

PSC-ED-OUS

Moderator: Emmanuel Caudillo
April 8, 2015
1:00 pm CT

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. We will now begin the conference call. At this time all participants' lines will be in listen-only mode until the question and answer session. During that time if you would like to ask a question, you may press Star and then 1. This call is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this point. Now I will turn the meeting over to your host, Ms. Alejandra Ceja. Ma'am, you may now begin.

Alejandra Ceja: Thank you. Welcome everyone. I'm Alejandra Ceja, the executive director of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics. I'm joined today by my colleague, Marco Davis, our deputy director; and Jacqueline Cortez Wang, our senior advisor. They'll be joining me for today's Webinar.

We're really excited to have the opportunity to talk to you about our 25-year anniversary year of action and how you all can get involved in our national call for commitment. Before we get started, I want to just inform and remind you that the Webinar is off the record and not intended for press purposes.

I would also like to mention that as operator just said, the Webinar including the Q and A will be recorded, and the recording and transcript, along with the slide presentation, will be posted to our Initiative Web site after the call. This will give us an opportunity to make sure that the information's available for anyone who was unable to join us for the live Webinar.

So let's go ahead and get started. We are so excited that you all are joining us for this important conversation. This year the Initiative will be celebrating its 25-year anniversary. Last September, to commemorate this significant milestone, we decided to launch, in coordination with Secretary Arne Duncan, our anniversary year of action.

We basically saw the significance of making sure that we commemorated this celebration by making it a national celebration, an opportunity for us to work with our community stakeholders, and to really be able to talk about the asset-based narrative that exists that was not present in 1990.

If you look at the slide that you have, it shows you from 1990 until today how far we've moved the needle on certain key policy priority areas. Early learning, for example, is that baseline policy issue where we need to continue to increase awareness. We need to continue to increase the participation of our Hispanic students in early learning programs, and to work with parents on the importance of early learning.

In 1990 we were at 29% of Hispanic 3- and 4-year-olds that were enrolled. Today we're only at 45%. If we are going to be able to compete globally and competitively, we need to make sure that we invest in the cradle to career pipeline, and that begins with early learning.

On Hispanic dropout rate, you'll see in 1990 we were at 32%. And now today we're at 11.7%. This is significant for our community, and it's linked to all of the work and investment that's taking place across the country.

We have obviously a lot of work to do in terms of completion. While we're seeing more Latinos entering college, we need to make sure that we also see them completing college and entering the workforce.

And another policy priority for us is the number of Hispanic teachers in the K through 12 system. You'll see in 1990 only 3.4% of Hispanics were in the teaching profession, and today we're at 7.8%.

So for us this is an opportunity to use the anniversary and leverage all of the work that you all are doing, your commitment to educational excellence, and be able to move the needle forward, ensuring that we can generate commitments to action that'll be a testament of the good work that needs to continue to take place for the next 25 years.

If you'll look at the next slide, we put together this timeline that I hope you'll find useful, and that you'll share with your stakeholders. But it gives you a sense of where we were at in 1990. We were created under the George H.W. Bush administration, and at the time it was at the urging of civil rights organizations that saw the alarming rate of the dropout for the Hispanic community that needed more federal intervention.

So our Initiative was created under an executive order in 1990. And since then, every administration has renewed the executive order for the Initiative. Under President Obama we have a cradle to career focus, basically looking at what's taken place since 1990 on, and all of the interventions and all of the persistent challenges.

We recognize under the Obama administration that we need to have a cradle to career focus -- so like as I mentioned before, the early learning baseline that is so critical, up until the completion and career for the Hispanic community.

I'll talk briefly about our anniversary year of action, and then I'll turn it over to my colleague. Our anniversary year of action is an opportunity for you all to get involved. I mentioned we have a national call for commitment to action. This is really an opportunity for the private and public sectors to invest in programs and strategies aimed at increasing the educational outcomes for Hispanic students.

We're really looking for investment to help us advance our key policy priority areas. Absent federal legislation, absent budget, how can we make sure that we continue to advance critical areas that will impact not just the Hispanic community, but the future global competitiveness of this country?

Outreach and engagement. We will be conducting several anniversary related events throughout the country. This is really an opportunity for us to shine a spotlight on those unsung heroes that are really helping transform our schools, our communities; those business leaders that are making investments. So all of our outreach will be connected to our policy priorities.

We'll be releasing a national blueprint that will basically highlight the trends that were seen since 1990. It'll give you a historical overview of the federal government investments that have been made. And most importantly, it will help us identify critical policy recommendations so that we can continue to have meaningful advancement in areas that will - policy areas that will impact the Hispanic community.

So our commitment's to action, but we're looking for meaningful commitments that will help increase and support educational outcomes from cradle to career. The slide before you on commitments to action shows you the requirements.

We basically are looking for commitments that will target the Hispanic community, that will focus on one or more of the critical areas that we've talked about -- STEM education, the teaching profession, early learning, college access, college completion -- and that will have a long-term impact.

We're using this playbook that the Administration has successfully done with the higher ED opportunity summit and the early learning summit that were convened last year at the White House, where there was a cultivation of commitments to action, and have seen a total combined of 800 million in those two priority areas.

So we're excited that we're able to use that framework for our anniversary year of action, and to be able to focus on meaningful commitments that stay in the community and further advance progress for the Hispanic community.

An example is a commitment for early learning, and why it matters. Hispanics make up about one-quarter of students in public schools. Only 20% of Hispanic 3- to 5-year-olds are enrolled in preschool. An example of a commitment on early learning would be to strengthen language literacy, math and science instruction in preschool programs, to be able to have a commitment that increases and expands access.

So I'm going to turn it over to Jacqueline Cortez Wang, who will walk you through some other examples on commitments. But we're just really excited for the opportunity to connect with you all, and to work with you all over the

next couple of months to have a strong showing across our country of individual stakeholders that are putting commitments to action on the table to help us continue progress for the Hispanic community.

