UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COMMISSION ON EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE FOR HISPANICS

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PUBLIC MEETING

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TUESDAY
DECEMBER 6, 2016

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The Commission met at the National Education Association in the Robert E. Chanin Auditorium, 1201 16th Street NW, Washington, D.C., at 9:00 a.m., Dr. Eduardo Padron, Chair, presiding.

PRESENT
DR. EDUARDO PADRON, Chair
ALEJANDRA CEJA, Executive Director
ALICIA ABELLA
MODESTO ABETY-GUTIERREZ
SYLVIA ACEVEDO
ALFREDO ARTILES
NANCY BRUNE
EMMANUEL CAUDILLO
JAQUELINE CORTEZ-WANG
LILY ESKELESON-GARCIA
LUIS FRAGA
PHIL FUENTES
JOANN GAMA
PATRICIA GANDARA
MILLIE GARCIA*
MANUEL GOMEZ
LUIS FRAGA
SARA LUNDQUIST
VERONICA MELVIN
MICHELLE MORENO
MARIA MERCEDES LIEVANO
MARIA NEIRA
LISETTE NIEVES
ADRIAN PEDROZA
DARLINE ROBLES*
LUIS ROSERO
MANUEL SANCHEZ

ALSO PRESENT
ELIZABETH ALANIZ, Weslaco Independent School District
KEVIN ARMSTRONG, Juarez & Associates
BEATRIZ CEJA-WILLIAMS, Director, Hispanic-Serving Institution Division, Office of Postsecondary Education
SUSANA DEJESUS, Scholar in Residence at NYU
DELIA GARCIA, Senior Liaison, National Education Association
CLAUDETTE HAYNES, Johnson Preparatory School for Boys
DR. TED MITCHELL, Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Education
JUAN NAVARRO, Lennox School District Board
ROBERTO J. RODRIGUEZ, Deputy Assistant to the President for Education, The White House
VANESSA RAMIREZ, National Human Genome Research Institute at NIH
JULIET STIPECHE, Director of Education for the City of Houston
TERRA WALLIN, Special Assistant, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Department of Education

*= Present telephonically
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Call to Order.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Eduardo Padron</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome Remarks.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delia Garcia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening Remarks.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alejandra Ceja</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Serving Institutions and Teacher Quality.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beatriz Ceja-Williams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks.</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Ted Mitchell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every Student Succeeds Act Overview and Status</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White House Remarks.</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roberto J. Rodriguez</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subcommittee Reports and 2017 Priorities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Learning Subcommittee.</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-12 Subcommittee.</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postsecondary Subcommittee</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Comment</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjourn</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DR. PADRON: Good morning everyone. I'd like to call the meeting to order. And, first of all, I'd like to say how pleased we all are to have so many of the Commissioners present here today.

The lines are also open for a couple of Commissioners for participation by phone. Can you hear me fine? Wonderful. Let me also thank you, members of the public, to be here this morning.

We very much appreciate your participation. And there's going to be an opportunity, toward the end of the meeting, for those of you who are interested in making comments.

There's a process for that, to sign in. The staff will guide you, in case you would like to be able to do that. Let me start by taking the roll call of the Commissioners.

(Roll Call)
Okay, that's the list. Okay, so I'd like to now invite Delia Garcia, who's the Senior Liaison to the National Education Association, to provide welcoming remarks.

And I'm very appreciative to NEA for providing us this space and to the great caterers today. Thank you.

MS. GARCIA: Good morning, buenos dias. Thank you, Dr. Padron, and again congratulations on your recommendation by the White House.

On behalf of the NEA, the National Education Association, and our 3 million members, we'd like to welcome you su casa tambien.

This is the last meeting of the year, but definitely not the last time we will see you all. We would like to also offer our home to you, anytime you're in D.C.

As well as moving forward into 2017, I sincerely want to invite you all to -- if we perhaps need to have a site meeting of organizing, we are more than happy to host it.
here, as it is the home base for all of us in the coming years.

Millie Garcia, our President, will be -- she's speaking at a conference simultaneously as we speak, so she will be here later this morning. Thank you, Dr. Padron.

DR. PADRON: Thank you, very much. I failed to recognize a great new member of this Commission, Phil Fuentes.

(Applause)

He has joined us today. For those of you who have not had a chance to know Phil before, we all know that Phil has been an owner and operator of McDonald's franchises since 1989, very successfully.

We have seen that empire grow little by little, and he's someone that is admired nationally for all of his efforts. Since 2013, he has been the Director of the Urban Partnership Bank in Chicago.

He has served on a number of initiatives, including being a member of the
board of directors of the Illinois Regional
Transportation Authority since 2008.

And he has been a member of the Coca-
Cola Hispanic Advisory Council, among many other
organizations. He is very active in the
community, and nationally.

He has a BA from Northeastern Illinois
University, and an MBA from Rosary College.

Phil, welcome.

MR. FUENTES: Thank you.

DR. PADRON: I'd like to ask -- more
than excellent, outstanding, Executive Director,
who has done a very good job in moving this
Commission forward.

I feel that we could not have done
half of the job that we have done without the
extraordinary guidance and support of Alejandra
Ceja.

And, right now, I'd like to give her
the opportunity to provide the opening remarks.

MS. CEJA: Thank you. Thank you, Dr.
Padron. I wanted to walk you through, since our
last Commission meeting, some of the activities
that we have undertaken.

And then I will spend a few minutes
talking about transition. Since our April
Commission meeting, we have partnered with
several key organizations.

One of them being the National Migrant
and Seasonal Head Start Association. We launched
a Migrant Voices series with them. We traveled
to Oregon, California, Washington and Florida,
where we were able to put a national spotlight on
our migrant farm worker families.

We were able to convene with community
leaders to talk about the educational means of
migrant students. We will have a report that
will be issued out that highlights several of the
key actions that have taken place.

Our partner, the National Migrant and
Seasonal Head Start Association, has demonstrated
great leadership and outcomes. It was a
wonderful experience to partner with them and to
be able to elevate this issue at the Department
of Education and nationally.

We've also partnered with our colleagues at the Department of Education, the Office of Post-Secondary Education and the Office of the Under-Secretary, to talk about something that we have been talking about for a while.

And that's teacher quality and teacher preparation, and what it means to diversify the teaching workforce for the Latino community.

That partnership started with a roundtable. And it was an opportunity for us to start talking about higher education reauthorization that is going to be up in the next administration.

The person you will hear from, later on in the agenda, we have Bea Ceja-Williams who will walk you through some of the work that we've done with the deans of education.

This is something that will continue on through her leadership. So, we're very excited about that partnership. And so, it's an opportunity for us to continue, in addition to
some of the outreach events that we have done throughout the year

    In addition to our Latinos Teach Campaign, what we're trying to highlight that asset-base narrative of our Latino teachers. This is where we will have a body of recommendations from the dean of education.

    So this is a great partnership with our HSIs, our Hispanic Serving Institutions, to continue to move this work forward. So I think that you will be pleased with the work that's being done, and that we'll continue at the Department of Education through their leadership.

    We were able to leverage the report that Patricia Gandara wrote on Latinos moving West. And we had a very successful summit at the White House, where we invited over 150 Latina leaders, to talk about everything from Latinas and entrepreneurship to Latinas in education.

    And we had a great presentation from one of our interns who's here joining us today, who talked about, as a young Latina, what support
system she needs.

So it's a great example of how the work that you all have done has been able to continue to be leveraged. There was some great take-aways from that summit.

So, I want to publicly acknowledge and thank Dr. Patricia Gandara for her work in producing that report. Because it allowed us to bring a national platform to talk about these issues.

So, thank you very much, Dr. Patricia Gandara. And we have worked with the Department of Homeland Security, and we've had a few convenings with our Central and South American embassies.

This is an opportunity for us to continue to cultivate partnerships where we can work effectively with key stakeholders on ensuring that they have access to the resources and the information, specifically to financial aid as it relates to our students that need access to financial aid.
So I wanted to highlight some of those key partnerships that are underway, and activities that took place following our April Commission meeting.

And we released a guide that Secretary Duncan helped release for us. And this was a continuation of our work to make sure we can continue to focus on access following completion.

It's a guide written by our first generation interns that come to our office, from their voice, from their perspective, on what is needed.

So, it's a way we can continue to use the leadership that comes into our office and put out culturally-relevant information to our schools, our students and their families.

And we'll talk a little bit about the work we've done with our federal agencies. This was very important for us to bring together a federal agency working group where we could talk about the opportunities that the Federal Government -- the responsibility of the Federal
Government to be transparent for the Hispanic community.

So we will be releasing our federal agency data plans. The data plans will outline key federal funding opportunities for the Hispanic community.

And we will also be releasing our Federal Agencies Investing in Hispanic Education report. This year, we have 23 agencies included in that report.

You'll find a sampling of programs, grants and initiatives, specific to the Latino community, where we can increase federal access to grant opportunities.

So, I'm really proud that the initiative staff and that you all have done to help get us to this point where we can continue to focus on progress and moving the needle forward.

I want to talk a bit about transition. As we all know, we are in a period of transition. What I will tell you is that, while we can't
speculate on what the next administration will
do, we are committed to the same principles that
we were committed to before election day.

To expand high quality early learning
for all families. To lift up the teaching
profession so that every student has the
opportunity to be taught by a great teacher.

And to increase college completion
rates by making college more affordable and
student loans more manageable. I want to talk
about the work of our commitment partners and our
Bright Spots.

Last year, during our 25 year
anniversary, we had a call to action. We had 150
commitment partners make commitments in support
of our career agenda for the Hispanic community.

We have a few here with us today. We
have individuals from the Teach for America, the
Center for Education and the Workforce at
Georgetown, the Houston Hispanic Forum.

They are part of our commitment
partners, they are a part of our Bright Spots.
They are going to continue the great work they are doing on behalf of our community.

My recommendation, moving forward with this Commission, is that we continue to put a lense on those commitment partners because several of their commitments are currently underway.

That we continue to focus on supporting the many organizations out there that are basically helping us achieve our mission to increase the educational outcomes and opportunities for our Hispanic students.

These are recommendations that we are putting forward to the transition team because there's a body of work there that is currently ongoing and that should continue.

And with your leadership, we would love to see all of those commitments to action fulfilled. So because that work is in progress, that is a key priority for us, to make sure that we continue to work with our commitment partners and to thank them for being a part of this
legacy.

And to thank them for the work that they're doing on behalf of our nation's children.
So, we are in the process of working with the transition team, and sharing with them everything you all have done since day one.

And I wanted to thank my predecessors. During the first term of the administration, there was a lot of focus on community action summits. And when I had the opportunity to join the team, we were able to use that bond and leverage it into commitments of action and into highlighting these bright spots of Hispanic education.

So I want to thank all of our commitment partners and our Bright Spots that are joining us here today. But that would be my recommendation to you all, is that we continue to work with these organizations to make sure that they fulfill their commitments.

And that we continue to cultivate new partnerships.
DR. PADRON: Before you proceed, I believe that those partners have been critical to the work of this Commission. And there are many. You'll want to make sure how many commitments or how many partners we have working with us.

MS. CEJA: Right, yes, so we have 150 commitments to action. That's 150 organizations named, totaling $335 million in investments that are going directly into the community.

Our Bright Spots in Hispanic Education, we have over 240 Bright Spots in Hispanic Education. And this is an ongoing nomination process, where we are continuing to identify organizations across the country so that we can designate them as Bright Spots.

One of the other campaigns that will continue is our Latinos Teach campaign. That has been very successful. We have been able to identify Hispanic leaders across the country, and shine a spotlight on their great work.

And this was part of the work on the K-12 Subcommittee. And it's something where we
are able to point to these great leaders in the classrooms.

And there are several pieces of the agenda that you all have helped execute that will continue. And I'll just say this, that it's been an honor to work with you all.

We are going to continue to focus on equity and closing that opportunity gap moving forward. So, 2017 is no different. We have to continue to put a lens on the equity and civil rights for the Hispanic community.

And we've got a great body of work underway, and we have to make sure it continues. So I will pause there and take any questions, before we transition into our next speaker.

Thank you.

DR. PADRON: Thank you, so much. Next on the agenda, we have Bea Ceja-Williams. Is she here? Please, come and join us here. For those of you who have not had a chance to know Bea, she is the Director of the Hispanic-Serving Institution Division in the office of Post-
Secondary Education.

Prior to that role, she served as the Program Manager for the Teacher Quality Program in the Office of Innovation and Improvement. She has served, in the past, as Federal Liaison to the states of Florida, Arizona, New Mexico and Puerto Rico for the U.S. Department of Education Migrants Education Program.

So, she has a successful track record of service and we're glad to have her today with us.

