

**PSC-ED-OS (US)**

**Moderator: Emmanuel Caudillo**  
**October 22, 2014**  
**1:00 pm CT**

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time all participant lines are placed on mute until the question and answer of today's conference call. And at that point if you'd like to ask a question you may press star and then one. Today's session is being recorded. If you have any objections you may disconnect at this moment. Now I'll turn the meeting to your host Mr. Marco Davis. Sir you may begin.

Marco Davis: Thank you operator and welcome everyone and welcome everyone. Thanks for joining us today. My name is Marco Davis. I'm the Deputy Director of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics. And I'm joined by several colleagues here at the Initiative on the webinar today.

Two quick business matters. I want to inform and remind you all that this webinar is off the record and not intended for press purposes and also I want to remind you that this webinar including the Q&A will be recorded as the operator just said and both the recording and the transcript of the conversation along with the slide presentation will be posted to the Initiative's Web site after the call to make the information available for anyone who is unable to join us for the live webinar.

The agenda today is a little bit different from previous webinars. We have one presenter and the reason for that is that we're talking about our Bright Spots effort. And so what I'm going to do is begin the webinar by going into a bit more depth about our Bright Spot effort and how it fits into our Initiative's upcoming year of action.

Then I'll introduce our presenter who will speak for up to 15 minutes about her organization which is a great example of a Bright Spot. Then we will have 15 minutes of Q&A with the presenter and then after that we'll actually broaden the discussion to allow for Q&A with us about our overall Bright Spots effort, ones you've both heard about from us and heard from an example of what a Bright Spot looks like. When we open the floor for questions after the first presenter's presentation the operator will come back on to provide guidance on how to get into the queue to ask a question.

And now on to our discussion today on Bright Spots. And first to again provide the overall context. As you all might be aware our initiative focuses on a full what we call cradle to career or a full spectrum of lifelong learning agenda, everything from early childhood education to post secondary and adult education and everything in between.

Within that spectrum we've identified roughly six areas that are aligned with both the president and the Department of Education's agenda and are topics where we think we can advance the dialogue or make a difference in some way. Those six areas are early learning, Hispanic teacher recruitment, stem education, college access, post secondary completion and family engagement. And in February of this year we actually added a seventh focus area which is leading much of the work in the Latino community around the president's My Brother's Keeper initiative.

We've actually held webinars on many of these topics already earlier this year in addition to the many other activities that we carry out as an initiative focusing on those areas. Now next fall our initiative will actually celebrate its 25th anniversary. It was first established this initiative in the fall of 1990 under President George H.W. Bush.

And to commemorate that milestone we've begun our anniversary year of action with the theme fulfilling America's future. So throughout this next year leading up to our actual anniversary we're going to be holding at least 25 events and activities throughout the country.

We're going to be securing at least 25 commitments from the private philanthropic and even public sectors to invest in Latino education in some way and ultimately create a comprehensive blueprint that will look back at and highlight the last 25 years of educational progress for the Latino community but also lay out an agenda for leaders at all levels to close the opportunity gaps that still persist for Hispanic students over the next quarter century.

Now leading up to this work some of the things that we've found out over the last couple of years and/or are confirmed are one, that there are some major needs still in Latino communities. We still have some very serious issues to overcome in a lot of areas.

But two, while there are challenges there are also tremendous strength and opportunities within local communities. There are people who struggle everyday but there are also people who rise above challenges, who overcome barriers and are able to succeed often with the support and the help of programs, organizations, schools and leaders. Their ideas and solutions to our

communities' problems being played out at the local level that just need to be supported, expanded, replicated or adapted. And so in keeping with our theme for the year of action, fulfilling America's future, we are planning to build a kind of catalog of Bright Spots. Next slide please.

Bright Spots are programs or models that are achieving real and positive results with Latino students and their families. Bright Spots also help reframe the narrative around Hispanic education from one of deficits to one of assets and opportunities.

You see one of the things we've come to understand is that it's important to reframe that narrative. When we first created, the initiative, one of the arguments advocates made about the need for our initiative was the issue of the moment that was discussed as the Hispanic dropout crisis.

Well the good news is that since then we've actually cut the dropout rate in half. In fact we cut this dropout rate in half from 28% to roughly 14% really over the last decade. But of course there's still more work to do and we haven't reached that goal yet. But we find that there is far better response, more enthusiasm and engagement when we focus on the possibilities of the future not just the challenges of the present.

Now we invite you all to think of and recommend programs and models for us to consider as Bright Spots. In addition to the general info like contact information, mission, etcetera, there are a few key questions which we'll need answered in order to consider a Bright Spot submission.

Those key questions include one, how has the program or model produced positive results? For example has it improved Hispanic student achievement in a measurable way? Have - has FASA completion or college enrollment gone

up in the served community? Have early learning offerings been expanded in that area?

Number two, how has it helped the Hispanic community overcome challenges in education? What are those challenges? Number three what has been the specific impact on the Hispanic community? Wherever possible provide specific details such as statistical data, metrics, evaluation info etcetera.

And number four what is the most significant factor or factors for the positives results? And in this case it may be strategies, tips, the program model of course but also include elements that could be useful for other folks to learn from in learning about this Bright Spot and thinking about applying the work of that bright spot to their own work.