Jacqueline Cortez Wang: Thank you, Alejandra. I want to make sure that we're all on the same slide, for those of us that are not using the WebEx feature. We're on the slide that's labeled Commitment for Early Learning.

Again, now that you have a general overview of what commitments are, what we really want to do is take you a little bit deeper into all the different priority areas and why they're important, and where Latinos are in each of those critical areas.

The first one, as Alejandra mentioned, is early learning. 20% of our Hispanic students, 3- to 5-year-olds, are enrolled in preschool. We really want to increase that percentage. We really want to raise awareness among our parents and families about the need and value of what early learning is.

As we go through each one of these priorities, I'd really challenge you to look at what your community can do in each of these areas. What is your community already doing? Where are the gaps in your community for each one of these priority areas? And how can your community come together to make a commitment?

If we go to the next slide on K-12 and College Access, you'll see that the number of Hispanic students enrolled in college jumped by more than 50% from 2008 to 2012. Yet those who do are only half as likely as their peers to be prepared for college. There are several types of commitments. Again this is very specific to your community and how you can help move the needle forward for Latinos in K-12 and College Access.

But you can help by providing financial aid and scholarships through FAFSA. Helping students access them. Understanding what the FAFSA is. Develop near peer mentoring efforts. Encouraging college and high school student partnerships. Or work with local school districts and colleges to increase exposure and access to colleges.

Again these are just some of the examples, but a lot of the resources that you will find on our Web site at ed.ed.gov/hispanicinitiative. You'll find more examples of what you can do in each one of these priority areas.

The next slide on Post-Secondary Completion -- Latinos are graduating high school and enrolling in college at higher rates than ever, becoming the largest minority group in our nation's colleges and universities. Yet only 22% of young Latino adults have Associate's degree or higher. 8.1% completed a Master's degree. And only 6.5% completed their PhD.

Again the types of commitments that can be made to help move the needle forward in this area include expanding counseling and advising services, and increasing remediation - decreasing remediation at college level; improving transfer efforts from a 2- to 4-year institution; and career advising.

As most of you are also aware, a priority area is STEM education. Why it matters? Only 67% of Hispanic students have access to a full range of our STEM courses in high school. Only 16% of Hispanics and 8.8% of Latinas completed their STEM Bachelor's degree.

Examples of these range all the way, again, from early learning to post-secondary education. But we're really looking to promote STEM careers through mentorships, internships, and after-school programming. We want to

increase the STEM teacher workforce and provide resources for those STEM teachers.

Next slide on Latino Teacher Recruitment. Nearly 1 out of 4 public school students are Hispanic, while Hispanic teachers only represent 7.8% of our teaching workforce. And Hispanic males only represent 2% of that same workforce.

There are examples of these commitments including working closely with our school districts to improve teacher and principal preparation nationwide. Develop support. Reward and advance teachers and principals. And provide culturally relevant training and development.

Again these are only five of our primary priorities. We really encourage you to look at what your community needs and what your community would like to do to come together to make a commitment for any one of these areas.

We'd like to talk a little bit about a commitment example from El Monte, California. On March 12 of this year, we went to El Monte, very excited to hear that they were making a commitment in their community, focused on college access and family engagement.

What they decided to do is develop a college savings program for all of their first graders, while at the same time educating their parents on how to save for college. They opened these savings accounts, and every time they deposited any amount of money for their students, every single month, this college savings program would add \$2.00 to that savings account. Every time you had a deposit, \$2.00 would go in.

So this is just one example of what a commitment looks like, and what can happen when public and private partners come together to really make a difference in a community.

When we attended this event, something that stuck out to me was that this was a no-risk investment. They were investing in their own community. They were coming back. These were graduates who had grown up in El Monte and were out in the business world already, and they wanted to come back and really make a difference for these students.

By the time we left this launch, a lot of these students were chanting that they were saving for college. They were chanting that they were excited to go to college. And there was no doubt in their minds that they would be entering and completing their college education.

The other example that I'd also like to point out is, what is it that you can do next? What is it that you can do to start these conversations about what your community can do?

We have been very fortunate to work with leaders throughout the Houston area who have come together, and presently they have leaders from the university, community colleges, school districts, public-private sectors, non-profits, that are really coming together to say, what is it that our community needs?

And they've identified areas in early learning, Latino teacher recruitment, college access -- really in every single one of our priority areas. And they're identifying how they can come together to make a commitment. This is coming from the entire city of Houston.

What is it that they're doing for their community? So the very first thing that they did was reach out to us, and we set up a stakeholder call to talk about these commitments, and what it means and what the steps are. So if you are interested in having your community come together like the one in Houston, we are happy to set up those stakeholder calls to talk through what a commitment looks like, and next steps for submitting a commitment.

For those of you - again let me - I'm going to repeat our Web site in case you don't have it. But it's www.ed.gov/hispanicinitiative. What you'll find there is not only examples of commitments, you'll also find our submission forms that have guidance on the types of commitments - the type of information you need to get a commitment approved.

It'll have objectives, strategies, timeline and measures of success. So as your commitment goes through our system once it's submitted, we have a panel review system that will be reviewing each one of the commitments, so that we can provide feedback to help you as you make your commitments.

All these commitments are due June 30, and the only reason they're due June 30 is we really want to look at your commitments, provide feedback, as you need to make these differences in your community.

Now I'll turn it over to Marco Davis to talk about bright spots in Hispanic education.

Marco Davis: Thank you, Jacqueline. Good afternoon everyone. If we could go to the next slide - for those of you following along on the document, it's the slide that says Bright Spots in Hispanic Education at the top.

Part of all of our ongoing effort in conjunction with the 25th anniversary, in addition to all the activities that Alejandra and Jacqueline just mentioned, is an effort to highlight promising practices -- evidence-based programs, models, organizations, schools, communities that are achieving positive results with Latinos in education. We call this our Bright Spots effort.

The idea is to find organizations, as I mentioned -- or programs, or schools, et cetera -- that are focusing on working with Latino students in some ways, ideally aligned with our major priority areas, and are achieving actual results. Are making an impact. Are improving Latino education in some way, shape or form.