MS. CEJA-WILLIAMS: Thank you. And I just want to echo your gratitude to the White House Initiatives staff. They have been amazing partners in helping to amplify the work that we are doing to ensure not only access, but success and college completion from the Office of Post-Secondary Education.

So, with that, I'm just going to describe a little of what our division does, so that you all have an awareness that while the staff may be changing for the White House
Initiative Hispanic Education, we do have dedicated staff that focuses on providing services to the Hispanic-serving institutions.

From our division, we have three programs that are targeted to this. Hispanic-serving institutions are institutions of higher education that have 25 percent or higher of Hispanic enrollment, as well as meet the threshold for having low student costs and low-income students.

So, we're currently in the process, at Office of Post-Secondary Education, in having institutions identify themselves as being an eligible institution.

Again, to be a Hispanic-serving institution, you must be vetted as an eligible institution, which has to do with a financial threshold and the enrollment in that.

The enrollment part, we do it when we compete. In 2016, we identified 115 institutions that met that condition of being a Hispanic-serving institution.
We completed one program of the three.
We have three programs from our office. The first one is developing Hispanic-serving institutions. That is the Title V RA.

In 2017, we are funding at approximately $107 million. With that $107 million, we have funded over 167 institutions. The average award size for these institutions is approximately 550,000 for five years.

The second program that we have is promoting opportunities for Hispanic Americans. That's our Title V Part B. Unfortunately, we have not received as -- what we have been funded as far as the other programs.

So, this program, we've been funded at approximately $9 million. And so, with that, we have awarded 19 institutions to help develop graduate programs.

The last program that we have, from our office, is the Hispanic-serving institutions science, technology, engineering and mathematics, our STEM program.
This is our Title III Part F. We compete at this program. We've been funded at approximately $92 million. And with that, we were able to fund 92 institutions of higher education, so that they could focus on not only increasing the number of Latino students into STEM fields, but also developing articulation payments, transfer models, with leading colleges.

We know that there is a big gap that happens for a number of students when they transfer for from the two-year institutions into the four-year institutions, where they are ready to transfer and most of them will leave during the first semester if that institution did not provide them with support services at their receiving institution.

And for the four-year institutions, we're trying to promote transfer student services. We know that four-year institutions are doing a great job of meeting the student needs of incoming freshmen.

But these transfer students are coming
in older, they're coming in with families. And so, the four-year institutions are working on services to provide those services.

So, again, just to provide you with some background on this program, this is just a description and I know you'll have copies of these slides.

These are just descriptions of what these programs promote. This one, again as I mentioned, follows graduate studies payments for developing HSIs.

It has several activities. It has highlighted 15 authorized activities, anywhere from faculty development, technology improvements, as well as tutoring, mentoring, teacher preparation programs.

And this just highlights the gap between the number of institutions that we identify over the years as Hispanic-serving institutions and the number that we are able to fund.

So, while in 2013, there were 356
Hispanic-serving institutions, we were only able to fund 11. When we had funding available, we were able to fund an additional 38.

In 2015, we funded 96. And last year, while there were 415 institutions, we were only able to fund 30. So far we have, again, about 167 institutions that are currently receiving funding from this particular program.

This is our science program. This program, I'd like to highlight, is a program that actually is in the HEA reauthorization when this was added.

It had an end date of 2019. And so, while we have funding available to make continuation awards to the institutions, they received funding in 2016 from 2019.

Unless Congress establishes this again, this program will actually end. And for this program, as I mentioned, we have provided awards to several institutions, two-year public, two-year private, four-year public and four-year private.
And these are private non-profit institutions, on average about $1 million. Thanks to the work that we've been doing with the White House Initiatives, we've been able to really amplify our competitions.

In 2017, we are able to have available funding for a new competition under the developing Hispanic-serving institutions program. We estimate that we will have approximately $11.2 million.

We do expect to identify over 440, is our estimate, that will meet the definition of a Hispanic-serving institution. So, unfortunately, while we identify about 440, we will only have sufficient funds to award about 25 awards.

And then, again, working with the White House Initiatives, we were able to amplify the Hispanic-serving institutions list. In 2016, it was the first year we posted a list of all of the institutions that have met the definition.

With that list, we were able to share it with NSF, we were able to share it with the
Department of the Interior, as well as other agencies.

So that if they had any type of program that we wanted to target specific institutions that have high enrollment of Hispanic students, they had a list to use to target those schools as well.

We participated in activities during HSI Week, and they were very helpful in getting some of the information of activities that were happening throughout the various campuses, just out through their social media.

We also provided some comments for the HSI Week proclamation. The Office put together a number of education rights box that they had identified.

And some of the work that will continue, is that we are working to help diversify the teacher workforce. As I had mentioned earlier, one of the authorized activities in developing HSI grant program is teacher preparation.
And so, we are hoping that by partnering with the White House Initiatives, by having them bring together a group of teacher preparation programs, that we'll be able to encourage institutions to work on their teacher preparation programs to increase the number of Latino teachers that become certified and then are placed in high need school districts.

So we're hoping that just competition in 2017 will highlight some of the work that we've been doing around diversity of the teacher workforce.

I'll stop there for any questions, and then I have some highlights from one of the papers that the workgroup has been working on.

DR. PADRON: Yes, I'd like to ask you. So while you're working with Hispanic-serving institutions, has there been any effort to highlight or to identify best practices that have been developed as a result of this funding that can be shared with public institutions?

MS. CEJA-WILLIAMS: I would have to
say, very honestly, that unfortunately not. We haven't -- I just came into this position, and we really haven't focused on sharing the best practices.

The White House Initiatives did do an excellent job when they worked to gather information for the Bright Spots. And even in that work, I believe that there were only a few Bright Spots that were identified as higher education Bright Spots.

So, to this end, we are working with the institutions that we fund to provide us with better information to tell their story of what they're doing with that.

Unfortunately, there is some miscommunication as to how we highlight what we're doing at the institution level, and then what gets posted through our best practices.

We're not connecting the two there. We're funding them and we're not communicating the work.

DR. PADRON: My suggestion would be
that people at the Division do some reflection on this, because this is a huge country. And there are many geographically institutions throughout the nation.

And we can all learn from each other. My own institution, many of the things that we have done that are successful are a result of talking to other colleagues and finding out some things that are important that they are doing that we have copied.

And to very positive results. But they started -- we have not been able to identify. So thank you for that answer. It explains it. Anything that's basically a summary or compendium of best practices.

And I think that, in itself, will be a tremendous help to institutions to be able to learn from others' experience. So, just a suggestion that should be considered.

Any questions from the Commissioners to Beatrice on the work that she's doing with Hispanic-serving institutions? Yes?
MR. FRAGA: Mr. Chair, thank you.
This is Luis Frag. I have two quick questions.
What is the current percentage of Latino/Latina students who attend Hispanic-serving institutions?
And what are the patterns that you think are going to exist over the next decade, let's say, in terms of propensity of Latinos and Latinas to attend Hispanic-serving institutions?
And then, my second question is, what's the best way to characterize the MOLO Latino/Latina student that's attending post-secondary education today?
It's generally understood that those students do not fit the traditional model, if you will, of the 18-22 year old who attend many of our institutions.
I'm just wondering what your sense is of the next decade and what the patterns of the moment are going to be and the backgrounds are going to be of our the members of our community who attend post-secondary institutions.
MS. CEJA-WILLIAMS: So, the latest data that we have shows that about 60 percent are Latinos are enrolled in HSIs. And HSIs make up about 12 percent of the institutions of higher education.

With respect to the Latino college student, as diverse as it is, identifying oneself as Latino. We attempt to put everybody that's Latino in their particular box, and we all know that there's differences between first generation and second generation.

So we know those differences exist. I'm not sure that a lot of our campuses have grasped some of those differences. And so, in some instances, they have attempted one size fits all.

We have promoted more -- we have promoted and encouraged campuses to focus more of their funding on direct services as well as faculty development.

Because, as we've seen on college campuses, college professors are amazing and
great experts at what they teach. They may be scientists, but they may not necessarily be the best ones at teaching it.

So, they may not have those pedagogical strategies and skill sets to go and teach quote unquote "non-traditional students". And so, the funding that we make available does provide institutions some funding to develop some of those skill sets.

If we keep the definition as it is, we're going to see a huge increase in institutions that become Hispanic-serving institutions. And then we'll really have to question whether we need Hispanic-serving institutions.

Are we only looking at enrollment and meeting a particular financial threshold? Or are we going to set other criteria for what we mean by serving?

Are we going to be looking deeper into the data to ensure that not only are we opening our doors to Latino students to walk into our
institution, but are we ensuring that those doors remain open so that they are able to walk across the stage and graduate with a degree?

And so, the thing that institutions will really have to focus on is that operative word serving. What do we do when we want institutions to move on to identify institutions as Hispanic-serving institutions?

We haven't really been having a lot of conversations around higher education beyond affordability. And so, these are some conversations that we are going to have to have to ensure that, again, not only students come into the university, but that students graduate with a degree.

DR. PADRON: I think that's an excellent point. I'm very much aware of discussions that have taken place. I know a couple of foundations, actually right now, talking about that.

Because some institutions, yes they obtain the 25 percent criteria, but the impact of
those institutions on the students hasn't changed and it's getting worse.

And they're getting their money, and then there is no improvement or those monies are not really directed to direct services, as we call them.

It's not the best possible use of funds. That's why I raised the question in terms of best practices, because in many ways it's related.

But this is something that is going to be at the table for discussion in the future because it is a problem that many of us are aware. And if we have to find a way to review that area to make sure that results in the kind of impact that was intended to be achieved.

So I know that all of you are very interested in this topic, and my suggestion would be that we engage in that discussion. Any other questions?

MS. CEJA: So, I would -- on that topic, because Beatrice will be the lead staffer
of the department, working on higher ed reauthorization.

Beatrice, what recommendation do you have for this group to kind of be your ears for you as you work on higher ed reauthorization. Any kind of recommendation on how we can continue to work together, especially with our higher ed subcommittee, to be of service to you?

MS. CEJA-WILLIAMS: I mean, I think Dr. Padron already started the conversation by really pushing us at the federal level to do some group work on collecting best practices and making sure it goes out and, to the extent possible, it gets into the selection criteria, the grant applications.

And so, the extent to which we will be able to add some language around sharing those best practices with the data. I know that there's organizations that are doing this. I'm thinking, at that federal level, we need to be able to highlight those practices that are working. And, again, as I mentioned,
reauthorization is coming up, so I welcome your expertise.

How do we promote Hispanic-serving institutions so that it doesn't become an enrollment program, that it truly is a program that has support to provide access to Latino students to ensure that these students are able to achieve their degree.

DR. PADRON: Dr. Gandara?

DR. GANDARA: Yes, I'm wondering if there's any focus or conversation going on at all, there within the Department, about assisting the two-year institutions in expanding to provide the Baccalaureate degree?

Since we have long-identified now this huge problem that the majority of Latino students going to two-year institutions, and that it is in fact these two-year institutions that in great part prevent them from getting a degree, I think it's 23 states now in the country have at least one program in the higher ed system that provides for a Baccalaureate degree within a two-year
institution.

But there has been no focus nationally, anywhere that I've been able to find, on using this to diversify the Baccalaureate. In other words, they're very specific programs that really don't take into consideration the disproportionate enrollment of Latino students in these institutions.

Is there any work going on to help support —

MS. CEJA-WILLIAMS: The best that we've been able to do, from our Division, is to highlight around transfer and articulation models, so that when an applicant competes for his funding, be it a four-year or a two-year institution, that encourages them to work together.

DR. GANDARA: Of course, the notion here is you don't have to do the transfer.

MS. CEJA-WILLIAMS: Yes, I understand that.

DR. GANDARA: Yes.
MS. CEJA-WILLIAMS: And in some instances, that would really be up to that state and that community college and that community college district.

But at the federal level, aside from these models that work together --

DR. NIEVES: I have a question as well too. One is, as you said, one size doesn't fit all. And so, I'm particularly thinking about the STEM funding that's happening.

How do you think about it in regards to Latinas in general? Are you seeing some of the grants that are going there also having a particular impact on gender as well?

MS. CEJA-WILLIAMS: Yes, because we are seeing a lot more Latinas in these colleges.

DR. NIEVES: Yes.

MS. CEJA-WILLIAMS: And so, they are the students that are being targeted.

DR. NIEVES: Are you also seeing a lot more than represented in STEM? Because that's not necessarily -- it doesn't equate the same
way. That's what I'm curious about.

Because we've seen a gender gap, not just an ethnicity gap.

MS. CEJA-WILLIAMS: so, for the programs that we've funded in 2016, we saw some that did attempt to target Latina population. But we didn't see a pattern, maybe just one or two that specifically targeted Latinas.