We will posting more information about this effort on the Web site in the next few days. Sorry on the Web site in the next few days which will include a Bright Spot nomination form that can be filled out and sent to us directly. As you see on the slides it will be posted on our Web site and you'll have the email address. It will be included on the form also that folks can submit to us. So that in a nutshell is our bright spot effort.

I know folks may have some more questions about the process, how to nominate, what they should be looking for, etcetera but before we get to all of that section of dialogue what we'd like to do now is to present a program model that we believe is an excellent example of a bright spot. So for that I'd like to introduce Tara Dunn who's the Director of Education at an organization named The Concilio which is based in Dallas, Texas. Tara?

Tara Dunn: Thank you so much Marco for this opportunity and good afternoon everyone. I'm very honored to speak to you today. As Marco mentioned I am talking to

you from Dallas, Texas. And I'll be sharing about The Concilio's parent engagement program called Parents Advocating for Student Excellence but first I want to tell just a little bit about our organization. We are a non-profit and next slide please.

So The Concilio works to build stronger communities by empowering parents in disadvantaged neighborhoods to improve their family's education and health. We focus on parents because we really believe that change begins at home. Our programs do their work in different parts of the whole Dallas, Fort Worth metropolitan area. Next slide please.

So let's talk about parents. Are they really that powerful a force in education? I mean we know that students need good teachers but research does show that parents do make a difference. When they're involved in their children's education the children have higher grades, higher test scores. They have better attendance in school. They graduate at higher rates from high school and more of them go on to post secondary education.

So right there those are tremendous benefits. But what's even more exciting is that those benefits can occur regardless of parent's ethnicity, of their socioeconomic status or their education level. We love that because it means that any of our kids have a chance to succeed when their parents are involved. It really levels the playing field and it makes a difference especially for those who are disadvantaged and at risk.

So even though the benefits are clear we here in Dallas often hear it said and hopefully you don't but you may that Latino parents don't care about education. Well we believe first of all this is absolutely not the truth and it's an offensive misconception and we're working to eliminate that in North Texas. At The Concilio we believe that parent's love their children and want the best

for them. Unfortunately there are barriers for many of our Latino parents and that keeps them from becoming engaged. So we want to look at some of those. Next slide please.

First there are cultural barriers and I'm probably preaching to the choir. I know many of you have dealt with this as well. The majority of Latinos in North Texas are from Mexico and Central America. I'm sure, you know, in different areas where all of you are calling from there may be some of the same and they may be from many other places as well.

Here many of them are recent immigrants from rural areas in their country of origin and they did not have a chance to receive very much education. It's not uncommon for them to be unfamiliar with the way the school system functions in the U.S. So often they have difficulty understanding report cards, assessment exams, graduation requirements.

And in fact in many of their countries of origin parents are actually discouraged from becoming involved in their children's education. Teachers are regarded as the academic experts and questioning them is considered disrespectful.

Thus many of our parents perceive that their role in their children's education is just to be that of making sure they get to school. They don't know that anything more is wanted or expected of them. And additionally things that a lot of us would take for granted like reading to our children or creating a time and place for homework or knowing that financial aid is available to help our children go to college, those are not things that a lot of the parents that we work with here are aware of. But in the U.S. education system these are knowledge and behaviors that are critical to academic success.

Latino parents also encounter language barriers to being involved as you can imagine. So many of those that we work with in the North Texas area speak very little English. And this may cause them feelings of inadequacy or intimidation when it comes to understanding how the system works or communicating with the school or even trying to help their children with their homework.

There are also educational level barriers and these surface when parents think well I didn't even get as far as high school in my own education. How can I help my child graduate let alone go onto college? Parents may feel that they have little to offer their children academically when it comes to being their child's first and most important teacher and many of them, you know, are not aware how important it is that they are the first teacher.

Finally another barrier can be lack of trust. There's often a fear of unfamiliar institutions by our Latino parents and this will stem from negative experiences with like the establishment and I put that in quotes, for example government agencies. And that can be from both their countries of origin and in the U.S. And then naturally schools might be viewed in this light and therefore parents are often reluctant to participate in school activities. And then of course certainly as we know immigration status plays a part for some parents in feeling, you know, fearful about going to the school.

So these are just some of the barriers our families are facing and that makes us ask is it any wonder that so many of them are not involved in education. No. It's common sense that they would not be involved. When it comes to Dallas Fort Worth as a region we here can't afford for any part to not understand the basic of education and we believe it's true for our nation as well. And this doesn't matter ethnicity, race, language, education level, socioeconomic or

immigration status. So that's why our non-profit The Concilio is in the business of parent engagement. Next slide please.

So in our program Parents Advocating for Student Excellence, or we call it PASE for short, we teach parents their role and responsibilities so they can one navigate the school system. Parents need to know what the expectations are of their children at each grade level so they know when they're succeeding or when their children are struggling. They need to be able to get help for their children when it's needed and know how decisions and changes are going to be made within the system.

Another piece is to provide a supportive home learning environment. This actually may be the single most important piece of our work because parents are reinforcing the mindset at home that education is a family priority when they are doing things like making sure their children do their homework or when they have conversations with their children about their expectations for their children's futures and when they listen to their children share their own goals and dreams.

