within their classrooms.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure that students of color have equitable access to quality teachers, counselors, and school administrators at all levels of education, including early childhood, K-12, and higher education.
- Develop assessments and certifications of cultural competency and assign teachers and counselors appropriately based on such assessment and training.
- Expand teacher loan forgiveness programs to cover the full cost of their education after five years, and make teachers eligible for a new public service loan repayment plan, which would be based on income-based repayment but whose payments would be 5 percent of discretionary income, and under which unpaid interest would not accrue.
- Ensure quality professional development for teachers and counselors of Latino, EL, and migrant students, to ensure these teachers are culturally and linguistically competent. This should include:
  - strengthening the Department of Education’s oversight over teacher preparation programs;
  - recommending that the Educator Preparation Reform Act (EPRA) serve as the framework for reauthorizing Title II of the Higher Education Act;
  - defining the terms “Profession Ready Teachers” and “Profession Ready Principals” using the following language: “has demonstrated the ability to work with students who are culturally and linguistically diverse”;
  - recommending that the Reaching English Learners (EL) Act serve as the foundation of the preparation of teachers of ELs under Title II, Part B of the Higher Education Act;
  - establishing a Grant Program to Fund Development of teacher preparation programs to train teachers;
  - enhancing and expanding counseling programs to train culturally and linguistically prepared counselors capable of addressing the needs of Hispanics and EL students; and
  - increasing investment in Teacher Quality Partnership Grants.
- Develop partnerships between school districts and colleges and universities to provide degree advancement and professional development to teachers of Latino and EL students.
- Provide federal resources to train teachers, counselors, teaching assistants, principals, superintendents, and other high-level school officials with cultural and linguistic competency, including LGBTQ cultural competency, and encourage diversity in these positions.

- Provide appropriate school-based mental and emotional health support and resources for students, teachers, and educational staff that is culturally and linguistically competent, including LGBTQ competent services and care.



## VETERANS EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, Latinos make up the largest single group of veterans under 34 years old, at 19 percent as compared to White veterans at 7 percent, and African Americans at 11 percent. This is the result of a long tradition of service in the Latino community; Hispanics have served in every war since World War I, many making the ultimate sacrifice to protect our nation. After World War II, the Montgomery G.I. Bill was the first federal program to grant higher education

assistance. To this day, the G.I. Bill assists veterans, including Hispanics, to pursue higher education. Unfortunately, the Montgomery G.I. Bill does not provide meaningful outreach provisions to assist the Office of Veterans Affairs with resources to identify and reach out to Hispanic veterans and other veterans of color to encourage and support access to higher education.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Fund proactive college outreach and recruitment of Hispanic veterans and other veterans of color, as well as programs that provide academic and related support services to eligible veterans, enrolled in Hispanic-Serving Institutions and other Minority-Serving Institutions.
- Include a college outreach and guidance

plan for veterans as they enlist into the armed services, throughout the transitions in their location of service, and as they approach the conclusion of their term of service.

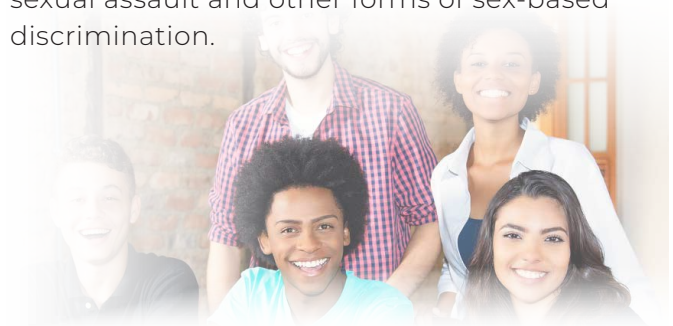
- Promote awareness of the extension of Montgomery G.I. benefits to immediate family in communities of color.



## TITLE IX PROTECTIONS

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 provides important civil rights protections that require educational institutions to protect all students, faculty, and staff from sex-based discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual assault. Studies have shown that the impact of gender-based violence can cause immediate and long-term physical and mental health consequences for students, as well as undermine their academic progress. To ensure equal access to education, it is crucial that schools, colleges, and universities respond promptly and effectively to address sexual violence and sexual harassment and that they

improve comprehensive prevention efforts. However, recent policy changes undertaken by the U.S. Department of Education, as well as their proposed rules regarding Title IX implementation, undermine access to safety in preventing and responding to campus sexual assault. These policies are a step backward at a time when our nation and educational institutions need to be strengthening the commitment to preventing and improving the response to sexual harassment and sexual assault and other forms of sex-based discrimination.



### POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Withdraw the Department of Education’s proposed Title IX rule, which undermines protections from sexual harassment and sexual assault.
- Advance policies and guidance that prohibit discrimination based on sex and ensure equal access to education for all students, including protecting the health, safety, and well-being of survivors.
- Strengthen policies and increase resources to improve prevention efforts in K-12 schools and institutions of higher education.
- Ensure that protections from discrimination based on sex also include individuals who experience discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

## ACCESS TO EDUCATION IN PUERTO RICO

Children and youth in Puerto Rico have the right to a quality public education that will ensure equal access to personal, professional, and labor opportunities.

Quality public education is a key element in achieving an effective recovery, lowering poverty levels, and overcoming the economic crisis of the island.

### POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Halt austerity measures imposed on Puerto Rico by the federal budgetary oversight board in the PROMESA legislation, which have resulted in school closures and decreased funding for the island’s public university system.
- Allocate and distribute funds appropriated by Congress to Puerto Rico for rebuilding and restarting the island’s education system without imposing additional controls that are not required of other local governments.