And so the idea is that we're collecting those stories, and we'll be highlighting those stories as a way one, to bring further attention to the issue, in particular to share with the broader population, both Latino communities in other areas outside of the local area served by this Bright Spot as well as to the general public, so the non-Latino public, helping them one, understand some of the issues being faced by Latino students and Latino communities -- as we just mentioned, early learning, college access, teacher recruitment, STEM, post-secondary completion, family engagement, et cetera.

But also using these opportunities and highlighting of these Bright Spots as a way to reframe the narrative around those issues.

So saying that, for example, while Latinos are still severely under-represented among the nation's teacher workforce, by highlighting a Bright Spot -- a school, a graduate school that's turning out Latino teachers, a school that has a good number of Latino teachers that are being effective, or simply even individual teachers who are really achieving positive results with their students.

The idea is that we can show that there are solutions already taking place in communities around the country, changing the narrative from one of deficits, one of gaps, to one of opportunities and assets, highlighting these Bright Spots, these places where we need to simply invest in expanding or replicating or adapting the solutions that these communities and these organizations have already found, to serve all Latino students and really all students throughout the country.

So to give you a sense of an example of the kind of programs that exist, if we go to the next slide we've got two examples to share. It's called Examples of Bright Spots.

One is a program called Abriendo Puertas. And some of you who have been on our Webinars in the past might remember that. We featured Abriendo Puertas in a Webinar some months back, focusing on family engagement. The Abriendo Puertas program, based out of Los Angeles, California, works with Latino and other parents to help them engage in the school system.

They basically, through a series of trainings and workshops and resources, help Latino parents understand the school system, understand the resources and opportunities that are available for their students as being served by the schools, but also helping parents understand both their rights and their role as parents, and how they can and should be engaged in their children's education.

How they should be working with teachers, with educators, with administrators at the school. How they can speak up. How they can look for positive changes. How they can recognize and encourage continuance of programs and efforts that they see supporting their students, et cetera.

So that's one example of a program that - again, they've evaluated their program. The program has been growing. The model's been expanding. They've been recognized. They're achieving real results with the parents they work with in helping those parents, through their work with the schools, improve the outcomes for their students.

The second example is based in Washington, DC, and it's called the Latino Student Fund. This is another program that those of you might remember was featured in our Webinar on college access. This is a program that actually works with Latino students in the DC area, and helps walk them through the process of taking charge of their own education.

Of helping them develop a strong academic foundation in order to both prepare themselves to graduate high school, college and career-ready, as well as accessing post-secondary education. Figuring out all of the steps that are needed.

How to navigate the process of identifying a post-secondary program that's of interest to them. Choosing a school. Accessing financial aid. Taking the standardized test of SAT or ACT as needed. Collecting all the materials for college applications. And, in fact, applying to college. All of those steps or pieces of the Latino Student Fund help the young people that they work with.

So this is another program that again is achieving real results with students. They help students both finish school and access post-secondary education. They are enrolling increasing numbers of students in post-secondary education.

So these are the kinds of Bright Spots that we're looking for to be able to highlight to show, again, that where there may be gaps and there is a need for

more Latino parents to engage in their children's education, to be more engaged with their school systems, and there of course is a need for more Latino students to both finish high school and access post-secondary education, there are programs like these two all over the country that are doing it, right?

That have figured out the problems. That are narrowing the gaps, if not closing them completely. And that what we need to do as a nation is continue to invest and support these. And that if we do that over the next 25 years, as evidenced by the commitments that we'll be collecting and highlighting as part of our 25th anniversary year of action, we'll be able to really solve all of the challenges that are faced by our Latino students and our Latino communities.

Going on to the next slide, this says Nominate a Bright Spot. Something that you can do is in fact nominate and let us know about a program -- as I said, an organization, a school -- in your community, that is achieving results with Latino students that you think should be recognized; more folks should know about.

On our Web site, ed.gov/hispanicinitiative, you'll find information about our Bright Spot in Hispanic education effort. There's an overview of the type of organizations, of the criteria's. There's an actual nomination form that you can fill out. You can nominate a school or an organization or a program in your community. That school, organization or program can nominate themselves.

They just need to submit all the information, which obviously includes things like contact info, but also information around their mission, around their goal, and of course any evidence they have, any way they can demonstrate that they're achieving impact, that they've had success in the work that they're doing, so that we can highlight them.

If folks submit all of those by July 17 - the deadline to submit those to be included in the online catalogue is July 17. What will happen is we will be rolling out, as part of our culminating events in the fall, an online catalogue of Bright Spots.

So we will put up on our Web site a listing of all of the Bright Spots about whom we've received sufficient information, so that we can then direct people -- whether that be community leaders, whether that be other new programs and organizations, whether that be the private sector, philanthropy, et cetera -- all folks can look to this list of Bright Spots and find successful programs.

Find models in their own community or in communities that they're focusing on, and they can see these positive results. They can hopefully engage with those programs. Participate in them. Adapt them. Expand them. Invest in them, et cetera.

So that'll be a way in which we'll be able to celebrate again the progress we've made over the last 25 years, but also really ensure that we continue to make progress as a community for the next quarter century.

So with that I'm going to turn it back over to Alejandra Ceja, who's going to summarize with you, and share just a few additional resources and where you can find the information you need in order to participate and support the efforts of our 25th anniversary. And then I believe after that we'll open the floor for questions.

Alejandra Ceja: So next slide, please. Additional Resources. You can - on our Web site you'll have - you'll be able to print out a lot of the information on the anniversary

overview. How to submit your commitment to action. The initiative timeline that we shared earlier. Information on the Bright Spots.

And also just want to let you all know we have several resources available. In addition to the work we're doing with the anniversary year of action, we work closely with our federal partners. We have a federal interagency working group. Our newsletter goes out monthly, and it also includes critical information on grant opportunities, peer review opportunities, internships, fellowships, related research on education.