Or even and I'm sure many of you parents can relate to this when they make sure that their children get a good night's sleep and then get them up to make sure that they get to school on time.

Parents also learn to support a child's emotional and social development in PASE. We discuss with them how important communication is with their children at all age levels and children need boundaries and discipline and how critical positive self-esteem is.

We also work to tie all of these things back to how they affect academics because for example if a child has a negative self esteem that may make them

think that they can't do anything well and then they just will quit trying in school because they just assume well I'm probably dumb anyway. And so we certainly don't want any of our children feeling that way.

We also talk to them about collaborating with teachers, councilors and principals because we want parents to be confident that they are true partners of the school. The school does want them. So we help them understand why meeting with their children's school is so important even when things are going well that they - it's not just when things are going bad but that when things are going well because parents are the experts on their children. They can provide great insight to the school on how their children learn.

They can also talk to the school about activities that they can do at home to reinforce what their children are learning in school. And when they talk to the school they find out about programs that are provided there. They find out about activities that are going on and of course they also find about issues. For example we had a parent tell us that they found out that their child's elementary school had a drug problem by participating in PTA. Otherwise they probably wouldn't have known about that.

And of course finally we want to encourage higher education. Many of our parents don't think college is an option for their children because of the cost. Some, you know, just want their children to graduate from high school and then work full time to support the family because they don't realize that a high school diploma won't get their children nearly as far in life as a college degree will. Parents are also scared of their children possibly moving away.

So it's really important for us in the PASE program to get rid of any myths and fears about higher education and encourage parents to make it the expectation for their family. This may mean a trade school. It may mean a

certificate program. It doesn't have to mean a four year college degree but some form of post secondary education will take their children so much further than no diploma or only a high school diploma. Next slide please.

So now I'll talk about the activities that make the PASE program work. First we partner with schools and this is beneficial for several reasons. It connects the parents to the school. It provides a venue for the program and it provides a ready-made pool of families for us to invite to join the program. So it's really a win win. Each school receives a team so that we are really providing a turnkey program to the school. We have education coordinators who are full time staff persons that oversee the program's implementation at several schools each semester. So each school gets one of those.

We also have facilitators who lead the weekly discussions and activities from our curriculum. We provide free childcare. So we have trained childcare providers for each session and we have recruiters to encourage parents to attend the sessions. And I'll talk more about the recruitment in just a moment but I do want to mention that our team members are typically parents who have graduated already from the program. So it's really one parent working with another parent and the parents make great leaders who are helping to move the program forward and getting more parents involved and aware.

When it comes to recruiting we do a number of things and first and foremost we get a roster from the school of all of the families and our recruiters call every parent from that list to invite them to the program. We feel like this personal invitation goes a long way in beginning to develop a relationship with parents and relationship is a huge part of what this program is about.

The principal will also send a letter to all the families to let them know that the program is going to be offered and that it's free to the families and the

principal lets them know in this letter that they will receive a phone call which is very helpful because we don't want them to think that we're just telemarketers.

We do send home flyers and sometimes we even make home visits where we go door to door knocking on doors and inviting people to participate. And then our team will also go to the school a few days before the program and talk to parents when they drop off their kids or when they pick up their kids to invite them to the program.

We've just found that being able to have a conversation goes so much further than a piece of paper. And so those phone calls and those face to face invitations make such a difference because the person knows who it is that's inviting them. They have a voice. They have a face. It just helps tremendously.

PASE is a nine week program and it's held once a week and holding it for a sustained period of time like rather than having it just be all on one Saturday for example allows parents to time to develop relationships with us and with the school and with one another.

So for a lot of parents they really feel like this kind of becomes like a support group for them. It also gives them time to digest the information that we're providing, to ask questions and to practice what they're learning because they do activities during class and we send them home with homework.

It's important for us to make sure that we eliminate as many barriers as possible that might keep parents from joining PASE. So as mentioned we hold the program at the school which usually means then that transportation is not an issue because the school is in their neighborhood. Our sessions are held in

both morning and evening on the same day each week and these are duplicate sessions.

That way we can accommodate parent's schedules and as many parents as possible can participate. If they can't come in the morning they can come in the evening or vice versa. We provide the program in English, Spanish and we do our best to provide for other languages as well if those are needed because when we're in a school we want the program to be open to all families.

As mentioned before we also provide free childcare so that that is not an issue for parents and our facilitators will call their classes each week to remind them of the next session. So one it's a good way to make sure nobody forgets to show up and it's a good chance to further develop a relationship with the parents. They get a chance to chat and find out how the parents are doing and what questions they might have.

The final week of the program is graduation and this is significant because some of our parents have never been recognized for completing anything before. They actually go on stage to receive their certificate, very much like you would imagine a graduation ceremony, and we ask them to invite their family and their friends to come and watch them.

We bring the children who are in childcare into the auditorium, even the infants and toddlers because we want them to cheer on their parents and to watch their parents model what it means to be committed to something. Parents will often get dressed up. We always have a reception afterwards. We just really want to celebrate their dedication to their children's education.

So for us all of these activities we have found them to be best practices that work in bringing parents to our program and then also retaining them all the

way through to graduation. But then you might ask well okay so you have wonderful activities but what's the impact down the line for parents and for their students. So next slide please. We actually wanted to see if PASE was making a difference on graduation rates and college enrollment because the program began and continues to be a dropout prevention program. However it's really grown to be much more than that. So we did a survey of parents who completed our program and next slide please.