DR. LUNDQUIST: Yes, Sarah Lundquist. Just to build on Dr. Gandara's point. Given the principles that we espouse as a Commission, the community college Baccalaureate in California, the largest state, does offer a $10,000 virtually debt-free Baccalaureate program for students, especially those students that are place-based.

Again, just closing the concentric circles of the primary concerns of our Commission around the attainment opportunity that that provides.

To unite your reflections with a point that Dr. Padron made earlier, if we highlight some of the promising strategies that conflate so
many of our goals and simply endorse the further
development of policy and practice in this realm,
I think we add strength to a fledgling movement
that could potentially be transformational when
attainment of Baccalaureate and post-
Baccalaureate credentials is considered.

DR. PADRON: Sara, that is definitely
an excellent point. Any other questions or
comments from the Commissioners?

DR. NIEVES: I have one more on that.

DR. PADRON: Sure.

DR. NIEVES: While you are thinking
about collecting best practices or effective
practices, also most HSIs have particular
attention, and this is something that came out of
the higher ed committee in the first proposal,
I'm looking at remedial education.

Particularly, who is doing really
effective work in that area? Thank you.

MS. CEJA: So we can spend just a few
minutes just talking about the remedial education
roundtable and the next steps with the white
papers that are being produced.

MS. CEJA-WILLIAMS: Yes. So, as you know, we brought together -- actually, this started back in August. In August, we came together with the White House Initiative, as well as with the Office of the Under Secretary.

And we identified a number of deans of schools of higher education that were willing to come to the table to speak to the issue of lack of Latino teachers in the workforce.

And so, we began the conversation through a series of webinars. We hosted three webinars on the topics, the need for Latino teachers.

Just one, in terms of recruitment. The second convened was around -- the second webinar was around cultural competency and linguistic competency and ensuring that teacher preparation programs included a focus in this area.

And then, the last meeting, webinar, we highlighted a couple of programs that we knew
to be doing a good job, to your point about sharing best practices.

So, we highlighted the California Mini-Corps, as well as the Cal State Dominguez Hills teacher preparation programs. They have a number of non-traditional programs on that campus.

And so, we highlighted the work that they were doing. From those webinars, we then decided that it would be useful for those that are staying at the Department to receive a set of recommendations from this group as to, again, how to help improve the preparation programs, as well as how you best recruit and serve Latinos to ensure that we increase the number of Latino teachers.

So we have two working groups currently that are developing papers. One group is working on highlighting promising teacher preparation programs and extracting what are those elements that actually can be replicated on other campuses.
And are those elements of their program that really make a difference for the students. And then the other working group is working on the pipeline itself.

So, what needs to happen in order to just grow the pipeline. And they are highlighting programs throughout the country. Some of those programs include the California Mini-Corps Project, the Grow Your Own at Cal State Dominguez Hills, Bilingual Teacher Scholars Program at Western Oregon University, programs at Florida International University, Eastern New Mexico University, Sacramento Unified School District, Lehman College, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Sacramento State University, Heritage University, and Texas A&M International University.

So, these are some institutions that will be highlighted in the papers.

MS. NEIRA: I just want to add one point. I applaud the emphasis on the pipeline for the Latino teachers. I would also like to
add the fact that we also have to look at the
stacking of our professors and their diversity.

    I think that's a really crucial
element that needs to be included in those
discussions.

    DR. PADRON: Absolutely, thank you.
    DR. GANDARA: I'm sorry, when will
those papers be --

    MS. CEJA-WILLIAMS: We are hoping to
have them in final draft at the end of the month.
And then, we will share them with White House
Initiative to amplify over social media. And you
will all have them then.

    DR. ARTILES: Some of the fastest
growing areas of Latino students assistance are
oftentimes not included in some of these efforts
in other areas.

    The South. Some areas of the Midwest.

So I would encourage that this work also
emphasize this disseminating and documenting best
practices for teacher preparation for Latinos,
especially Latino teachers and Latina teachers in
those regions.

And our equity assistance centers and regional labs are able to be leveraged to disseminate this information and offer professional development opportunities for school districts that are desperate to understand what to do with the interest of Latino students.

DR. PADRON: Very good. Thank you so much, Beatrice. Excellent report, and we look forward to getting the information from you.

MS. CEJA-WILLIAMS: Thank you. And thank you all for your work.

(Applause)

DR. PADRON: Now it's my distinct pleasure to welcome someone who needs no introduction. Dr. Ted Mitchell, the Under Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

DR. MITCHELL: I've never hugged a Medal of Freedom recipient before.

(Laughter)

(Applause)

DR. PADRON: Well, we are very
familiar with you, Ted, but let me take care of
the protocol here and say a couple of words about
you, especially your long history of involvement
in youth education.

We have before you someone who's been
a professor, a dean, vice chancellor, college
president and so many other jobs in academia,
that have really prepared him very well for the
job in serving as Under Secretary since 2014,
after being nominated by our President and
confirmed by the Senate.

He has the most serious
responsibilities in the U.S. Department of
Education. I don't know how he handles so many
departments and responsibilities, including the
Program Manager of Teacher --
I'm sorry, he oversees the policies,
the programs and activities related to not only
secondary education, but adults and career and
technical education affairs, student aid.

That in itself is a three times full
time job. And the five White House Initiatives,
including this one. So, Ted, thank you so much, Mr. Under Secretary, for being here with us and sharing your thoughts today.

       DR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Dr. Padron, it's a pleasure to be here. It is an honor to be with you on any occasion, but today it's especially so to, again, congratulate you on the Medal of Freedom.

       And to congratulate all of the Commissioners and thank all of the Commissioners for the incredible work that you have done throughout your term, throughout this administration.

       I know that Alex agrees with me, that we regard you as strong, serious and vital partners in the work that we have tried to do over the last eight years.

       And we look to the Commission, to the Initiative, and to the Commissioners individually to carry that work forward. We've made a lot of progress together, but that progress is not enough, it's never enough.
And so the work has to continue. I want to take a moment and, Commissioners, I hope that you will join me in thanking Alejandra Ceja and her team at the Initiative for just incredible work and incredible leadership over the course of this administration.

(Applause)

So, we've done some good things together. You know that when the President started, we were in the depths of the Great Recession.

And thanks to help from Congress, we were able to use the stimulus package to make good headway and good progress in education, as in other areas.

It's particularly appropriate, I think, that we're gathered here in this building, at the NEA, to recall that one of the very first things that the stimulus had to do was to protect teachers' jobs.

And that was important. I was in California at the time, and it was a very iffy
proposition about whether that would happen or
whether there would be massive furloughs and
reductions.

Teacher excellence. And as we know,
even though the schools where good teacher are
most needed. But starting from that very first
investment through the stimulus, the
Administration has worked to improve the quality
of American education at a very exciting moment
in our history when the K-12 population is
becoming majority minority, in which the
diversification of the teaching force is more
important than ever.

And we're providing more resources to
schools and students who need them the most. We
tried to address each of those topics in turn.
It was great to come in Beatrice, because the
work that she is doing and the work that we've
been doing in the Department with HSIs and
minorities to improve both the quality and
quantity of Latino and African American teachers
is imperative.
The good news is, as you know, the high school graduation rate is at an all-time high. The good news for Latinos and Hispanics is that the dropout rate versus the graduation rate has dropped really dramatically.

And faster than any other ethnic group. It's dropped from a high of 32 percent in the year 2000 to just 12 percent in 2014. That's remarkable progress.

At the same time, the college going rate has increased from 22 percent to 35 percent. Good progress, but not enough. On the higher ed side, at the beginning of the Administration, the President took bold action to change the way that this country funds student loans.

Moving student loans from private industry into the direct funding program, thereby saving $60 billion and enabling that money to be used to fuel Pell Grants and other investments, not only in education but across the economy.

Pell Grants themselves have increased by a thousand dollars, the average award. And
over time, we believe that we are saving students about $3,700 per year in college going costs. It doesn't sound like a lot, unless you're the one writing the check, in which case it's quite significant. We've tried to make access to federal financial aid easier, by simplifying the FAFSA form.

And this year, for the first time, making FAFSA available so that students can have access about their eligibility for financial aid when they're making those crucial decisions.

My daughter will be going to Miami Dade in the Fall. We've also linked the FAFSA form to the IRS, so that now families have the ability to get that information as they apply.

One of the things that research has made clear is that there are significant information asymmetries for families when they're searching for Pell Grants.

And no surprise, the families at that asymmetry tend to be low-income families and first generation college going families. And we set
out to try to rectify that asymmetry a little bit
by improving on the college navigator and
creating the College Scorecard.

That's a one-stop reliable place for
families to go to get critical information about
the outcomes that they might expect. So,
completion rates, graduation rates, persistence
rates, real costs to families by income level.

Levels of debt, levels of repayment,
all of which are critically important for
families as they make these decisions. I would
argue, and the research suggests, that that kind
of information is doubly important for families
who are unfamiliar with the college-going process
and don't have that college knowledge that comes
rather automatically to more advantaged students
whose families may have been in college and
through college for several generations.

And so, through the Scorecard and
Shopping Sheet, we hope we've provided improved
information to students, better access, easier
access.
We're not done simplifying the form, so stay tuned to that. In terms of the cost of college itself. This is a hard one. We work against significant odds.

Those of you in the public sector know that, while the economy is recovering from the Great Recession, education broadly has not rebounded to the level that we hoped it would.

And in comparison with other investments that states make, particularly in the penal system, incarceration, we found in a study that we did recently that the rates have increased.

We think that that's upside down. And so, every chance we get, we work with states to urge them to reinvest in K-12 education, to reinvest in higher education, to invest in pre-K, where we know it pays incredible dividends.

But we've tried to do our part. I mentioned the increase in the Pell Grant. And, over time, we believe that we can index Pell to inflation to retain the purchasing power against
that important metric.

    But as the President likes to say, we're not done. We're going to sprint to the finish line. So if you look at the President's budget and if you look at legislative proposals that are in play in Congress right now, beginning with the America's College Promise Plan that seeks to make the first two years of community college tuition-free.

    The two years at HSCUs and MSIs tuition free. You'll see that we have a serious commitment in reducing college costs and increasing college opportunity.

    The President's budget includes the restoration of summer Pell. And for those of us who work with students, we all know how important momentum is.

    To be able to keep going. To keep that summer mill from drawing students. Particularly the new normal college students, the 24-year old returning veteran, the 32-year old single mom, the 50-year old displaced worker.
Those are people who need to get in, get through and get out and get on with their lives. And the summer Pell Grant will enable them to continue their momentum.

We also want, in the President's budget, to recognize institutions that have done a great job helping Pell students, not only get access to higher education, but complete it.

And so, the President's budget proposes bonuses for institutions that do a great job at graduating college students. We believe that those institutions should both be rewarded for that work, and given dollars to help deepen and broaden those programs.

So we're not done yet. And we're not done yet for a reason. We're not done yet because the job is only part-way done. It is wrong in this country for folks in the highest income bracket to be seven times more likely to complete a four-year degree than those in the lowest.

It's not right for students who are in
this country without the proper documentation to be denied access to what is an American right, the right to a high-quality higher education.

It's not right in this country for African Americans and Latinos to have half of the college degrees per capita of white students. So we have a lot of work to do together as a country.

We have a lot of work to do together as a community. And I have enormous confidence that with your leadership that work will get done. With the voices that need to be heard will be heard.

And that higher education, K-12 education, will continue to be in the hands of opportunity. They will continue to help us live up to our fondest dreams for America as a country.

And we'll help our students achieve their American dream. Thank you.

(Applause)

DR. PADRON: Thank you so much, Mr.
Under Secretary. I wonder if you have a couple
of minutes for a couple of questions?

DR. MITCHELL: I do.

DR. PADRON: Anyone? Anyone on the
Commission who would like to ask Dr. Mitchell a
question?

MR. FRAGA: I have one. Good morning, great to see you, thank you for being here. Thank you for your comments and your support over the years.

One of the strategies that is sometimes suggested as to how we might respond to the change in the Administration is for many of us to focus on our states more than trying to promote change at the national level.

I was just wondering what your thoughts are on that strategy, that general strategy?

DR. MITCHELL: So, it would be inappropriate for me to make any comments directly on the new Administration or what its priorities its own issues might be.
But I think, as one looks --
certainly, I know that next we'll talk about
ESSA. I think two things. I think that higher
education has always been a diffuse
responsibility.

I mention state investments. I think
that there has been and will continue to be an
enormous amount of work for us to do at the state
level to restore publicly supported state
institutions.

It's encouraging to us as well that
while -- when the President announced the
America's College Promise, several states of the
union -- wise communities and states decided they
weren't going to wait for Congress.