So I hope that you join us not just for our anniversary year of action, but in helping us fulfill the mission of this executive order to increase the educational outcomes and opportunities for the Hispanic community.

We have a historic, historic opportunity ahead of us to show the country that the community can come together. That we can cultivate commitments to action from the public and private sector. That we can continue to move the needle forward where it matters. That Latinos matter. That they play a key role in shaping the future of this country, and the role we'll have to compete globally.

So I hope that you all will join us in this significant milestone. I hope that we are able to connect with you throughout the year in your communities and in the work, and be able to highlight and shine a national spotlight on the work that you all are doing.

So with that, I will open it up for questions. Operator, can we see if there are any questions in the queue? Or can you give folks the instructions on how to ask a question?

Coordinator: Yes, ma'am. Thank you. So we will now begin the question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question, please press Star and then 1. Please unmute your phone and record your name clearly when prompted. Your name is required to introduce your question. To withdraw your request, you may press Star 2. One moment, please, for our first question.

Alejandra Ceja: And while we wait for that question, we just put up the slide where you can connect with us on social media, so you can also get critical information on a timely basis on the work that we're doing. Operator, do we have a question in the queue?

Coordinator: Okay, we have questions on queue, speakers. Our first question will be coming from Ms. (Saida Soto). Ma'am, you now have an open line.

(Saida Soto): Hi, this is (Saida Soto) in California, and my question is around your focus. Are you open to also receiving applications from organizations focused on policy? Or are you entirely focused on organizations that are focused on programs?

Alejandra Ceja: We're open to policy programs, philanthropic partners, so it's definitely open to everyone who wants to fill out a commitment to action. Were you asking about the Bright Spots or the commitments to action?

(Saida Soto): Both.

Alejandra Ceja: Yes, on both. It also applies for the Bright Spots.

(Saida Soto): Okay. And second question, is there - will we expect to see some commitment from the White House to ensure that some of these initiatives or these commitments really are successful?

Alejandra Ceja: So what do you mean by that?

(Saida Soto): Well I mean it runs the gamut. Are there resources that are committed to ensuring - from the White House, ensuring that some of these commitments made by organizations are successful in achieving their impact?

Alejandra Ceja: So I think under this administration we've made some historic education investments. Obviously this President has said that education is a civil rights issue for our generation, so we will continue to invest in education. There's been a lot of work on the affordability piece on higher ed. There's been a huge focus on early learning.

So to answer your question, absolutely we're going to continue to elevate the importance of investing in education. Many of you all know we're currently in the process of renewal of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. That's an opportunity where we want to continue to make sure that the Hispanic community is included and represented in the programs and investments that will come out of that legislation.

But yes, absolutely that is the mission of our office. We want to continue to make sure that there's key investments and inclusion of the Hispanic community in education.

(Saida Soto): Okay, but not necessarily in the form of grants, is what I was asking.

Alejandra Ceja: So I would have you look at what we've put out in our budget request, because there are some significant investments that are proposed in the President's budget request. So I can't right now share with you any particular

announcements that'll be announced in September, but stay tuned. I think it'll be pretty exciting.

(Saida Soto): I appreciate that. Thank you.

Coordinator: Thank you. Our next question will be coming from (Sir Mike). You now have an open line.

(Mike): Hi, how are you, Alejandra? This is (Mike) from California.

Alejandra Ceja: Hey, (Mike).

(Mike): How are you? My question is around the outreach and engagement, the events across the country to gather stakeholders and partners throughout the community. What do those events look like? And do you happen to know where they're going to be held at this point?

Alejandra Ceja: So all of the events that we do across the country are tied to policy issues. So we do have some that are confirmed that we can share and that will be posted on our Web site.

We're working right now on having an early learning symposium that'll take place in June in Chicago. Our early learning sub-committee members are taking the lead on that symposium. It's going to be a great opportunity to highlight research specific to Latinos and early learning.

We'll be working - we'll be attending an event out in Kentucky, where we'll be talking about the importance of college access and completion. So that's just an example of how we make sure that our outreach is linked to policy issues that we want to continue to elevate.

So we can make sure that the confirmed events are posted on our Web site. And we also want to use this opportunity to hear from you all, because we are continuing to plan our outreach calendar. And so it's an opportunity to make sure that there's areas that we haven't hit where we can pay some particular attention to.

We've done some events in emerging communities, and we want to continue to drive the conversation on being able to share best practices with those emerging communities. And I'll just give you an example.

We were in Springdale, Arkansas, in February, and we worked with our office of civil rights on the rollout of guidance for English learners. And so for us, making sure that we're able to connect with communities and also connect them with the critical policy issues, is very important.

(Mike): Okay, great. And the symposium in Chicago sounds great, so I'm looking forward for that information once it's posted.

Jacqueline Cortez Wang: If you will come back to our Web site early next week, all of our confirmed outreach activities will be available.

(Mike): Awesome. Thank you.

Jacqueline Cortez Wang: Sure.

(Mike): That's it.

Coordinator: We have other questions in queue. Mr. (Albert Sorientas), you now have an open line.

(Albert Sorientas): Thank you very much. I'm calling from Kansas City, Missouri, and it's kind of a follow-up question. Is there going to be any commitments from foundations or other people for continuing to support programs that are best practices?

Alejandra Ceja: So that's exactly what we're trying to drum up with this call for commitments. We are actually trying to provide this as an incentive for the philanthropic corporate community to help us scale up those programs we know are working, help us connect with those stakeholders directly in the community.

So this is also an opportunity for you to take a look at our call for commitments, and use it and leverage it and connect with your local philanthropic partner, so that they can come to the table with you.

I think the example that Jacqueline highlighted with the city of El Monte is a good example of how a community was able to bring in some of the philanthropic partners in support of addressing a gap in their community.

So this is exactly why we want to do this call for commitments, so that we can also provide an incentive for folks to come together, and for there to be a meaningful investment in areas where we know we need to continue to help scale up programs.