The survey showed that 90.2% of their students graduated from high school and 78% of those entered post secondary education. These results are so exciting for us because they are significantly higher than what we find here in Dallas County for example and from what we see typically these are definitely higher rates. Additionally we've partnered with Southern Methodist University to evaluate parents who completed the PASE program and their students over the past three years. So from 2011 to 2014. And the study actually showed some really significant changes.

First there was a statistically significant change in parent's attitude towards their children, also in their knowledge of education and in key behaviors related to academic advocacy after the PASE program versus before they participated in the program.

So for example parents' perceptions of their ability to help their child make better grades increased significantly. Parents are spending more time requiring their children to read at home, having their students do their homework consistently and communicating with school staff, all which are things that, you know, are objectives of our program. Parents are also having discussions with their children about long term career and academic goals.

Additionally Southern Methodist University found that parental involvement in PASE improves student attendance. And research suggests a statistically significant relationship between attendance and achievement. For example, a study showed that attendance in elementary and middle school was a robust predictor of GPA and performance on standardized tests. And clearly we do need our children in the seat so they can learn.

Another impact of the PASE program is that when parents participate their students decreased in tardiness. And of course again being in the classroom on time provides students with the best possible opportunity to learn. And attendance and a reduction in tardiness, being to school on time those are indicators of success down the line. So next slide please.

We are delighted that Latino families are being impacted by our Parents Advocating for Student Excellence program and we are really honored that we have the chance to support our community in this way. And that is the end of my presentation. Thank you all for listening and I'll be happy to answer any questions.

Marco Davis: Wonderful. Thanks so much Tara. I really appreciate that and certainly congratulate you on the great work you're doing. So now we're going to open the floor. We'll spend about 15 minutes first taking questions that people have specifically for Tara about the work of The Concilio in case folks have any questions about the work that they do and then like I said we'll then shift and broaden the subject to folks who have questions about the initiative's broader Bright Spot effort. So operator if you wouldn't mind reminding callers how it is they can get in the queue to ask a question.

Coordinator: Sure thing sir. We will now begin the question and answer session. If you'd like to ask a question you may press star and then one. Please record your

name clearly when prompted. Your name is needed to introduce your question. To cancel you may press star and then two. One moment speakers for the first question.

Marco Davis: Great and while we're waiting, while folks are queuing up just wanted to let folks know that Tara has graciously provided her contact info and the information for The Concilio on the deck. As you see it's on your screen right now.

And you all should have received a copy of this slide presentation which talks both about the Bright Spots and about The Concilio just before this call. I don't know if you had a chance to check your inbox. But if you find that you haven't received it after the call and you have follow-up questions and you weren't able to take down Tara's info or want to reach out to us simply send us an email at whieeh@ed.gov and we'll be sure to send you the slide deck.

Once again that's whieeh@ed.gov. It's also the email address from which you should have received the invitation to this webinar. So thanks for that.

Operator do we have folks in the queue?

Coordinator: Yes sir. Our first question comes from the line of (Anisole Gutierrez). Sir, ma'am your line is open.

(Anisole Gutierrez): Yes. I just wondered if you have the curriculum or the work plan, the details of what is presented to the parents anywhere? I'm looking at your Web site and I can't find it and it would be useful for us to know what the content of the program is.

Tara Dunn: Sure. Absolutely. Yes. It's not - I know it's not on the Web site. That would definitely be something that I could provide to Marco to forward out. The

curriculum is one that we actually developed ourselves after working in parent engagement for awhile. And we partnered with the community, with educators, with parents and students to get their feedback and we had educators review it. So it's one that we've created and I'll be happy to let you know what the topics are.

(Anisole Gutierrez): Thank you.

Marco Davis: Great. And so we're happy certainly to pass that through but also if you can also happily cut out the middle man and if you want to email Tara directly her email address is on that deck - is on the screen right now. And so you can just email and ask her for that and she can send it straight to you. And other folks who are on the line who are also interested I'm sure Tara would be happy to engage with you.

Tara Dunn: Oh sure. Sure I'll be happy for anyone to shoot me an email and I will be glad to send that your way.

Marco Davis: Great. Next question operator.

Coordinator: All right our next question comes from the line of (Gwen Peters). (Gwen Peters) your line is open.

(Gwen Peters): Hi. Thank you very much. Yes. So I have a couple of questions. The first one is, are children in Dallas tested in their L1, their native language so that you can get a - so that you can determine what it is that they do know, particularly students who struggle with English? So that's the first question. And then the second question that I have for Tara is does your program align with common core in any way? I don't even know if Dallas does right now but I'm curious about that. Thank you so much.

Tara Dunn: Okay sure. No problem. Thank you for your question. In Dallas the children are tested in their language kind of depending on. I mean they are tested for their proficiency.

(Gwen Peters): Yes.

Tara Dunn: But then when we do our state assessments which start in third grade, the Texas state assessments those can be done in either English and Spanish. I don't believe they have them in any other languages unfortunately. And so children do have that opportunity. We are developing more and more bilingual schools here and dual language schools.