And so we've seen great momentum in
communities around the country to create tuition-
free community college programs. And so, I think
that that work, that strategy, is already
underway.

I think that the ESSA creates much
more opportunity at the state level and, in fact,
moves the balance of power, if you will, more squarely into the state arena.

So I think that it's appropriate, regardless of the Administration, to think about the states as a more imperative focus point for both higher education and K-12 education.

And I mentioned pre-K, just very briefly, but I think that that's also a domain in which states and communities are beginning to do more than experiment with pre-K to do work to provide certainly kindergarten services, but also pre-K services.

DR. PADRON: Dr. Gandara?

DR. GANDARA: Hello. You know, I'm on the faculty at UCLA, so yes. One of the things that has concerned me, and I wonder what the thinking has been in the Department, is that with the free tuition at the community college level -

We know that a big problem for the Latino community in particular is the disproportionate attendance at two-year
institutions as opposed to four-year
institutions, which we also know has the result
that they have much lower completion rates under
Baccalaureate.

Has there been any discussion about
the first two years free, independent of the
institution to which you attend? Whether it's a
two-year or a four-year institution?

DR. MITCHELL: Yes, we had a lot of
conversation about that, coming out the gate.
And there were sort of lots of reasons why we
felt that community college would be the right
place to start.

So one is we wanted to be sure that in
making this commitment, we were rather evenhanded
about the role of higher education in moving
people directly into the world of work.

And community colleges, it's very
closely tight connections to their local labor
markets. And many of the best of them are very
nimble in making programs that attach to local
labor markets for students who match their goal.
We wanted to be able to support that in the President's plan, while at the same time we were supporting pathways to that. Second, we do understand the political reality to cost.

And it started with the $60 billion that we estimated would cost for the community, it wasn't an appropriate beginning point. And then, finally, the President kind of said that, rightly or wrongly -- I think he's right.

He has identified the universal high school through the beginning and middle of the 20th century as one of the economic drivers. And so, his point in the State of the Union speech is that we as a country need to acknowledge that that's not enough and that we need to expand universal publicly-funded education to create a vehicle for all Americans to be able to travel the pathway from pre-kindergarten through the Associate's degree in a publicly-funded system.

So, with that, I think goes some expectations about improvement in community colleges, creating better pathways, better
We've seen that Congress has already expanded the American College Promise in ways that about which we're enthusiastic, expanding the first two beyond community college to the HSCUs. And we think that that's an important step. And there are conversations afoot about increasing that even more broadly.

DR. PADRON: Thank you so much, Dr. Mitchell. Thank you so much for being with us today.

DR. MITCHELL: Thank you.

DR. PADRON: God bless you for all of the good things that you have undertaken, and for being such a supporter of the community.

DR. MITCHELL: Well, thank you all.

(Applause)

DR. PADRON: The next topic of our agenda is equally important to all of us, and it's one that this Commission has given special attention.
And we're very fortunate to have someone here who has a lot of expertise and has undertaken a lot of work in the arena of elementary and secondary education.

And that's Terra Wallin, who will be joining us here at the table. Terra works with policy and program implementation issues related to the ESSA.

So, we would like to welcome you and ask you to share your thoughts with us here.

MS. WALLIN: Great, thank you so much for having me. I have the slightly terrible position of being after Ted and before Roberto, so I will be showing slides of factual information.

And I'm really happy to answer questions. I think everybody was provided the slides in advance, so I'm not going to go through them word-for-word.

There's a lot of helpful, comprehensive information in there. But I do want to make sure you guys have time to ask
questions. And I'd be happy to talk after if there are any additional questions.

So, I think this slide is up. Great.

I think, as many of you know, over the past seven years we've made a lot of important progress for America's students in the K-12 states, particularly.

From higher standards in nearly every state and every classroom to increasing the nation's graduation rate to the highest point. But we know that there's a lot of work to do.

There are a lot of gaps between different student subgroups. There's some places that meet higher standards. And so, we were pleased in December of last year when the President signed the Every Student Succeeds Act.

I realize we're quickly approaching the one-year anniversary. And it has been only a year, but we've done a lot of work to implement the law to this point.

And we expect that work to keep moving forward. Secretary King and various members of
the Department have been traveling around, both
in DC and throughout the country, to speak to
teachers, educators, civil rights groups, the
business community, professionals, other school
support staff to see areas where the Department
could be helpful.

And, also, to learn about what states
we're doing and some of the innovative work that
states had undertaken. And what we did is we
took all of that feedback put together at the
beginning that has continued together to figure
out where we can provide regulations, where we
can provide guidance and other technical
assistance to support states in implementing the
law.

So I think, just taking a step back,
kind of big picture, what is helpful, I think
some of you have seen this before. But just a
reminder about the great things that are included

For the first time, the law holds all
students to college- and career-ready academic
standards. So a lot of states are moving there on their own.

But this is the first time the law actually required that. It provides more kids with access to high-quality pre-school. Even though the administration of the program has shifted a little, it's something we were really excited to see.

It guarantees steps are taken to help more kids and schools when they need to recruit. And rather than the blunt tools that No Child Left Behind had, really focusing on schools where the entire population is underperforming or where individuals have groups of students that have fallen behind their peers.

It reduces the burden of testing while maintaining what we think is an essential requirement that there is annual data on how students are performing, so we can identify where they need support.

And it promotes local innovation and investing in what works, which I think a little
bit of what you heard Ted talk about has been happening in the higher ed space.

But the Every Student Succeeds Act really returns some of the flexibility back to the state level to give them some room to innovate and help their students.

So, as I mentioned, I'm not going to go through these kind of in-depth, but the law does maintain a requirement for annual assessment. But it also has lots of pieces in there to help reduce the burden of testing.

So, last October, the President released the Testing Action Plan, where we lay out a set of principles for high quality assessments that encourage states to get rid of burdensome low quality, redundant both assessments and test preparation.

And so, we're excited to see that the law includes some of those pieces as well. So it includes funding for state and local audits to eliminate unnecessary testing.

It has new requirements to provide
families with better information about the
purpose and the value of required assessments.
And it provides flexibility for states to pilot
new innovative assessments.

And we'll touch on that a little bit later. But we were encouraged to see that the
law really builds on one of the good things we
saw in No Child Left Behind, which is annual data
that allowed us to point out achievement gaps.

But also recognizing that, in many
places, the focus had become too heavily focused
on reading and math assessments. In terms of
accountability in school improvement, as we
mentioned, the law does empower state and local
leaders to continue refining their own systems.

So it still requires states to set
long-term goals, to identify the lowest-
performing schools and to provide support and
interventions to those schools.

But it provides states with lot of
flexibility around what those interventions look
like and how they create the systems to identify
those schools.

It encourages multiple measures, so I think many of you familiar with the systems of No Child Left Behind that focus on test scores, graduation rates or attendance and participation rates and that was it.

For the first time, the law includes multiple measures of school quality or student success, providing states with lots of flexibility to come up with innovative measures like access and completion of AP courses.

Things like chronic absenteeism that we've seen many states start to use. Student discipline, teacher engagement, parent engagement, student engagement.

So those are all things we're hearing states talk a lot about, and we're excited to keep working with them on. And then, as I said, it maintains this strong action when schools aren't serving all of their students.

And so, you'll see that the law still requires that states identify their lowest-
performing Title I schools. So we're really
focusing on the lowest schools rather than trying
to identify every school, which was what was
starting to happen under No Child Left Behind.

High schools that are failing to
graduate one third or more of their students, of
which there are far too many in this country, and
schools where some groups are consistently low-
performing.

So there is still pieces to catch
schools where they are meeting individual
subgroups that are low performing, which is one
of the components we thought was most critical to
any law that the President signed.

In terms of how the law supports
teachers and school leaders, it helps ensure that
low income and minority students are not being
taught at disproportionate rates by ineffective
teachers.

It provides states with the
flexibility to define what an ineffective teacher
is, so long as there isn't a consistent approach
across the state.

But this builds on a lot of the work the Department was already doing for teacher equity plans, where we asked states to identify any gaps in access to effective teachers.

And then, how they were working within their state to address those gaps based on their own individual needs. It supports improved teaching and learning through the implementation of human capital management systems.

That includes performance-based compensation, similar to what Ed's Teacher Incentive Fund Program was already doing. But we're excited to build on that.

And it supports innovative and evidence-based approaches to teacher and leader recruitment preparation and development. One of the other pieces we saw was that Title II, which provides a lot of funding for teacher and leader professional development.

The formula for that is really focused on making sure those funds are going to the
schools with the highest poverty rates. And allowing states and districts a bit more flexibility around how they can use those funds based on their own needs.

And then in terms of equity and student support, the law maintains dedicated funding and protections for groups of vulnerable students. So, as I mentioned, increasing the role of poverty and allocating Title II funds, supporting states provide high quality educational and support programs for migratory children.

And that specifically focuses on students through the full continuum, so students age 3 through age 21. It requires that those migratory children receive support catered to their unique needs.

And then, they have full and appropriate opportunities to meet the same challenging academic standards that all other students in the state are responsible for meeting.
There are pieces of the law that incentivize cross-agency collaboration to address the unique challenges faced by justice-involved youth.

And some of you may have seen Secretary Keene last Friday did an event in Chicago with the former Secretary Arne Duncan, really focused on how you serve students as they are in the juvenile justice system.

But then, particularly how we are helping those students transition out of the juvenile justice system and making sure they get back in school.

And they receive all of the supports that they are entitled to under the law. It provides new protection to ensure educational stability for students in foster care.

And so, building on what was known as the Foster Connections Act. So it really focuses on making sure states are coordinating between their districts and child welfare agencies.

And that students have a right to
attend -- a foster student has a right to attend
the kind of school that will serve their
education and keep their education stable, even
if they move.

And requiring states to have a process
in place for how they determine transportation
and all of those technical issues we know
sometimes get in the way of serving those
students.

But empower states to make those
decisions, just require that they have some kind
of process in place. And then, it enhances key
protections for students with disabilities and
English learners.

Particularly within school
accountability. So, for the first time, English
learners, much of the funding to support those
students came from Title III of the law.

And it moves some of those
accountability pieces into Title I. So Title I,
as I think many of you know, is a larger funding
stream.
But it requires that states are looking at things like progress in English language proficiency across all of their schools within Title I, to emphasize how important we think it is to serve those students.

And also knowing how our population is shifting over time, and how many more schools have that population of students that haven't had it in the past.

And then, continuing with equity, one of the pieces of the law I think I was personally most excited to -- and many of the people that work in the K-12 space were that -- it increases transparency for critical equity data.

So one of the things the law does is, for the first time, require states to report actual per-pupil spending at the school and district level, which some states were already moving to and districts were already moving to.

But this codifies for everyone to include. We know that that transition will take a little bit of time. But we think it's a key
component of helping make sure stakeholders understand what's happening in their schools.

And we know a lot of those funding decisions happen at the state and local level. But we're hoping that this data provides stakeholders with one tool they can use to talk to their districts and states about how they're using their funding to support their most vulnerable students.

It also reports on a number of other important factors around student support. So, things like student discipline, chronic absenteeism, and access to preschool and advanced coursework.

So, many of these things were pieces of the civil rights data collection that the Department was already using. But this codified it into the law to make sure that that will continue moving forward.

And then, the law also authorizes flexible funding within Title IV for all states to help increase access to a well-rounded
education and improved conditions for working.

So what this does is allow states to allocate 95 percent to these down to the district level. And then it'll districts, based on their own needs, and states working with their districts to support safe and healthy students, which can include school counseling, physical education, bullying and harassment prevention and school discipline initiatives supporting a well-rounded education.

So, things like access to APPLICATION, IB and advanced coursework, early college high schools, arts, music, foreign language, STEM education and supporting the effective use of technologies in schools.

So that's one place where states and districts have been given significantly more flexibility than they had in the past to determine where they see the most need in their districts.

And then, it maintains separately the 21 Century Community Learning Centers, which
provide a number of afterschool programs across the country.

The next one, I'm not going to go over too much. But other than to say, the ESSA does maintain some of the competitive grant programs that this Administration was instrumental in putting in place.

And you can see those listed here. The charter schools, magnet schools. And some of the education and innovative research programs. And then, I already mentioned early learning.

But the law does give expanded access to high quality preschool programs through the preschool development grants. So those grants will actually be managed by the Department of Health and Human Services, working jointly with Ed to develop the program and guidance.

But the funding will actually go through HHS. And as I already mentioned, states are going to be required in their annual report card to report on the number and percentage of students enrolled in preschool programs, which we
think is another key way for stakeholders to get involved if they want to see more preschool in their district.

Or to know how the funds are being used. And then, it requires districts to align their Title I plans under ESSA with the work they're doing under the Head Start program to make sure they're kind of fully leveraging those funds.