(Albert Sorientas): But is there going to be any commitment from the White House? Because, you know, there's all these initiatives out (unintelligible) like the low-income, minority (unintelligible) initiatives. Is there already commitments from national foundations to this program? Or is it just...

Alejandra Ceja: This is exactly what I'm working on. I want to - I am representing the White House in this effort, so I can tell you that that is exactly our goal, is to make

sure that there are commitments from foundations, from philanthropic partners, corporate partners, from community stakeholders. So this is my - the purpose of this call is exactly what we're aiming to do.

Jacqueline Cortez Wang: Sir, if there's a very particular area you're interested in getting - in working with those philanthropic partners to grow something in your community for My Brother's Keeper targeting that community, then please leverage this anniversary. Leverage the materials that we have available to approach these groups or approach these potential partners, and say come in with me to help partner to develop a commitment for this anniversary.

(Alberto Sorientas): Can I just follow up one question? Who there should we specifically talk to at your office?

Jacqueline Cortez Wang: So my name is Jacqueline Cortez Wang, and my information is on the slide deck. At the very last slide you'll find my email address.

(Alberto Sorientas): Yeah, okay. Thank you very much.

Alejandra Ceja: And it's also on the last slide, Jacqueline Cortez Wang at ed dot gov.

Coordinator: Thank you. We have another question in queue. Mr. (Juan Lopez), you now have an open line.

(Juan Lopez): Hello, this is (Juan Lopez) with NASA - Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. Well first of all, thank you for sharing all the information on the presentation. I think it was really useful, and just gave us some background on the statistics about Hispanic education.

Jacqueline mentioned that there's already some community groups out there, like in Houston particularly, that we could collaborate with. I wonder, is there contact information included on the Web sites? Or are we - do we have to work through Jacqueline to get in contact with those folks?

Jacqueline Cortez Wang: Yeah, so there is some particular information for Houston or any of the other cities. But if you email me and say that - because they actually have some upcoming meetings that you can be a part of. So if you email me directly I can connect you with the person that's coordinating all that.

(Juan Lopez): That's great. Thank you so much.

Jacqueline Cortez Wang: Sure.

Alejandra Ceja: Thank you.

Coordinator: Thank you. We have other questions in queue. One moment, please. Ms. (Olivia Danfers), you now have an open line.

(Olivia Danfers): Yes. I am calling from deep south Texas, and is there any plans focused on parental engagement? I think involving parents is very, very important. I am a parent director for a school district, and I think that if we have more support in Washington, DC, I think that would make a big difference.

Alejandra Ceja: Thank you so much for that. Yes, absolutely. Family engagement is actually a core priority focus for us. It's embedded in every policy issue that we've highlighted. So definitely we are looking to scale up programs like the one Marco had highlighted, the Abriendo Puertas, those family engagement models that we know are working.

So we are looking through this anniversary call to action to not only be able to identify commitments to action, but to be able to identify those Bright Spots, those programs we know are working.

Jacqueline Cortez Wang: The other thing is, although we didn't mention it as a priority area, it is one of our cross-cutting priority areas. If you look at the application, we specifically call out parental engagement. We would love to see parental engagement in as many of the applications that we receive.

(Olivia Danfers): Well thank you. As a matter of fact, I'm going to submit my program. I just started last year with this program, and in the first year we were able to engage 3600 parents.

Alejandra Ceja: That's wonderful. Thank you for your leadership on that.

(Olivia Danfers): Thank you.

Coordinator: Thank you. We don't have further questions in queue, but once again for the participants, if you would like to ask a question, please press Star 1.

Marco Davis: Hi, folks. Just if we don't have any more questions in the queue - this is Marco Davis again. Just as we get ready to wrap up, just something to mention to folks.

As we look for Bright Spots and ask you to sort of think of and nominate and suggest Bright Spots, do keep in mind that in addition to the five priority areas that are listed on our materials, we are also interested in some of what we call sort of cross-cutting or special priority areas that we're heavily involved in.

One has already been alluded to, which is family engagement. In many ways we pull that one out because it really affects everything from early childhood through K-12 into post-secondary. It's really across the board. And so obviously any programs that you know of in family engagement, certainly please do let us know and consider nominating for Bright Spots.

And the second was referred to - alluded to in one of the earlier questions, which is specific focus on boys and young men of color, in this case obviously Latino boys and young men.

Our office is charged with leading a lot of the work, engagement and outreach, to try and raise awareness and to advance the goals of the President's My Brother's Keeper initiative, which seeks to give all young people a chance to succeed and reach their full potential, and to reduce gaps and disparities, including those experienced by boys and young men of color.

And so if you know of any programs, organizations, et cetera, that are having impact particularly on young Latino males, do also consider referring those to us, nominating them for Bright Spots as well, because that's another set of activities and efforts that we can raise up that do fall under our 25th anniversary year of action effort that we'd love to be able to highlight and amplify and bring more attention to in terms of solutions, again, that are really helping to reframe the narrative and show young people in our community that asset with lots of potential.

Coordinator: Speakers, we have questions in queue. Our next question will be coming from Ms. (Velma Ray). You now have an open line.

(Velma Ray): Thank you very much. This is (Velma) from Virginia. And I'm very active in Virginia teaching English to speakers of other language (unintelligible)

national organization. In any event, I just wanted to - first of all I want to applaud all the efforts. I'm sitting and taking copious notes. And I just - I have two questions or thoughts.

I don't know if - I'm sure you all know, but other people on this line, when you mention policy and parental engagement and community engagement - but the policy piece, and right now what's happening in legislation with the ESEA, there was at one point certain folks on the education committee who believed that Title III, which deals with second language acquisition and (unintelligible) there, as well as Title I services, should somehow be merged.

And I guess my issue is, I have been up there. January I was with (ASCD) lobbying, and then I'm coming back in June with (CECIL International). And I just want people to be aware that when we talk about reauthorization of ESEA, we really need, quote, the whole child, as you all have specified about -- early learning all the way up to college and career readiness, as well as post-secondary - post-graduate, excuse me, degrees.