So we're, you know, seeing I think, you know, some improvement in our limited English proficiency. Our program specifically is working with parents. And so unfortunately a lot of our parents aren't in, you know, positions. They don't have jobs or many of them, you know, don't work. A lot of the mothers are in the homes. And so they are actually not in finding themselves with a lot of opportunities to learn English just period.

In terms of our program aligning with common core Texas does not follow common core. So that is not something that, you know, we have had to really had to take a look at. What we do though is one of the lessons that we provide at the elementary age is a lesson on academic standards and those we get directly from the Texas education agency.

So we are letting, you know, helping parents understand what are the academic standards that are required for your children. When it comes to the older children Texas just passed a new law recently about what's going to happen when students get to ninth grade about basically picking a path to

follow through high school. And so that's another lesson that we've added to our program because it's absolutely something that parents need to be aware of because they're supposed to work with their children to, you know, pick kind of which avenue do they want to take through high school.

(Gwen Peters): Great. Thank you so much.

Tara Dunn: Sure.

(Gwen Peters): Very, very helpful.

Marco Davis: Great. Next question operator.

Coordinator: All right our next question comes from the line of Ms. (Cheryl Juarez). Ma'am your line is open.

(Cheryl Juarez): Thanks. I'm at the Frost Science Museum here in Miami, Florida and I wanted to get a little bit more information about the mechanics of you have this is for elementary, middle and high school. So do - and you hold it at - the sessions at the school. Is that true? And then how do you recruit the parents?...

Tara Dunn: Yes.

(Cheryl Juarez): And then how do you provide the trainers? Are they on staff? Are they of El Concilio or what?

Tara Dunn: Okay. Sure. Sure...

(Cheryl Juarez): And then if we can get through those I see you have a preschool component as well, a yearlong preschool component for parents. So I was very interested in that. Thank you.

Tara Dunn: Right. Okay. Well you did ask if we hold, you know, just to clarify if we hold the program at the school and yes we do. It's pretty rare that we would hold the program elsewhere. We just really want the parents to connect with their child's school.

And so we do work elementary, middle or high school. So we have different curricula for different levels and we have developed relationships with school districts. Sometimes a school will just contact us. In fact often anymore schools will just contact us out of the blue and, you know, ask us if we can partner. And so we do work with them to figure out the day of the week, the time of day.

And then in terms of recruitment we ask them for the school roster so that we can call all the families on the school roster to invite them to the program. And then the principal also sends out a letter.

We send out flyers and then we do have our staff at the school in the few days before the program begins just to talk to as many parents, you know, when they come and pick their children up at the end of the day or when they drop them off in the morning. Just to really let them know about the program and kind of reinforce the letter that they received or if they got a flyer. Hopefully they got the phone call although we do find that a lot of the phone numbers unfortunately are disconnected.

So we want to kind of tackle it from every avenue. But when we partner with a school we would certainly let others in the community participate but first

and foremost it is for the parents whose children attend that school. We don't restrict the number of parents. You know, so if we have like 50 parents come or 100 parents come we're going to serve them either way. And we will just add more staff.

And then in terms of our staff they are parents - primarily parents who have graduated from the program and who are full time education coordinators who oversee the programming and have seen leadership qualities in and parents who are really passionate about giving back to others in their community and want to get engaged.

And so we do work with them as seasonal workers because the program is only nine weeks. So it's not a full time job. But we do provide the training and so we have some of those parents who've been with us since we started the program in like 2002 and then we have, you know, every year as we're expanding we find more and more parents.

And we really try to develop teams in the different parts of the metroplex that we're working in. So if we're working in Fort Worth as much as possible we want to have our team at the schools there actually be from those neighborhoods. The same thing if we worked in Dallas or in the suburbs of Dallas, that sort of thing.

And yes we do have a pre-K curriculum. That one I did not talk about because it would, you know, you all would be listening to me all day. But it is a yearlong program. So we start that at, you know, pretty much the second or third week of school and go through the end of school and parents again come once a week. And we provide it in Spanish. We're getting ready to provide it also in English because we're moving into a neighborhood where there's a need for the English as well. And that really focuses on developing

vocabulary, how parents can use everyday experiences to teach their children concepts and words. We really want children to be kindergarten ready but then we do also focus on the parent's role, not only as their child's first teacher in the home but then what is their role when their child does start school because we want the parents to be kindergarten ready as well.

(Cheryl Juarez): Great. Thank you so much. It's a wonderful program...

Tara Dunn: Sure.

Marco Davis: Great. Thanks. Do we have another question operator?

Coordinator: Yes sir. The next question comes from the line of Ms. (Kerry Anne Sylvester).  
Ma'am your line is open.

(Kerry Anne Sylvester): Well thank you so much. Tara I want to know do you want your program to be nationwide? If so do you plan to add Creole as a leading language in Florida?

Tara Dunn: That is a very good question. We would love to expand it and now because Creole is not something that is widely used here that's not, you know, something that we've run into yet. Really for us right now just expanding it around the Dallas, Fort Worth area has kind of kept our plates full. And of course as a non-profit organization we have to raise the funding to do that.

But if we were to expand that would definitely be something that would be, you know, that we would need to look at as we go into new communities because even as we go into new suburbs for example of Dallas we're finding families who speak different dialects, you know, families who speak different

languages and they're often not yet proficient in English. So and they're certainly not proficient in Spanish, you know.