So I know that was a lot of information, but that was a lot in ten minutes. So now, I'll talk a little bit about what we have been doing to implement the law.

So, the ESSA provides time for Ed to help with an orderly transition. And so that's the language that's used. So we've been trying to do that as much as possible.

For the most part, what schools, states and districts are doing now in 2016-2017 is still guided by the language of No Child Left Behind. And so, states right now are working to start developing their plans and figure out how
to implement the ESSA really for the 2017-2018 school year.

So we, in one year, we know that we can't redo, undo, 14 years of guidance and regulations that we've done under No Child Left Behind.

But we have been working as quickly as possible to get information out to states, knowing that they're looking for answers, they're looking for guidance, as they're making lots of important decisions.

So there are a number of areas in which we already released guidance. And you can see those all listed here. It's why many of us look very tired.

But we particularly focus on vulnerable populations of students that were included in the law. So, students in foster care, homeless students.

The law, for the first time, codifies this term "evidence-based", which it uses throughout to talk about interventions,
professional development.

    So we put out guidance on how you can
use evidence to strengthen education investments,
knowing that that's an area for many districts
and schools that will be new.

    It's not just new terminology, it's a
new way of thinking about building evidence.
We've released guidance on Title III, around
English learners, Title II, around supporting
teachers and school leaders.

    Under Title I, schoolwide programs,
focus on how you can use those funds to kind of
leverage whole school reforms. So, think about
things like early learning, and that's how you
can use Title I funds to support early learning
in a schoolwide program.

    And then, separate early learning
guidance about how you can use your funds across
the laws to support those efforts. Title IV,
which I've mentioned, is kind of the area with
large flexibility for states to look at access to
a well-rounded education.
On November 21st, I think was our last guidance. We put out language around fiscal requirements and equitable services which talks about the interaction between private schools and public schools.

And then, we are still going with guidance that we anticipate getting out in the next few weeks, around school accountability and state plans, which are what states submit in order to get their federal funding, and data reporting.

So, report cards and graduation. So, it has not been a slow year here. There is a website listed at the bottom, so all of these documents are in one place.

All of the letters we sent, all of the guidance we've sent. So, both for your own education, but also to forward to stakeholders and groups that you work with.

We try to send to send them as much as possible. But you often know people that we don't. So, I just wanted to make sure that you
I have all of those resources.

And then, I'm not going to spend a lot of time on the next couple of slides. But we have done is provided you a summary of what's in each of those guidance documents, which might be helpful to focus your attention.

So, as I mentioned, we focus on students in foster care and homeless students. And so, being focused on both of those is about the coordination between state and local agencies who are tasked with providing the full wraparound support services for those, as well as the educational agencies that provide educational services.

And then using evidence, you'll see again across the law how to implement evidence-based activities. And then, on the following slide, you'll see kind of an overview of the Title I, Title II and Title III guidance, which I will leave you to read on your own.

The last slide, with guidance -- there's a lot of guidance -- early learning Title
IV are the last three documents we've released. And so, those are all there for you to learn more about, either through this presentation or on the website, as I mentioned.

The other big area of focus that we've really tried to take on over the last few months is thinking about stakeholder consultation. So, the law includes a lot of great new pieces about required stakeholder consultation.

We know that many states were engaging a variety of stakeholders on their own, but the law includes a lot of provisions to make sure that happens.

And so, we've released a few documents to support states in those efforts. So, some dear colleague letters from the Secretary to states about what groups must be consulted.

Particularly thinking about tribes and tribal organizations, where there are very specific legal requirements. And then, also, kind of other technical assistance efforts that we have in place.
We've been trying to focus those
groups on working with states, for how meet
stakeholders in a meaningful way and not just as
a check-the-box activity.

The other big piece, besides guidance,
of what we do is thinking about regulations. So,
based on the feedback that we got from
stakeholders very early on in the process, there
were a number of areas where the Department
decided to regulate.

And you can see those four up on the
slide. So, the first I'll mention is
accountability state plans of data reporting. In
this one, we've actually released final
regulations.

It came out last week. So there's
been a lot of talk in the states as they're
getting ready to create and submit their state
plans, which will come to the Department next
year.

And then there are three other areas
where we released proposed regulations, and the
public comment period has closed. And we're reviewing the comments before releasing final regulations.

So, two of those were in the area of assessments. One was around the general assessments that all states get for Title I. And one was the main area of the innovative assessments that the law allows a subset of states to pilot.

I'm looking at different ways to assess the thing about performance-based assessments or assessments that are broken up over the school year and not just at the end of the year.

For the Title I Part A assessments, and then the supplement not supplant regulations I'll talk about in a moment. We went through a process called negotiated rulemaking, which was both very interesting and busy.

So what we did was we pulled together a wide variety of stakeholders. So, teachers, professionals, parents, civil rights
organizations, business, federal, state and local leaders.

We sat very much at a table like this, over a number of sessions. And then we actually negotiated what those regulations should look like.

And then we published the proposed regulations and received comments on those. So the two assessment regulations we're reviewing and hope to have out soon.

The Title I supplement not supplant regulations, which are described on the next slide, we are reviewing comments a little bit later.

So we're still working on moving those forward as quickly as possible. And I won't spend any particular time on all of those regulations, other than to say that these are the only in which this Administration will be regulating.

We identified them as areas where we thought it would be important. But the law has a
lot of pretty cool components. But there are a
lot of other places where we either need to
clarify what was in the law or to make sure there
were pretty critical guardrails to protect
students, schools and districts.

So, Title I supplement not supplant,
there's a requirement in the law that Title I
funds are used to be supplement state and local
funds, and not to supplant the use of the funds.

We know from data that we have that
schools receiving Title I funds educate over two-
thirds of the low income children and children of
color in this country.

And yet, there are about 5,000 Title
I schools nationwide that receive substantially
less state and local funding than other schools
within their own district.

And so, what this regulation is really
looking at is building on the requirement in the
law and ensuring that states and districts really
are using Title I funds to supplement their
schools, not to replace shortfalls in state and
local funding.

And so that's an area that we're still working to get regulations out as quickly as possible. And then, the other thing that we've been doing outside of guidance and regulations is thinking about technical assistance.

So, I think many of you have interacted with our comprehensive centers or other Department-funded centers for technical assistance where we've invested over $50 million.

We've also set up a new technical assistance center this year, called the State Support Network, with about $10 million of funding.

That's to really focus on helping states and districts support their lowest-achieving schools and their lowest-performing students in those schools.

And so, we've taken a comprehensive approach to thinking about how to implement the law, which is not just regulations and rules or
guidance.

But also, how do we bring states together. How do we collaborate the states to make sure that they're implementing the law. Both to meet the letter of the law, but also to support all of their students.

And so, the last slide you'll see up here is additional resources. If there's anything I missed, you can email questions, you can go on the website to get additional information.

The other thing, I'm happy to take questions. I will flag based on what Ted already said. The question we most commonly get is what's going to happen on January 21st.

I have no idea, other than it is Saturday. We are moving forward very quickly on implementing the regulations that we release. So, we have a webinar for states tomorrow and we have a number of state officials who are federal program officers coming in to D.C. on Monday and Tuesday, where we're going to go through the
regulations and the processes to submit a state plan.

So, we are moving forward full-tilt, and we know that states are eager to implement this law. They've been working with a broken law for a number of years, and they're ready to move forward.

And we're doing as much as possible to help them do that as quickly as possible, while providing them the time they need to really engage their stakeholders and teachers across the state in developing their state plans.

So, that was a lot. But, I'm happy to take questions if there are any.

DR. PADRON: Thank you so very much. Lots of information, and it's very obvious that a lot of work and energy has gone into doing this work.

We have an opportunity for a couple of questions. And I know this is an area of great interest to a few Commissioners who have done a lot of work in this arena.
So, I'd like to open it up for those Commissioners. Let me give Adrian a chance, and then Patricia.

MR. PEDROZA: Thank you. Adrian Pedroza from New Mexico. We are very happy to see how strong early learning is really emphasized in this Act.

What opportunity do you see for local states to really push an early learning agenda? We, in New Mexico, have been working hard to really increase early learning new dollars, new funding, to not supplant but to supplement our early learning system there.

And we really see an opportunity with this new language to really continue pushing at the state level for to boldly fund high quality early learning to make it accessible.

What opportunities do you see for local states to really push that agenda using this new language?

MS. WALLIN: So, there's an obvious funding piece, which is that preschool
development grants continue for state, federal, new programs and scale up programs.

A lot of that is continuing on appropriation. So, thinking about how you talk about that with your local and national leaders. The other thing that we've tried to emphasize in all of these many guidance documents and regulations that we've released, is making sure preschool is at the table from the beginning.

So when stakeholders engagement is including the leaders of preschool, and thinking about how you're doing your turnaround process for elementary schools, how you are thinking about how early learning is effecting that school.

And so, one of the things we've done, for example, in the regulations -- there's a requirement for the lowest-performing schools, that they review any resource inequities.

And we said one of the resources you have to review is access to preschool and full-day kindergarten. And the idea is, if you're
thinking about why a school may be low-performing, that you're thinking about access to early learning as one possible reason.

So, it's not just about what happens once a student enters kindergarten, but what happens before. So the thing we've been emphasizing is how do you keep up the table from the beginning and build preschool in.

Don't at the end of it say, oh yes, you can use your money for preschool. How are we actually strategically setting up districts to do that.

MR. PEDROZA: Thank you.

DR. PADRON: Patricia?

DR. GANDARA: Yes, Terra, we -- I think this may be a longer conversation I'd like to have with you, but maybe we could just touch on this. We know that one of the assets that many Latino students bring with them to school is another language.

And we now know, incontrovertibly, this is a huge asset for these kids,
psychologically, educationally, cognitively, occupationally. But ever since NCLB, the language around support of primary language has disappeared.

There is no more BEA or anything. I've spent my time, some of my time, going through ESSA, trying to find where -- because the language here is all about English proficiency.

I've been trying to find where in this document we can find support for -- in fact, the increasing demand of parents across the country for programs that provide dual language education and/or support for the primary language.

Is anybody in the Department doing what I've been trying to do, like trying to figure out okay, where can these funds, where can this program, be actually used under Title II to support bilingual teachers, under Title III to provide support for primary language instruction? Is anything like this afoot?

MS. WALLIN: So, I don't know if you know Libby --
Dr. Gandara: Yes.

Ms. Wallin: I talk to Libby frequently, and she said exactly what you are saying right now. So, I can assure you that there's someone in the Department frequently bringing this up.

Based on what I put up on the slide, I don't think there's a plan right now to release kind of separate guidance on how to do that. I think it's one of the things that we are working on, thinking about how people can use funds as they ask these types of questions.

But also the rhetoric that we're using, and how we are talking about bilingualism as being valued for all students, whether they are native English speakers or not.

Dr. Gandara: Right.

Ms. Wallin: And so, how states are thinking about using those Title IV funds I mentioned. They can certainly use those for foreign language.

And so, how you think about that, both
for your students who are native English speakers and non. How you think about your indicators of school quality and student success, in thinking about access to well-rounded and what is well-rounded mean within your state.

So, we have been fielding some questions from the field. And the great thing about that is when we get a question and we answer it, that it becomes guidance to help a lot more people answer it.

So, the action steps, I would say to flood us with questions. Not flood, but a steady stream of questions about how we can support that. We are certainly thinking about it across our documents, even if it is a separate document.

We want to also release the English learner toolkit, which touch on a lot of things about identification, and also the types of services provided.

We are working to obligate that, based on the new law. So those are -- we're trying to build an in across our documents, so that it is a
recurring theme and not a separate vehicle on that.

DR. GANDARA: So, if I were to make a formal question, that would trigger some response around where we can find this in the document?

Thank you, Terra.

MS. WALLIN: Yes, don't use my name in the request though.

(Laughter)

MR. ABETY-GUTIERREZ: Hello. Modesto Abety from Miami. What is the status of Common Core?

MS. WALLIN: So, we have nothing to do with states -- so the law requires that states have rigorous standards. The Federal Government has never had a role in approving those specific standards.

The law, for the first time, requires that states have standards that are aligned to the expectations for entrance to institutions of post-secondary education within that state.

So a way that a number of states have
been thinking about that has been Common Core. But, there are a number of other states, like Texas and Virginia and Minnesota, that have thought about that by developing their own standards in conduction with their IEGs.

So, I can't comment on the status of the standards, particularly, we don't weigh in on those. I think a number of states are still actively transitioning.

And so, we field questions about how they can use funding to support teachers and those types of questions. I will say, it's an ongoing -- nobody feels like they are done with their work of transitioning standards.