And we do not - I'm just concerned that there will be services that Latino children are getting by way of ESL or other services that will somehow be diminished or cut out. And I was just wondering if people knew, or is there any initiative that gets the word out to the community, or something to that effect?

Alejandra Ceja: So thank you for your question. Obviously we are working closely and monitoring the action that's taking place on ESEA reauthorization. And I agree. People need to be informed about what's taking place with Congress and some of the policy priorities that they're putting forward.

I would encourage -- and obviously we are also trying to amplify -- to look at our ed dot gov Web site. The Secretary has pretty much outlined the Administration's policy priority areas, and then there's a great comparison of what Congressional action would mean for Title I schools.

So again, we're continuing to monitor the Congressional action taking place, and I think a lot of the latest information is accessible on our Web site. So we will continue to amplify, to make sure that people are informed that this is going to have an impact in their schools and communities.

(Velma Ray): Absolutely. Thank you very much.

Alejandra Ceja: Thank you.

Coordinator: Thank you. Our next question will be coming from (Maricella Rodriguez). Ma'am, you now have an open line.

(Maricella Rodriguez): Hello?

Alejandra Ceja: Hi.

(Maricella Rodriguez): Hi. My name is (Maricella Rodriguez). I'm from the state of Washington state. I work with Washington state association of Hispanics. We went - in middle of March we went to DC, and we were talking with some senators, especially the ones in charge of the budget.

And we talked to them about how can they support parent engagement. You can imagine their answer, right? They don't have any money, especially with sequestration coming on. So they don't have any money for to take - to fund

engagement all around the nation. So how are you helping to support parent engagement?

Alejandra Ceja: So thank you for your question. I think that's exactly what we're trying to do. In the absence of budgets, in the absence of federal funding for parent engagement, how can we leverage this anniversary? How can you help us identify those community - those business leaders in your district, so that we can make sure that we can have investments in key communities?

Obviously we know it's a national priority, but this is our call to action. This is exactly why we're doing this, because we know that we need to help communities. We need to help invest in these policy areas. So parent engagement is a priority.

But like I said, this is where the community comes in, where you all come in. I'm trying to everything I can to leverage this anniversary and have meaningful investments on the table that will further parent engagement, further early learning. I can't do that alone. I need the help from the country to help me identify and make inroads with some of these corporate and philanthropic partners.

But this is exactly where the community comes into play. And I think, you know, Jacqueline mentioned Houston. That's a great example of a community coming together, basically saying here's how we're going to bring in our corporate philanthropic community partners to the table, and how we're going to address them and tackle some of these issues.

(Maricella Rodriguez): Thank you. And all the information is on the - I'm sorry. I joined the call pretty late. So all the information is on the slides?

Alejandra Ceja: Yes. So all the information is on the slides, and then we also have a staff contact, Jacqueline Cortez Wang, who presented. So all of the information you'll find online. And I hope that once you take a look at what we're trying to do, you can connect with us and we can be helpful and work with your community.

(Maricella Rodriguez): Okay, thank you very much. And thank you very much for working on this. We really appreciate it.

Alejandra Ceja: I appreciate you participating.

Coordinator: Thank you, ma'am. Now our next question will be coming from (Robert Trasi). Sir, you now have an open line.

(Robert Trasi): Hi. Thank you and thanks for your presentation. My name's (Robert). I'm at LaGuardia Community College, which is in New York City. We're a Hispanic-serving institution, and we have a number of initiatives focused on college completion. And of course these are kind of overarching initiatives.

So my question really is, if we're doing work across the college to impact the whole student body, which has a significant Latino population -- about 40% of our students are Latino -- can we highlight the work that we're doing that is in some ways intended to reach all students, but because of the nature of our student body is very much impacting Hispanic student completion?

Alejandra Ceja: Absolutely. But we definitely do want to make sure we pull out the narrative on the impact in the Hispanic community.

(Robert Trasi): Great. We can absolutely do that.

Alejandra Ceja: Great. And all of our materials are online, so we look forward to seeing a commitment to action or a nominate a Bright Spot.

(Robert Trasi): Yeah, we will certainly be part of that. Thank you for organizing it.

Alejandra Ceja: Thanks.

Coordinator: Thank you, sir. Our next question will be coming from Ms. (Elizabeth Dominguez). Ma'am, you now have an open line.

(Elizabeth Dominguez): From the private sector in Des Moines, Iowa. And I think the call to action that I'm hearing over and over again is pretty much a nomination for Bright Spots, and a submission of a commitment.

And some excellent benefits have been shared in terms of why it's a great idea to do this, and I definitely appreciate that. Are there any additional benefits to sharing these things, in addition to, you know, being highlighted on your Web site? In addition to getting your support from a strategic standpoint, for our commitments?

I keep hearing from the questions kind of an underlying, you know, what else is in it for us to share this with you? And you've shared great things, and I think you're asking us to do everything that we can in our community to support the 25th anniversary. There really isn't a whole lot of financial support that you can give us, but I keep hearing the same question over and over again; kind of, what else can you do to support us?

Can you help us understand what the benefits are, aside from the ones that I just mentioned? What additional benefits are there to putting this commitment together and working with your office? And to submitting a Bright Spot?

Alejandra Ceja: Absolutely. Thank you so much for your question, (Elizabeth). We are looking to have a national conversation with our anniversary year of action. So we will be having a culmination event that we are looking to have in September, where folks that have made commitments would be recognized for those commitments.

Obviously we are working closely with our colleagues in the White House. I can't really share too much about what the culmination event looks like, but we are envisioning an event with the President at the White House, similar to the higher ed and early learning summits where there was a call for commitments.

So this is an opportunity for us -- with the Bright Spots, with the commitments to action -- to have a national conversation, and end our culmination event with a celebration of those leaders, those stakeholders, who have come to the table.

And that's the one question I always get is, well what can the White House do? You know, this President, like I said, has made historic investments in education. You can see it reflected in his budget proposals. But it really takes all of us coming together to transform our country, to invest in our students, to support our parents.