Especially we have a lot of Asian families. And so that is something that we're starting to address. And the great thing is that the schools really care that all their families can participate. So they will often help us with translators.

(Kerry Anne Sylvester): Okay. Thank you.

Marco Davis: Great. Well we'll move onto the next question but just also want to let folks know we're now at the 2:45 point. So if folks want to get in the queue and ask questions about the broader Bright Spots effort of myself and my colleagues about that if there were any details that I didn't provide or that folks had questions about feel free to do that. But obviously if there are folks still in the queue who have questions for Tara by all means we'll continue there as well. So operator if you want to go on to the next question in the queue.

Coordinator: Oh as of this time sir there are no questions in queue.

Marco Davis: Oh great. So then maybe folks are queuing up hopefully. Or perhaps I provided enough detail about the - our Bright Spots effort that makes sense. As I mentioned the form will be up soon. The idea really is for folks to tell us about great work that's being done either in your community or other communities that you know about that we can then share information. To give you all a sense we obviously have had Bright Spot organizations that fit the Bright Spot category who are presenters on these webinars and we do hold them every month.

We have also invited organizations that would be Bright Spot categories to be presenters when we've had convenings or we've had policy action summits.

We feature Bright Spot organizations sometimes in a blog when it's an organization or a program or a model that illustrates the topic that we're trying to discuss. When we're conducting site visits and we're traveling to a different community often Bright Spots are things we're interested in looking at and maybe conducting a site visit and trying to bring some attention to the great work being done there.

And then of course it's useful to know that having this information obviously it will be up on the Web site and so obviously there will be a lot of great cross sector information across community learning and awareness. But also we can share that with our colleagues here at the Department of Ed and senior officials in the administration for when they're traveling, when they're looking to do visits and when they're looking to hold events that they can make sure to include, invite and/or highlight that work. So we do encourage folks to talk to us about Bright Spots.

As I mentioned Bright Spots really should run the full gamut. So we're looking for Bright Spots in the areas of early ed, middle, high, post secondary, adult education, everything in between. Obviously our seven areas are of particular interest to us but obviously if you have a Bright Spot that's in another area beyond that we'd love to hear information about that as well. So...

Coordinator: Mr. (Davis)?

Marco Davis: Yes. We have questions?

Coordinator: Do we have room for two more questions? So we have only two questions...

Marco Davis: Perfect. We do. Perfect.

Coordinator: All right our - all right the next question comes from the line of (Gwen Peters). Ma'am your line is open.

(Gwen Peters): Hi. Thank you for taking me again. I got lucky. So I actually just sent a question through the chat about looking for some more information about the broader program My Brother's Keeper initiative. I'm not familiar with that. And then Emmanuel I also have a question about family resource centers that are across the country, you know, somewhat maybe similar to Tara's program. I'm wondering if your office has a relationship to - a direct relationship with community family resource centers throughout the country?

Marco Davis: So answer your second question first most easily. We do not have a formal relationship to family resource centers. We do know of some and again that's part of our purposes in this Bright Spots effort is to build sort of a larger list of groups that are out there that are local and/or regional organizations that we simply may not be aware of. And then of course to share them with everyone and to put their info up on our Web site so that people can access them and connect with them directly themselves.

(Gwen Peters): Okay.

Marco Davis: But so yes we don't have any sort of formal relationship or directory or anything like that. But again hopefully we'll be getting closer to that over the course of the next year. And then with regard to your first question so the My Brother's Keeper initiative is basically something that the president announced in February of this year to build ladders of opportunity for all including boys and young men of color. The idea is to really improve life outcomes throughout different aspects of the educational and/or the developmental process. Again allowing all young people to reach their full potential but also

looking to reduce disparities and to close gaps among specific populations which in many cases are particularly boys and young men of color.

The areas of development that My Brother's Keeper initiative looks at, focuses on or thinks about are early learning, school readiness, third grade literacy, school discipline, post secondary completion, linking to ladders to jobs and economic opportunity and also interactions with the juvenile and/or criminal justice system.

So there are a variety of activities and ways that the initiative is looking and highlighting and encouraging people in the private sector to work. The easiest thing to do is to look at either on our Web site if there's a specific interest in the work in the Latino community that our initiative is doing on our Web site at [ed.gov/hispanicinitiative](http://ed.gov/hispanicinitiative) there is a tab across the top called My Brother's Keeper where you can see that work.

(Gwen Peters): Okay.

Marco Davis: And then there's also the main Web site at the White House which is simply [whitehouse.gov/mybrotherskeeper](http://whitehouse.gov/mybrotherskeeper) which also talks about the overall initiative and the work and in fact highlights the - includes rather video of the president's speech at the establishment of this initiative which personally I think is very powerful and really sort of illustrates and encapsulates sort of what the motivation behind - is behind this effort and really what it seeks to achieve.

(Gwen Peters): Awesome. Okay thank you.

Marco Davis: No problem. And the next question?

Coordinator: All right. Our next question comes from the line of (Mary Gonzalez). Ma'am your line is open.

(Mary Gonzalez): Hello?

Marco Davis: Yes. Go right ahead?

(Mary Gonzalez): Hello?

Marco Davis: Hello. Yes we can hear you.