A lot of states are still asking questions about how to use this funding to help. But, as far as the content of the standards, I can't talk much about that.

DR. PADRON: Yes?

MS. NEIRA: I just have a quick question on the assessments. You've talked about that there was a negotiated committee about the
different types of assessments, which is really
great and very responsive to the field.

   My question is a little more specific
about the testing of English language learners,
the students with disabilities. That was
something that we have over the last 14 years
been very anxious about.

   And there hasn't been any flexibility.
Has anything changed with the new Act?

   MS. WALLIN: So I think a couple of
things. I think one, in terms of the general
assessment that states are administered for the
first time in the law incorporates things like
universal design for learning, so they think
about how those assessments are actually designed
to serve all students.

   There was actually flexibility for
states to test recently-arrived English learners
in their native language for three years. And,
at a district level, on an individual basis for
up to five years.

   What we have seen historically is
states have not used that flexibility.

MS. NEIRA: Right.

MS. WALLIN: And you know, a lot of times it's related to costs. It's about developing assessments in their native language. They have an English version, they may not feel like they have the funds or it's not prioritized to assess students in their native language.

But that's something we've always been supportive of. And that flexibility remains. A lot of that is on states to take up that opportunity.

The other thing is that the law provides a new flexibility for a district within the state, at the high school level, to give a nationally-recognized high school assessment in place of the statewide assessment.

And so, this could be any kind of nationally-recognized assessment. When we did negotiated rulemaking, we said nationally-recognized meant that it was used by more than just one state, which seems to be the national
And recognized, being that it was recognized by institutions of higher education for placement or admission. And so, what we heard at the negotiated rulemaking table was lots of states talking about the ACT and SAT as an assessment their district wanted to give.

And one of the pieces that came out of negotiated rulemaking was the proposed rule that we're still finalizing, is that assessments can't give any benefit to some of their students that they don't give to other students.

So what we saw often was happening with some of these college entrance exams was, when they were given to students with disabilities or English learners with accommodations, then those results were essentially flagged and weren't allowed to be used for college admission because they had some kind of an accommodation that other students didn't have.

So the purpose of negotiated
rulemaking was really to get at that issue, and
said, no your test has to be accessible to
everyone. And then, everyone -- if somebody is
using those results for college entrance, then
every student should be able to use those
results.

And so, I don't think there's
necessarily any new piece of the law. They're
still out of the flexibilities that were in
there. We are hoping, because there's a new law,
people will pay more attention to them this time
around.

And for the native language assessment
piece, we give out state assessment funds to
states. But then it's up to them to prioritize
the native language.

MS. NEIRA: Thank you.

DR. PADRON: Any other questions or
comments? Yes?

DR. ARTILES: The emphasis on
subgroups has been an important advance in this
policy. However, it is increasingly apparent
that intersections of the subgroups is becoming increasingly important.

For example, English language learners with disabilities, or Latinos who are English learners with disabilities and so forth. And because of this lack of attention, there was going to be actually a National Research Council report released in the next three months on English language learners showing their urgent need for research on English learners with disabilities.

So we see a debate in the national circles about, on the one hand, under-identification of English learners with disabilities.

While, at the same time, there is evidence showing that many of these students are being placed disproportionately, especially at the district and state level.

When you look at the data at that level, you see a critical problem. Are there any discussions in the Department about emphasizing,
providing, more resources to understanding the
needs of populations?

And this is not only about language
and disability status. It applies to gender and
ethnicity and so forth.

MS. WALLIN: So, I think a couple of
things. The law has a requirement around the
cross-tabulation of data. So, states actually
publishing some of these intersections of groups
so that you can look at students with
disabilities who are also English learners.

It's kind of the next step in
transparency. So I think that's one important
piece that will allow people to think more about
those intersections.

I think the other thing is, this came
up both in the assess -- when we regulated around
assessments and also when we regulated on
accountability.

They're kind of very practical
considerations. So, English language proficiency
assessments normally are core domains. I look at
speaking, listening, reading and writing.

But sometimes you have students with disabilities who may not be able to participate in one of those domains. Or, you have a district saying that a student has a disability and that's why they can't participate.

But, really what they have is a lack of English language proficiency that's preventing them from participating. And we have to think about some of those things in the regulatory context.

So that's helped drive a lot of conversation to thinking about guidance and technical assistance. But that's one of the issues I was in several meetings about over the last week, is thinking about how we provide more guidance to states about the intersection particularly in English learners and students with disabilities.

I think one of the challenges is it's very state-specific, it's a lot about on-the-ground services. So, thinking about where our
kind of key touchpoints are for that.

And a lot of it is technical assistance. So, helping states put in place screening processes that both meet the letter of the law, but also are practical for them to implement.

So that's how we are thinking about it in the regulatory space. We address some things, but it raises a lot more questions. And so now we're trying to push those into regulations.

DR. PADRON: Anyone else? Thank you so much for everything.

(Applause)

Let's take a four minute mini-break, so you can stretch and do whatever. Let's take about four minutes.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 10:58 a.m. and resumed at 11:11 a.m.)

DR. PADRON: Okay, we are going to resume our meeting. And it is my great pleasure to officially welcome our hostess, who has done
such a wonderful job in formulating all of our needs, and someone who makes us very proud for everything that she has accomplished, including being the President of the National Education Association.

They have done such important work in the areas that we're most concerned about. So, the floor is yours.

MS. ESKELESON-GARCIA: Oh, thank you. And forgive me for being late. There was a meeting of Democratic state legislators talking about how they could make the new ESSA law something that actually worked for students, instead of just a test and punish regime.

And I'm very excited that we're seeing some real interest and some real advocacy on the state and local levels. And I want to welcome you.

I was going to say mi casa es su casa. But that really is true, this is your house. After all of these years, and the people around this table, the power around this table of people
who have the best hearts and the best minds of
any group that I've ever been privileged to work
with.

I just want to tell you how proud NEA
is to have you in the house. And I don't want to
take up a lot of time with this welcome. But I
asked Alejandra if I would get in trouble or get
her in trouble if I talked about the new world
that we woke up to.

And she said, you can say anything you
want.

(Laughter)

So, that's dangerous, that is
dangerous. But our lives have changed. This is
the first time. And as a sixth-grade teacher
from the vastly diverse state of Utah --

I kind of say that as a joke, but
there is no state that doesn't have a beautiful
diversity to it. There are Latino communities,
Vietnamese communities, Hmong communities
everywhere.

Everywhere you look, you see the
beauty of immigration and the diversity in our communities. And, for the first time, many of my colleagues teaching in those public schools had to comfort children who were frightened after the results of the election.

That tells us that we have a lot of work to do. These are our children who deserve to be respected and their families deserve to live in safety.

And that public school, for many of these children, was the safest place they could think of. It was a place where educators took care of them, and that they could show up.

And sometimes it took care of their health needs. They had a hot meal. They had a teacher who would hug them and encourage them. And parents had a place where they could trust.

We will do everything in our power to make sure that that is always true, no matter who's President. But I look at the good work that this Committee has done over the years, from preschool to graduate school.
We have really, I think, had an incredible impact on the way people see education and see our Latino children and see the talents and gifts that they bring.

And, again, no matter what happens to a future Commission, no matter what happens to Departments that are now being -- people are being nominated and people are being hired.

It's up to us on this Committee not to let our work die. We got on this Committee because we were outspoken advocates in some form, we have a circle of influence.

And no one can take that away. And so, as far as I'm concerned, the honor of serving here and the work in this building that you're meeting in right now, will continue ten times harder.

We know that now's the time for us to step up and be even stronger than we've ever been before. So, I'm so honored to have this Commission meet here.

I'm honored for the work that we do in
this building.

(Applause)

DR. PADRON: Thank you, Lily, for those heartfelt comments. I probably agree with you, in terms of our mission, in terms of the incredible work that has taken place in this Commission and the great support that we have received from staff.

We're very fortunate now to have someone who, from the very beginning of this Commission, has been our greatest advocate, supporter, and a very effective communicator in his role as Deputy Assistant to the President for Education.

He's worked at the Domestic Policy Council has always reflected the values and ideas that have been exposed here. And he's always been there for us, only a phone call away.

When there have been issues and areas that need attention. So it is with great, great sense of anticipation that I welcome Roberto Rodriguez to join us today and share some
thoughts with us.

(Applause)

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. I want to begin by thanking you for your outstanding leadership of this Presidential Commission.

We're so proud of what the Commission has accomplished over the course of President Obama's tenure and Administration. And it is a testament to the leadership of you as Chairman, and of this entire Commission, all of you, for your contributions to our Administration's agenda, to advancing and furthering the President's vision to provide a complete and competitive education for all of our learners.

I want to thank Alejandra and all of the staff at the Commission for your service to our Administration and to the President. And please join me in giving them a round of applause.

(Applause)

She has been an amazing colleague and
friend, but a really powerful voice for expanding and extending our Administration's priorities in the Latino community and helping our young people and our families understand what our Administration is endeavoring to accomplish to help them be successful and to help improve opportunities for them.

So, thank you. I want to thank you so much for your leadership, not only your participation and contributions to this Commission, but your dedication to creating and supporting a strong public education and a strong public school for every child.

And I can't tell you how it brings me great hope to know that that mission will continue, with your leadership, regardless of who's in the White House.

And that's so important. So I just want to reflect a bit on where we are, relative to the President's agenda for education and, also, reflect a bit on the future of the work here of the Commission.
Because, as has been noted this morning already, that work is far from over. And we have much more to accomplish and do on behalf of our Latino children and families to improve opportunities and to really help them reach their full potential.

I was with the President last night, yesterday evening. And he was expressing how proud he is of what the Administration has accomplished.

And that reaches beyond just education and the domestic issues that we advance on his behalf. You know, the work that has been done internationally, the work that has been done outside of education on health care, on DACA, on so many other important issues to our nation.

So, you know, at this point in our Administration, I will share it's moving to me to hear that reflection from him. But he also shares not just his pride in what's been accomplished and what's been achieved, but also in how that has been achieved.
And the values behind that work. And that is tremendously important for this body of work in education, because providing high quality education for each and every learner, from our youngest all the way through post-secondary education, and opportunity for our adults.

This is work that is about building a stronger democracy. This is work that is about living up to our moral values as a country. This is work that is about maintaining those hallmarks of fairness and opportunity and justice for all of our families.

This is work about advancing the values of pluralism and diversity and multiculturalism across our country. And I think what -- not only what this Commission has accomplished for the Latino community, but how it has reflected those values and how it has accomplished that mission is just as important as some of the wonderful strides that we have seen over the past eight years.

As we've heard our President, we have
the highest graduation today on record, 83 percent. We still have a long way to go to provide that opportunity for each and every learner.

But I think it's really important to mark that progress. We have seen the dropout rate reduced significantly under the President's tenure.

That has mattered most for our Latino students. We have seen that rate cut in half for our Latino students since just before our Administration took office.

And that's really remarkable because we have faced, as a Latino community, challenges around high school dropout for years. This has been a priority we've all been focused on collectively, even before the President took office.

So, that's remarkable progress. We have seen over a million more Latino and African American students enrolling in our institutions of higher education.
A new national commitment to college completion is not only helping to improve and open the doors of higher education for our Latino students, but also to make sure that they have every opportunity, every support, they need to make it through and earn their degree.

We have seen a new national imperative and focus on preparing every learner for college and careers and citizenship. And that is a huge step forward in terms of the progress of our education system.

We now have college and career-ready standards adopted throughout all -- across every state, honestly. And when we took office, this was an important imperative.

The idea about how to redesign and support the reforms that are needed to No Child Left Behind so that we can all focus on the imperative of college and career readiness.

And help engender shared responsibility on the part of our students, on the part of our families, on the part of our
educators, on the part of our policymakers
towards that goal at every level.

We have seen a focus on the importance
of supporting our nation's teachers, who are our
country builders, who are the ones that make such
a difference and are so consequential to the
future for our learners at every level.

And making sure that we are starting
and opening a new conversation about how we can
support and strengthen that profession. Do more
to recruit, to develop, to prepare, to retain
great teachers in all of our classrooms.

We've seen a focus on some of our
lowest performing schools. And a national
imperative that says we can't tolerate a lack of
investment and a lack of attention and a lack of
focus on opportunity in places where we have a
majority of -- or even over a third of our high
school students who are not making it across the
finish line in terms of high school graduation.

And we have seen a precipitous decline
in the number of schools that produce the
majority of America's dropouts from 2000 to just over 1000 schools -- almost in half.

A lot of those schools are in our neighborhoods. These are schools that are serving our students. And I think the important lesson we have there is that we have to stay the course and maintain the investments, while providing the support that our communities need to come together with educators and develop the solutions that work best in their neighborhoods to help provide a new day of opportunity for learning for our students in those schools.