And so for us this is exactly why we're trying to do this. But we are looking to have a culmination event where we can highlight all of the folks that have come to the table.

So I don't know if that's answered your question, but as we can release details on that culmination event, obviously we're going to be revealing the

commitments to action. But it's going to be an exciting opportunity to have a national spotlight on the stakeholders that have come to the table.

(Elizabeth Dominguez): Okay. No, that does add an additional element to it, and thank you for that. I believe as communities we are responsible for supporting whatever initiative we happen to be - to have a deficit on. So I'm not asking for any more than what you're doing, but I was just curious what else there was.

So you did mention some grants that are out on the Web site, so there potentially is something to tap into out there that's already been established, right? That we can kind of dig into and see if there's anything that we can glean from that?

Jacqueline Cortez Wang: So we don't necessarily have grants specifically for the anniversary year of action, but on our Web site what you do have is what we're calling the opportunity bank, as Alejandra mentioned earlier. And it really just has grant opportunities, internships, fellowships -- any type of opportunities that exist throughout the federal government.

So you're absolutely welcome to kind of visit our Web site and look at what we have available, things that you can access. But it's not necessarily specifically for this anniversary year of action.

(Elizabeth Dominguez): Just in general terms, got it. Okay, I just wanted a little bit of clarification. Thank you. You've definitely answered my questions.

Alejandra Ceja: Thank you so much, (Elizabeth). Operator, do we have any more questions in the queue?

Coordinator: We have lots of questions in queue, ma'am. Our next question will be coming from Ms. (Margaret Van Kirk). Ma'am, you now have an open line.

(Margaret Van Kirk): Yes, good afternoon. This is (Peggy Van Kirk) from San Juan, Puerto Rico. And my question is if we submitted at the Reach Higher...

Alejandra Ceja: Are you there?

(Margaret Van Kirk): Overlap - yes, hi. Is it okay for us to have overlap with commitments we submitted at Reach Higher? Or do they have to be completely new commitments?

Alejandra Ceja: So what we're asking is - you can absolutely submit a commitment. What we are asking is that you really bring out the narrative for the Hispanic community. So that's really the piece that we're looking for. So you can absolutely resubmit for this commitment to action.

(Margaret Van Kirk): Okay, thank you.

Coordinator: Thank you. Our next question will be from Mr. Kirk Whisler. Sir, you now have an open line.

Kirk Whisler: Hi, this is Kirk Whisler, Latino Literacy Now. And we have done, for a number of years, the national Latino and American Indian scholarship directory.

But we've recently started a new program co-chaired by (Dolores Worth), Eddie Olmos, and Ambassador Julian Nava, that we've got titled Changing the Face of Education in California, that basically has as a goal over the next ten years to hire at least 50,000 to 100,000 educators that'll be hired in California

as Latinos, because of the dramatic under-representation. And really the school districts are not changing their hiring practices at all.

What other teacher recruitment programs are there out there on a national basis?

Marco Davis: So there's an effort that was actually initiated by the US Department of Education, and has now spun off into its own entity or is in the process of spinning off to become its own entity, called Teach dot org.

And there is a Web site. It's a national effort both to raise the visibility and the stature of the teaching profession in the nation, as well as serve as kind of a coordinating central hub for efforts to recruit more individuals into teaching, with a particular emphasis on under-represented populations, which includes, for example, STEM teachers and teachers of English learners, et cetera.

So that's one of the main national efforts that I know of. Beyond that, as you know, a lot of the teacher preparation activities take place at the individual graduate school level with the teacher prep programs.

There's a number of universities that have specific programs that are recruiting under-represented populations for their student population, and the organizations that represent those graduate schools, or that work on things like professional teaching standards, et cetera, also have each individual sort of efforts and campaigns around needing to recruit more teachers into the teaching profession.

And many of those have specific sort of diversity outreach components. So those are the main places I would recommend. And that's, in essence, sort of why that's one of our efforts, is to just raise awareness of the fact. One of the

things we find when we speak to groups and organizations is that they're just not aware of the numbers, that they're so low, that Latinos are not even 8% of the teaching profession.

Kirk Whisler: Exactly. And, yeah, we're certainly aware of the different programs, and they certainly give lip service. But that's about all they give.

Marco Davis: Well so again...

((Crosstalk))

Marco Davis: Certified for a teacher, you need a graduate school preparation, right?

Kirk Whisler: Of course.

Marco Davis: Of course they need some certification, so that happens at the local level. And then the individual districts hire. So at the national level, really what can be done is to encourage districts to encourage graduate schools and so on, all of whom, to increase their practices to better do outreach, to better support teachers in the pipeline, so that they can actually be placed.

There isn't an actual national teacher placement process, so it has to be done at the local level. So what we try to do is sort of really raise awareness that will then help move that forward. So definitely thank you for the effort that you all are doing. We really appreciate it.

Those are exactly the kinds of commitments we want to be able to point to, to say these are folks on the ground who are reaching out to folks at the local level, reaching out to individuals to try and encourage them to go into places

like teaching, which is what's needed for the Latino community to move forward. So definitely thank you for your efforts.

Kirk Whisler: Thank you.

Alejandra Ceja: Operator, in the interest of time, we have time for two more questions.

Coordinator: We have three, ma'am.

Alejandra Ceja: Okay, we'll take the third.

Coordinator: Okay, our next question will be coming from (Maria Alvarez). Ma'am, you now have an open line.

(Maria Alvarez): Excuse me, I have a little bit of a cold. I hope you can understand my question. I'm calling from El Paso Community College. And our institution - and as most of you are probably aware, many Hispanic students who go to college will start their education at a community college.

And at our specific institution, we've been able to implement a variety of programs on STEM education, and with a strong institutional commitment, and very successfully been able to implement, you know, getting students into the PhD pipeline, having, you know, a very good number of students graduating with advanced degrees in basically, you know, a 10-, 12-year period.