(Mary Gonzalez): Oh okay. Good afternoon. Dr. (Mary Gonzalez) from New Mexico.

Marco Davis: How are you?...

(Mary Gonzalez): I wanted to ask you about My Brother's Keeper. I live in a community where even the government, the local government, does not truly promote My Brother's Keeper or the program or something similar that Tara was speaking about earlier. You had mentioned that we can go online and look and sort of get the application and I guess fill it out to see if we can get some kind of help. Can we just do that or does a program have to be already in full force before we can even attempt to get some kind of information or help from you?

Marco Davis: So the Bright Spots effort that I was alluding to that you'll be able to download a form is actually for folks to nominate or recommend an existing program or model in your community that you think that we should know about. So our office specifically is designed to sort of highlight efforts and to provide awareness about sort of topics of interest as well as to share information about the federal government's efforts, the Department of

Education, the president's priorities and initiatives. And so we do that through a variety of channels that are available.

And a lot of that information is available on our website in terms of what it is the information we provide and the information that we - that the federal government has that can be useful to local communities that may be of assistance to you in your community that you may be able to take advantage of and leverage in order to help improve conditions in your community.

The Bright Spots effort and that form is specifically to nominate an existing program. It's simply to share with us something that you know about that we may not be aware of that is in fact achieving results, that is in fact something that we should know about, that others and the public should know about, that should have more attention paid to it because it is already successful.

And the - however you mentioned the My Brother's Keeper initiative which is an additional separate initiative that actually originates at the White House and interestingly just a few weeks ago the latest facet and component of the My Brother's Keeper initiative is something called an MBK community challenge where the president actually issued a challenge to local communities to take on the challenge of trying to improve life outcomes for all young people including boys and young men of color.

And there are some materials and information to help folks try to build kind of a local kind of coalition or collaboration ideally really headed by a local executive, sort of a mayor or a county official. But bringing together many different folks around the table, so schools and local business and non-profits and advocates and so on, to help figure out how in a local community folks can look to tackle any challenges that exist and barriers to achieving their full

potential for young people. And so there are materials on the My Brother's Keeper Web site about that. That might be useful to you there in New Mexico.

And that White House Web site also lists the localities that have already signed on. And so you may find that perhaps your community may have signed on and if it hasn't signed on there may be a community nearby in New Mexico that has signed on that you may be able to reach out to to get some sort of peer to peer learning from.

And then I understand that there are also initiatives in the private sector that in support of that challenge are offering sort of some types of technical assistance to groups to help them build those types of community strategic plans in response to the challenge. But all of that information is also available on the My Brother's Keeper Web site.

(Mary Gonzalez): So Marco just one more last question. If the community or my surrounding communities, cities, whatever that have not - if they have not signed on can we sign on?

Marco Davis: Yes. That's also available there on the Web site, a way to respond and to accept the challenge I believe is the language on the Web site. But yes you can sign on and join. The idea is to continue growing and have more groups sign on.

(Mary Gonzalez): Okay. Okay. And it's MBQ community challenge.

Marco Davis: MBK as in My Brother's Keeper but the Web site is simply [whitehouse.gov/mybrotherskeeper](http://whitehouse.gov/mybrotherskeeper), all one word.

(Mary Gonzalez): All right. Thank you very much.

Marco Davis: Thank you. Operator do we have any other folks in the queue?

Coordinator: Yes sir. Our next question comes from the line of (Daisy Torres). Ma'am your line is open.

(Daisy Torres): Hi. I have a question about Bright Spots and I wanted to know when you plan making the nominations available online. Is there a period?...

Marco Davis: So yes. So I believe - so we're working on just sort of both finalizing the form and the layout of the form and then sort of getting it uploaded. Sort of - it's limited by our technical capacity. I'm hopeful that we'll have that up probably within the next week. If you check our Web site - you check back on our Web site either at the end of this week and starting next week hopefully again the form will be up and there will be information about our 25th anniversary effort within which this falls. And so you'll be able to - our goal is for it to be a downloadable form that you can download, fill out and send right back to us.

(Daisy Torres): Do you have a deadline in line for when the submissions are due?

Marco Davis: No. So that'll be ongoing. So we'll be actually collecting that information throughout the course of next year and we'll try to continue growing it. I mean if anything, you know, we might end next fall but not anytime before that. All right I think that - was that it?

Coordinator: All right...

Marco Davis: So if we have another question, yes. Yes.

Coordinator: Yes. All right. Our next question comes from the line of Ms. (Karen Sylvester). Ma'am your line is open.

(Karen Sylvester): Thank you. My question is about, you know, issue that in south Florida that where, you know, the graduation rate is very low, like 30% among Haitian American. And also there is a huge number of those kids who are incarcerated. I know that is the issue in Florida like action for their future or helping to improve education among the Haitian and this - and also to control the incarceration rate.

However, you know, funding has been always an issue. Is there something that we can do to get something? Because, you know, language is a problem because not many people speak Creole. But we do have professional Haitian American who speak Creole who have the credential but they don't have funding. How can you help please?

Marco Davis: So that - it sounds like there's absolutely tremendous work being done in south Florida. What I would say is if you would like to follow up with us directly. After this if you could send us an email...

(Karen Sylvester): Yes I would like to do that.