We have a seen a re-focus on early childhood education and early learning, where we saw such an under-representation of our Latino children in high quality preschool and high quality early education programs.

The President talked about this when he took office, early in 2009, at the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. He talked about the need to raise the bar, as a country, on early childhood education.
And to open the door to a greater number and share of our youngest learners. He's called for preschool for each and every learner, because we should be a country that is not 28 out of 38 developed nations, but first in the world relative to providing that opportunity that we know makes such a difference for our youngest children.

When they have the opportunity to connect with nurturing and caring adults to learn those social and emotional cognitive early literacy, early numeracy, competencies that are so important to their future success.

And we have seen -- despite a Congressional inaction on that proposal, we have seen that expansion flourish and expand across the country.

And we now have over 15 states that have in place high quality preschool programs that are helping our youngest learners succeed. We've expanded dramatically the Head Start program by over 65,000 slots.
That means that over a full -- over a third of those are children, that are Latino, are getting access to high quality early childhood education.

And we've put on the table a proposal to provide high quality childcare to each and every one of our families. We know that that's an important work support, but also an important early learning environment for our youngest children.

We've done more to grow the Pell Grant, and improve access to staff support -- that important support -- for higher educational opportunity for millions more young children and adults since the President took office.

That grant has grown by $1,100 over the last eight years. We have just over 3 million more recipients of Pell. And we have charted a course to make sure that that keeps up with inflation, that that grant continues to grow so that it can be a meaningful down payment and support on the promise of earning a post-
secondary degree.

We've expanded dramatically support for America's community colleges. And the President has galvanized us around the goal of making sure that our higher education system is as universal and as accessible as high school was a generation ago, two generations ago.

When we had a conversation about, should every student be able to attend high school. Today, this should be a no-brainer for us to provide access to our post-secondary system.

To support stronger collaborations between our community colleges and our two-year systems and our credentialing programs. And our four-year systems.

To provide that pathway for more of our families. It's so important for our Latino students, where we have a majority of our students that are in our community college system and where we depend on that system to be able to get ahead.
We've done more to expand income-based repayment to ensure that our young people have a promise of being able to repay their student debt at a level that does not ensure that they're drowning in debt or unable to make their payments.

The President's income-based repayment and Pay As You Earn plans, which he has acted on three times over the course of his tenure, have become more generous and ensured that students graduating from college can peg their repayment at 10 percent of their monthly discretionary income.

That they have that promise to be able to say I'm going to make that college choice and I'm going to take that leap and know that the Federal Government will have my back as I repay these loans.

That we have public service loan forgiveness for our college graduates who enter the important service professions, who enter teaching, who enter other professions in their
community that are giving back.

And we've done more to make sure that we're opening a new conversation around -- and a shared responsibility around -- investing in our higher education system.

Because if we're going to have a strong public K-12 education system, we have to continue to have a strong public higher education system. And that requires our states to invest more in our colleges and universities.

And we've tried to encourage that effort. But also making sure that we are focused in the shared responsibility and commitment to helping all of our young people get through.

And so this question around value, and this question around helping to support the advising and counseling and the peer networks that are needed for our college students, and especially our first generation students and our low income students to complete college.

It's so important. So we've seen tremendous strides. And all of those, I think,
really translate into greater opportunity for our Latino children and families.

As the President often says, this is the first rung on the ladder of opportunity of economic mobility. And our times, the economy, the demands that our learners face today, necessitate a great education for every learner.

This is not just a choice for some, this is a prerequisite for success for all of our students. So, we know the stakes have never been higher for our students.

And we have to continue to embrace this charge as a country. And it is my hope that this Commission will continue to embrace this charge moving forward.

The work that the Commission has engaged in to advance early learning opportunities, to bring to light the importance of bilingualism and multilingualism, and to really lift up the assets of our families and our communities and put those at the center of the educational experience has been so important.
The work that has been done to bring to light the challenges that we face in strengthening the teaching profession. And the challenges we face in opening more pathways for our Latino community to get into teaching, so that our young people can see themselves in their classrooms, early in their schooling career.

So that they have the mentors that they need and the stewardship that they need over their learning. Folks in their communities, folks that can communicate and relate and connect with them and with their parents and their families is so important.

We still have such a shortage of Latino teachers across our system. And we must do better. The work that needs to continue to make sure that our institutions of higher education are making the changes that are needed to focus on our first generation learners in that system.

This is not just about doing a better job of getting more Pell-eligible students into
our colleges and universities. It is saying, how are we supporting them every step of the way.

How are we making sure that every one of those students is finishing their freshman year and going on to their sophomore year. They're not leaving because they're overwhelmed academically or isolated culturally.

Or don't have the social and emotional supports that they need to be successful. Or drowning in debt. Or trying to manage that work/study relationship.

Or trying to figure out how they send money back home to their families to help support their parents as they pursue their college degree. These are conversations we have to keep having as a country.

They're conversations that are central to ensuring that our Latino community can get ahead. That we are fulfilling the promise of a great education for all students, not just for some.

And I think that has to be the
continued focus of this Commission. Because the
aggregate talent and experience that we have
here, that's collected here in this Commission.

The contributions that this Commission
has made to move that conversation forward on all
of these fronts has been tremendous. And the
stakes around continuing that conversation, the
imperative to continue that conversation, is
higher than it has ever been.

At least in my opinion. So, I think
it's very important to chart a continued focus
and direction on these issues. And to explore
the other challenges that we're grappling with.

And the work that you're doing on
behalf of ultimately, not just President Obama
and not just the Obama Administration -- and we
have been honored to be able to appoint such an
esteemed group of educators and leaders.

But it's not just that. It's not just
the work done on behalf of the President. It's
really the work that is done on behalf of our
families and on behalf of our young people and on
behalf of our learners.

It's the work that's done on behalf of our adults and our immigrants who are looking to learn English and succeed and get the skills that they need to lift their families up.

Making sure that that continues to be a strong adult education system and a strong system to provide opportunities continues to be a part of our education system.

All of that work is so important to our future, collectively. So, it is with very deep gratitude that I come before you today to thank you for all that you've done.

All that you have contributed to this discussion. To thank you for your service, to express our appreciation and to express the pride on behalf of President Obama.

But it is also in asking you to go even further on behalf of our Latino children and families. And thank you all so much for all that you'll continue to do in that effort.

(Applause)
DR. PADRON: Thank you very, very much. We have time for actually one question. Sylvia?

MS. ACEVEDO: Okay, great. First of all, I want to thank you, Roberto. I've been fortunate the last few years, I see you all over the country in front of small classrooms, small early childhood centers to reaching more of an audience.

And you always came with the same passion and fervor. But I specifically wanted to call you out for thanking you and steal a little bit about early childhood's thunder, is we also got a policy change, thanks to you, about language.

And as a result of your tireless work, pushing through a lot of bureaucracy, for the first time now, children in early childhood, they can use federal funds to get curriculum that supports them in dual language.

And, you know, Dr. Gandara was instrumental in that, the Early Childhood
Subcommittee. And it just kind of went through this bureaucracy and, thanks to your laserlike focus, it happened.

And so, now, children across America can have those evidence-based quality early childhood dual language programs. And so, I know that that was not easy and I wanted to thank you for that.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, Sylvia. And that was a partnership. I mean, that work would not have happened without your leadership, without your leadership Patricia, and without this Commission's focus on that end.

So, this is a perfect example of how this Commission has made real change in our federal system and real change on behalf of our Administration. So, thank you.

MS. ESKELESON-GARCIA: Dr. Padron, I have another question.

DR. PADRON: Yes.

MS. ESKELESON-GARCIA: Just a fast comment. I was remiss in pointing out that, at
NEA.org, you can find some fabulous materials from our Center for Social Justice, on DACA, on bullying, on safe spaces in schools, on your rights as an immigrant.

And I wanted, Roberto, I wanted to introduce you to the Director of our Center for Social Justice. Her name's Rocio Inclan. And I just wanted to make sure that I made that connection. You can explain.

DR. PADRON: Roberto, I know that I speak on behalf of all of the Commissioners when I say thank you so very much. We're very grateful for your support from the very beginning.

Everything you've done, and I know you will continue to do, to make sure that the children of this nation have their fair share. And that all of the other important values that we sustain here at the Commission.

Again, thank you, and on our behalf, thank the President for appointing this Commission, for supporting the Commission and
understanding and actually becoming aware of the work.

Because in my conversations with the President, there's no question that the President is very much aware of what this Commission has accomplished. And for that, we're very grateful.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

DR. PADRON: Thank you. Thank you so much. I'm going to ask Alex to give us the latest in terms of logistics and housekeeping matters before we go to lunch.

MS. CEJA: So, we are going to be transitioning into our lunch break. So, for those of you in the public that are joining us, we have a list of recommendations of nearby restaurants.

And then, we will reconvene at 12:30 with the subcommittee reports and their recommendations for 2017 priorities. And for the Commissioners, we have lunch with you with our Asian-American Pacific Islander Commission next door, where you all had breakfast.
So we will be transitioning there.
And during that period, we will take a quick
group photo there in that room. Thank you guys.
(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
went off the record at 11:44 a.m. and resumed at
12:49 p.m.)

DR. PADRON: Okay, we are ready to
start. We now have the reports of the various
subcommittees. And the work of the subcommittees
have given us the 2017 priorities.

So, we're going to start with the
Early Learning Subcommittee. I'm going to ask
Sylvia Acevedo to please present that report.

MS. ACEVEDO: Great, thank you very
much. Thank you everybody. We have this amazing
Committee, and you can see all of our names. We
have Ernesto, we have Manny Sanchez from Chicago.

Shakira is not able to join us, but we
have her representation here with Maria. So,
let's go to the next slide. I'm really excited
to talk about what we've done in early learning.

So, how we first started, you know,
kids. And what I like to say about early learning is you cannot have higher ed without lower ed. It all starts with young kids.

And, so what we did was, we realized -- you know, in the early ed community we all knew that, but we had to bring in uncommon partners. So, our first major national summit was Dr. Padron hosted us in Miami and we brought together the uncommon partners of the business community, including a Noble Price Winner, Dr. James Heckman, who talked about the Seven-to-One Economic Advantages.

But we also had the military there saying that early ed was a national security issue. And that was a real big surprise for a lot of our partners in early ed.

In addition to that, we got some media partnerships that many people have now seen where we really focus on reading and writing, the benefits of reading and singing to your children.

Then, we did a Bright Spots in San Antonio. San Antonio, deep in the heart of
Texas, was able to raise taxes -- yes, you heard that right -- raise taxes for early ed.

And so, we did a Bright Spot convening to hear from the civic leaders from both parties, talking about the investments business communities, non-profit communities that were making in their community in early ed.

And they saw a dramatic increase of the number of children in early ed. But another thing that we heard about is where's the data. And what we saw is so many children in early ed were coming with their native language.

And as soon as they got into an early ed program, we have to leave that language skill at home and only learn English. English immersion was the only way.

And we knew there's great data, and there were great programs you there, that would focus on what are the benefits of a bilingual or dual language curriculum.

So, in Chicago, we went and we discussed the benefits of family engagement,
showed the data about benefits of family engagement in early childhood and the outcomes.

We also focused on STEM, my favorite as an engineer. But the other one was the economic benefits of dual language. And what we know is that, in a global economy, under-served and under-represented communities and children lose two competitive advantages.

They lose the competitive advantage geographic place, and they lose the competitive advantage of language. What happens is, when you can get services and products with a click of a pen or just a click of a mouse keypad, or over the phone, you don't necessarily have to be local to do that service anymore.

So, many kids in under-served and under-represented communities that used to have job opportunities because of their place. In a global economy, many of those jobs went away.

The other one was, they had opportunities because English was an elite skill. Well, now in English is a common skill. And so,
now they're competing with people all over the world, who can speak English well -- very fluently.

And those competitors have kept their native language. And so, our kids have lost those two competitive advantages. English as an elite language and also the advantage of geographic place.

With that data, we had educators, we had Dr. Patricia Gandara who wrote white papers, worked with the Health and Human Services and the Department of Education.

They saw that you needed to make sure that our kids who were coming prepared with another language could keep that language as they were learning English.

And they changed policies so that now dual language curriculums can be used in early childhood, including Head Start. That was a major policy change, and I'm just so grateful for that and for all of the work of the Commissioners who fought to make that happen.
We're really proud that that's in place. So now, those wonderful curriculums that utilize the child's native language can be used across the U.S. with federal funds.

Now, we do have recommendations, and I'm going to hand it over to Dan for the recommendations.

MR. PEDROZA: Thank you, Sylvia, and for your leadership, chairing our subcommittee with Melissa. How much time do I have? I just want to be mindful of --

DR. PADRON: You have about five minutes.