Now I know that there's an emphasis on community college education, but I haven't really seen any programs that specifically target community colleges in STEM education. In fact, I've seen a couple that had dropped community colleges from being eligible institutions. And others allow us to submit

applications, you know, and this is to federal programs, only if we are doing it in collaboration with a four-year.

And of course there's always an advantage to having the institution being the lead, because we know the needs of our student population. And like I said, we've been able to have a pretty good track record.

Is there any emphasis or are you aware of any programs that will facilitate, you know, us continuing to make our commitment to STEM education for Hispanic community college students?

Alejandra Ceja: So obviously STEM is a priority of the Administration, and there have been a lot of investments. I think, again, I'd point you to look at what we're proposing in the budget request that's before Congress, in terms of the different STEM components that we are looking to continue to invest.

On the community college piece, I think we'd have to go back and connect with our office of career and adult training education. They handle our community college portfolio for the Administration. So we can go back to them and see if there's any resources.

If you wouldn't mind emailing us your contact information, we can make sure that we give you any information that we know is coming down the pipeline. And in addition, our federal interagency working group is a great avenue to look for opportunities, not just at the department, but what other federal agencies are doing to invest in STEM and in higher ed.

(Maria Alvarez): Okay, thank you.

Alejandra Ceja: Thank you.

Coordinator: Thank you. Our next question will be coming from (Milaro Navarro). You now have an open line.

(Milaro Navarro): Hi, good morning everyone. How are you? Well good afternoon already, my time zone. My following question or thought is, what is the government doing to equally fund education throughout the country? Because (unintelligible), I mean the amount that we get per student (unintelligible). Like here in California, I mean we get like only like - we're in the 47th place how we get funded per pupil.

And also, is there any thought on making sure that we invest in early education? Because usually when you think about a school district, you think about K to 12. But a lot of people don't think about preschool being part of it.

And here in my - I'm a board member for a school district. And we do have - fortunate enough to have a state preschool. But we also have (unintelligible) preschool. And that part of it, it's not going to be funded anymore. So we're just concerned if you guys know how preschool's going to be funded in the near future.

And also here in our school district, I mean we do as much as we can, you know, with the money we get, you know, to serve our parents, too, as well. I mean when there's like local conferences, like for example when there's college, we try to send as much parents as we can, so they can be more educated in how they can help their kids at home, and how they could, you know, get more information from schools.

And also when there's like local workshops, like for example from (Spanish language spoken), I mean we're able to, you know, use some of that money, you know, for parents.

But bottom line, I think the biggest captor here is that if we would equally fund every student -- it doesn't matter from what state they are or what their background is -- I mean we'd really be investing in our children's education, because...

Alejandra Ceja: Absolutely.

(Milaro Navarro): Yeah, because honestly if we're, you know, continuing not to fund equally everybody, then we're, you know, doing a disservice to our students.

Alejandra Ceja: Well that's exactly why we're having this Webinar, to talk about the opportunity to bring more investments into these critical areas. We are familiar with (Beacon), (LA Up). And I don't know if you heard the presentation earlier, but early learning is a baseline for us to continue to invest if we're going to strengthen the cradle to career pipeline that starts with early learning.

This Administration has made a significant call for investments in early learning. We're going to continue to push education as a critical priority for the country, and so from day one this President has been committed to investing in education. We are seeing a lot of work going into the K through 12, the early learning, the college access and completion.

I would encourage you to look at what we're putting forward in the budget proposal. But like I said earlier, it takes all of us. You know, that's only the federal role. What's happening at the state and local level, what's happening

with our philanthropic partners, our corporate partners, that can help us move the needle forward on progress absent federal intervention.

So that's exactly why we're having this anniversary year of action, this call for commitments. It's an opportunity for you to spark this conversation with some local leaders in your community to say, what are we going to do to answer the call from the White House to support and increase opportunities for the Hispanic community? So thank you so much for your comment.

(Milaro Navarro): Thank you.

Coordinator: Okay, and we have (Teresa Maldonado). Ma'am, you now have an open line.

(Teresa Maldonado): Thank you. Good afternoon. This is (Teresa Maldonado) representing Lupita Alcala, Deputy Superintendent at the California Department of Education. Thank you for having this wonderful Webinar today regarding all the different places where we can have critical focus for Latino students.

And I wanted to ask specifically, kind of piggy-backing on (Maria)'s comment earlier, about your STEM efforts. And what do you have planned this coming year or next year regarding STEM? I know that the Administration has it on the forefront, and we do, too, here in California. But I wanted to know specifically if there are any events planned currently in the future?

Alejandra Ceja: So we are looking to cultivate commitments on STEM specifically, so as we confirm which partners those are in what communities, we definitely want to make sure that we use that as an example for other states and entities, so that they can kind of use that as an example they can follow.

But at this point right now, what's in our budget proposal that's gone before Congress, those policy priorities and funding opportunities, those are key priorities for us on STEM. We're using the anniversary to try and cultivate commitments to action in particular for STEM, so working with the philanthropic and corporate community, and stakeholders.

So this is an opportunity for us to even work with you, and figure out how could we do something to bring and drive investments in California using this anniversary year of action.

(Teresa Maldonado): Wonderful. Sounds great. We will be in touch.

Alejandra Ceja: Thank you so much. Thank you, operator. That concludes our Webinar for today. If there are folks that were in the queue that need to ask questions, please feel free to send us an email. I'll turn it over to Jacqueline Cortez Wang to close us out.

Jacqueline Cortez Wang: I did want to make sure that everyone is aware that the Webinar, including the Power Point, will be posted on our Web site, and will be archived there in case you would like to use that as you approach your philanthropic partners, as you approach different partners in your local community.

Please feel free to use the Power Point to present to them, to encourage them to make a commitment with you, to encourage them to come in, to make a commitment for your entire community. That's all that we have. Thank you and please feel free to send me an email if you have any additional questions.

Alejandra Ceja: Thank you.

Coordinator: Thank you. That concludes today's conference. Thank you for participating.
You may now disconnect.

END