Marco Davis: So yes. So if you can send us an email to our - so that we can get in touch with you. What I think we can do is we learn a little bit more about your community, the organizations you're talking about. We can maybe try to refer you over to some of our colleagues or at least highlight for you some of - for example at least on the federal level some of the resources that are available.

For example some of the grant programs that exist. I'm thinking if it's specifically about incarceration rates there may be programs out of the U.S.

Department of Justice that are programs that could be applied for that you may be eligible for. And/or we may at least be able to point you in some directions or give you some ideas about how to do some research for the private sector, for the philanthropic sector, in order to try and identify those resources that you would need to fund your program.

Our office unfortunately doesn't have any funding mechanism. So we don't provide any funding to the community but again we try to refer people to the places within the federal government that does do funding so that people are aware that they - that you may not have known of beforehand. So again if you just send us an email directly with your info we can then follow-up with you and make sure to try to connect you to those places to someone who might focus on either that region or that stakeholder group, etcetera and sort of see how we can be helpful.

(Karen Sylvester): So what is the email address to reach you please?

Marco Davis: Whieeh@ed.gov. So it's basically the initials of our office White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics @ed, short for education, ed dot G-O-V.

(Karen Sylvester): Okay. Thank you so very much.

Marco Davis: No problem. Thank you. Do we have another question.

Coordinator: All right sir. Our next question comes from the line of Ms. (Evelyn Rodriguez). Ma'am your line is open.

Marco Davis: Great. And before we do how many more folks do we have in the queue operator?

Coordinator: This is the last one sir.

Marco Davis: Okay great. Because we're right up on time. So we might make this the last question. Go right ahead.

(Evelyn Rodriguez): Good afternoon Emmanuel. Thank you so much for taking my question. Actually (Daisy Torres) already asked the question which was about in regards to the nomination form and the timeline in which it would become available...

Marco Davis: Okay.

(Evelyn Rodriguez): I guess my only other follow-up to that is I'm sure you're going to get an influx of phenomenal organizations. What's the process going to look like if you are already aware in terms of selecting an actual organization? And by the way I'm calling from New York, from the Committee for Hispanic Children and Families.

Marco Davis: Oh great. So again this is an effort I think to help expand the pool of great programs that are known, that are talked about. It's an effort also to sort of help expand awareness around work that's achieving results.

So that for example someone in Texas who might be facing a challenge might realize that there's a program in New York that in fact has figured out how to tackle that problem and is achieving results or a new program in Tennessee with a newly arrived community can learn about a program that's been around for a long time in Los Angeles and to help them sort of not have to reinvent the wheel but just figure out sort of what some of the best practices are and so on by connecting with each other.

So our goal is ideally not to sort of really limit it and to sort of have some sort of exclusive selection but rather the only I think real criteria for us will be sort of the having a comprehensive set of info, right. So we'll - I think our goal is to really list as many programs and organizations that we get full info for. The emphasis though there is that we do - we will want and need to get enough information.

So the program will need to for example be reaching some, you know, substantial number of participants, right. So programs that serve very, very small numbers of folks while absolutely admirable will probably want in terms of being listed in this kind of national listing. We'll want them to have expand it a little bit before including them on there.

Similarly again we'll want to know from the organization sort of how they're measuring results and how they're able to really verify that they're having a positive impact. So whereas again their goals are maybe completely admirable and we salute them for their efforts in order to share them as a bright spot they'll need to be able to demonstrate in some way that they've either had an evaluation, that they've conducted studies.

The way The Concilio talked about that they actually can show stats or data that evidence as it's called evidence that they're achieving results and having that success with the Latino community.

And basically again so for all the groups that we get all that info for we'll be posting that up, you know, and we would love to have the problem of having too many organizations that fit that bill because if anything that for us even strengthens our argument about telling the story of as we mentioned our theme fulfilling America's future. If we can say there are literally hundreds of

organizations all around the country doing great work then it strengthens our case for saying that America needs to continue investing in our community because there's already results. And all we need to do is to keep doing what we're doing and have to - and have folks support what's going on so that we can overcome any remaining barriers and challenges to success.

(Evelyn Rodriguez): Awesome. Thank you so much.

Marco Davis: No problem. Thank you. So unless there's one more operator.

Coordinator: Oh as of this time sir there are no questions in queue.

Marco Davis: Great. So then what we will do is we will conclude our webinar. As I mentioned we'll have more information on our Web site. I really want to thank you all for joining us. I want to thank you all for the tremendous interest in this effort and the work that we do. Please be sure to check our Web site, not just for the Bright Spots info but for many of the other things that we do, for example our monthly newsletter.

If you don't currently receive it and would like to there's a way - an easy way to sign up on our Web site and things like that as well as other types of resources, for example our ((Spanish Spoken)) financial aid guide to success, specifically in the Latino students and families to help them navigate the higher education process. Lots of information available and as I said the Bright Spot effort will continue to grow.

Finally I want to thank Tara and the folks at The Concilio for the great work that they're doing for presenting with us today. And of course we want to thank all of you for taking the time out of your day to participate and join us on this webinar. We'll be in touch soon to share the topic and the details for

our next monthly webinar which will take place in November. But until then we hope everyone has a great day.

Coordinator: Okay and that concludes today's conference. Thank you all for participating. You may now disconnect. Excuse me...

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