MR. PEDROZA: Five minutes, okay. At the top of our list of recommendations, was continuing the support of a bold investment in early learning education.

President Obama challenged us, early on in our appointment, that he wanted to invest $75 billion over 10 years in universal high quality preschool programs for low and moderate income families.
We want to continue pushing for that bold investment as he challenges us and as Roberto challenges us. We've made strong strides in investment across the nation in early childhood education from birth to pre-K.

But we want to continue pushing for that bold investment. And that work also happens at the statewide level, that we all know we push for individually, state-by-state.

And even by municipalities and local governments, as Sylvia pointed out. We want ensure that we continue focusing on increasing preschool development grants for states.

We heard earlier that that was a big push by the ESSA Act. And we want to continue just highlighting that those preschool development grants we need to continue pushing at the state level and competing for those local dollars.

Mental and infant early childhood home visiting programs. You know, many times with early education, we focus on pre-K, but we want
to really emphasize that early education, when we speak to that, starts at birth.

And it starts with good, high quality home visiting programs that we know impacts -- it's an issue of equity in our low-income communities that these home visiting programs are essential to the success of young children.

Because that support of parents and understanding early childhood development, brain development, is just -- it's so crucial in those early years, those zero to three years.

The public private investments, as Sylvia pointed out, early on when we had our convening in Miami, where we challenged the private sector to really partner with the public sector on making bold investments into early childhood education.

We want to continue sending that message that we need this to be a public private partnership. We need foundations to continue, and our local community-based organizations to continue investing both in early childhood
Because, as we all know, when we invest in families and young children, we better prepare children to be ready for learning starting at pre-K.

And so, we want to continue pushing for that public private investment. The next slide? You know, Sylvia spoke a lot about dual language learning.

And, as she pointed out, we have work to do now to ensure that the implementation of the advocacy work that was done by this Commission and by the Administration to have stronger dual language early learning as a part of our state-by-state work.

That we need to continue ensuring that early learning is emphasized. Because we strongly feel, as a Commission, and we know that the President strongly supports that language is an asset for our community.

It is not a deficit. We should not just look at language as children entering with
that deficit of maybe not knowing English. But
we see it as a strength.

And when we focus on dual language
programs, we see early learning strengthened.
And so we want to continue just emphasizing that
as a recommendation.

The ESSA Act, we just want to -- we
won't say too much about that. We focused a lot
about that earlier, and there's a lot of work
that we can do, state-by-state, on that.

And I'll wrap up by saying that we
want to make sure that our policies and practices
reflect our growing diversity of early childhood
population.

We just had an opportunity to meet
with our colleagues over lunch, and between the
Asian community and Pacific Islander community
and the Hispanic community, we have the fastest
growing populations in this country.

And that's strength in numbers. We
want to continue showing and speaking to that
strength. And that is what this country is
about, is diversity and that strength in
language.

And we'd like to emphasize that the
work moving forward needs to respect and focus on
that diversity as we see our numbers strengthen
here in this country. Thank you.

DR. PADRON: Do we have any questions
for Sylvia or James? If not, let me thank you
both for the hard work, as well as the other
members of the Subcommittee.

Great work. We're very, very proud of
what you've done. They've been very persistent
from the very beginning, to say the least, but
you've accomplished what you've set out to do.

And that's great. Okay, so we're now
going to go to the K-12 Subcommittee. And nobody
better to do that introduction than Dr. Gandara.

DR. GANDARA: Muchos gracias. The
goal of the -- I think we made last-minute edits
on here. So, I'm going to hope that we can just
get them inserted before this becomes final.

But the goal of the subcommittee on K-
12 -- well, first let me begin with -- I chaired this committee, alongside of Dan Cardinali who cannot be here today.

So we're missing Dan. Actually, we missing several of our Committee members today who've worked very hard. The goal of the Subcommittee was principally two-fold.

It was to push the issue of integrated services for children, because we all understand very well now that schools cannot do it alone. And that the serious challenges that many of our children have, many of our families have, includes things like health.

And other kinds of services that are so critically needed. And so, one of the things that we wanted to highlight and continue to push forward on was integrated services.

And the other was to increase the number and the preparation of Latino teachers and bilingual Latino teachers in particular. Because we have an enormous shortage, both of Latino teachers and of bilingual teachers in this
country.

So, most of our activities have been in that regard. The members of the Committee include Alfredo Artiles. And we had two, by the way, just tremendous expertise on this Committee in these areas.

So we had a deep pool to draw from with our Committee members. Lily Eskelsen-Garcia, JoAnn Gama, Monica Martinez, who isn't here today, Veronic Melvin, who is here, Maria Neira, Eduardo Padron, Darline Robles, who is not here today, and Kent Scribner, who is not here today.

So, to move to the next slide, the highlights. You know, as I look at these, I thought gosh, you know, that seems like not all that much filling an important slide.

But I think what people need to know is that each one of these activities was basically a year-long activity. And so, the first -- that actually -- that's great, we actually got that fixed.
Our first major activity was to try and focus in on the issue of the great need for Latino teachers, bilingual teachers and to -- the notion was really threefold.

One, to honor the teachers who were out there who were doing such extraordinary work, to show them as models for young people. But also, to help young people understand the pathway to becoming a teacher.

And this is an area in which we would still like to forge ahead further. But, in this particular activity, in August of 2012, which took about a year to put together because the committee had to meet and decide on criteria, decide on how people would be selected, do the selection of the teachers, plan the entire event and figure out the logistics of having all of this happen.

So, with this, in August of 2012, we increased national awareness of the shortage of Latino teachers and produced a small report on that.
We highlighted the special skills and experiences and we had 11 -- I'm sorry Lily isn't here right now, because we had -- it brought tears to my eyes, because we were able to bring 10 outstanding Latino teachers from across the country to be honored at the White House.

And Lily provided, and NEA provided, a lovely breakfast for them, honoring them. And then Dan Cardinali provided this beautiful luncheon at Hay-Adams.

So, the teachers were all brought to tears. And as every wonderful teacher should be, at least once in a while, brought to tears by the ways that we honor them.

So, that was very nice. So, in March of 2014, we did this National Symposium on Integrated Student Supports in Los Angeles. And we convened more than 100 national leaders in philanthropy, academia, government, to discuss what we know, what we need to know and what need to do about increasing integrated supports.

And we do see that reflected in the
ESSA, which does feel like a policy win. And we do know that the activity of the Commission -- and Dan is spearheading those activities, had a very direct impact on that particular piece of the ESSA.

And, as a part of that whole activity, Veronica Melvin arranged a wonderful day in Los Angeles, at Manual Arts High School, seeing what people were actually doing, in practice, about integrating student supports into the school.

And that was a wonderfully successful event, for which we're really grateful. And so, as I suggested, we've actually seen this now reflected in the new law.

In 2015, we published Fulfilling America's Future: Latinas 2015, a focus on what was going on with Latinas in this country, disaggregating the data, which had not previously been disaggregated in most of these areas to see what's happening with the women.

And that's a very -- that publication is available now freely, and online. But that
was very eye-opening because there's been a lot of discussion recently, and with good reason, about the terrible gender disparities, and the fact that women are actually pushing ahead significantly at every educational level.

Now we have reached all the way up to the doctoral degree, more women getting doctorates than men across all ethnic groups. But this is particularly exacerbated among the African American and Latino communities.

So, there has been a particular focus on what's happening with the boys. And, as I said, with good reason. But in that process, we can forget to look at the women, and what is happening to the women.

And I think one of the things that just jumps off the page in this report is that although Latinas are doing so much better educationally, they still earn less than their brothers with lower education.

And they earn considerably less.

Their educational attainment, as well as their
earnings, is very significantly less than that of White women.

So, it depends on what standard you use to measure these things. If you measure them against Latino males, they look great. If you measure them against everybody else, there's still a lot of need for improvement and a lot of need to focus on these women.

And I always like to make the argument that one reason why we must focus on these young women is because there is no better predictor of a child's educational achievement and attainment than that of his or her mother.

Fathers are important, we love them, but it's mother's education and attainment that is most predictive of what's going to happen to the next generation.

So, we need to be focused on that. And then, finally, it's already been discussed, but I think this was a great coup between our Committees, Early Education and K-12, to get this case off on dual language.
And I would simply add, this is an area of my own research over many, many years. I would simply add that another reason why this is so important to really push on the issue of dual language at the early learning level, is because when we don't do that, we separate children from their parents at a very early age.

We send a signal to the parents at a very early age, you have nothing to do with this. The school is really not going to be communicating with you.

And we know that, among the huge advantages of children learning in their primary language, is family cohesiveness. Parents have more of a role in their children's education, and families function better, when the children actually continue to develop their first language.

So, there are many, many benefits, but that's one I don't like to get lost. Next slide. So, we continue with Presidential Session at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational
And maybe I could -- Alejandra, maybe I could just insert something here. Because -- and we'll perhaps post this. But, last week, I did this centennial lecture in Brooklyn for the AERA.

And basically it was on defending the education of immigrant children in this country. And so, I would -- it's a research-based thing about what does the research say about the education of immigrant children and why this is so critical to our nation.

So, I would like if we could share that.

MS. CEJA: Absolutely.

DR. GANDARA: Okay. And this was another Presidential Session at AERA. And then, finally, Alfredo Artilles, Luis Fraga, and Sylvia Acevedo did a presentation for Linea Abierta about the Commission, explaining -- June of 2011. So, this was very early on in our tenure. And I'm sorry, that should
have been the first thing rather than the last thing. In which, they talked to the Latino community in our language, in Spanish, about the importance of the Commission and what it did.

So, to the -- if we can move -- what recommendations do we make? Continued support for the use of Title I to support evidence-based integrated student supports.

We need to track on this, we need to see to what extent ESSA actually makes a difference. And what more needs to be done in this area.

Exhaust administrative actions possible to protect the safety and well-being of the 740,000 recipients of DACA. This needs to be high on our list.

These young people are the cream of the crop. I met with 40 of them, or so, a couple of weeks ago, from across the country. And I was literally reduced to tears myself.

At what these young people have been through, what they have accomplished and what an
enormous asset they are to this nation. To lose
them in any sense would just be -- talk about
shooting yourself in the foot.

This would certainly be that.

Continued focus on the Latino and bilingual
teacher recruitment and retention. California,
in the last election, did something
extraordinary.

With 73 percent of the vote, they
overturned an 18-year ban on bilingual
instruction, and is now opening all of its
schools to multilingual education.

People are extremely excited about
this. But we don't have the teachers to pull it
off. So, if we ever needed a focus on this, we
certainly need it now.

And the U.S. Department of Education
should collect and report data on race, ethnicity
and, por favor, language. Because nobody is
collecting this data on what languages our
teachers have.

And this is certainly not just Spanish
language, but language as well. How many of our teachers have this capacity? How many of them are certified?

How many of them could be certified? Where are they? We desperately need this data now. If we're going to make any difference in the recruitment of bilingual teachers, across the board, we need to know who the people are who have these skills, where are they and what can we do.

I want to add two that are not on there. I would like to add that, for the future, we should have regular policy meetings with folks in the Departments -- relevant Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, et cetera -- with the Commissioners to have policy discussions about --

There is tremendous, tremendous knowledge on this Commission in deep areas. And I would like to recommend that that happen going forward, and that we establish a latinodata.gov in the same way that the Asian Committee has an
This is one thing that we can make tremendous progress on. So, Alfredo Artiles is going to take just a couple of minutes to say something about the white paper.

DR. ARTILES: Do we have time?

DR. GANDARA: Do we? Eduardo, can we take two more minutes? I'm sorry, Alfredo, I thought you wanted to say something.

DR. ARTILES: That's okay. This is a very raw list of ideas that you have in your folders. It was a brief discussion in the context of a conference call with the Subcommittee a few weeks ago.

The idea is to produce a white paper that will represent a vision for education for Latino/Latina students in the 21st century. And the challenge for a white paper like this is to approach it from as generative a perspective as possible, so that it really addresses issues related to learning and effective practices that we know from the science of education and other
disciplines.

As well as addressing the unique needs of the Latino/Latina communities. Somewhere between those two priorities, we need to be bringing to the writing of this white paper.

We won't have time to discuss it today, but I wanted to share some of the preliminary ideas that are being considered at this point, that will include attention to a view of learning that is not treating Latino/Latinas as an exception to what we know.

But it's part of a cultural view of learning that benefits from interdisciplinary insights. There is enough evidence to this now, that we can be drawing from.

As well as bringing a perspective that will emphasize a sustained effort to conduct with certain produced knowledge from multiple disciplines.

There are incredible advances in understanding Latino/Latina students experiences, cultures, communities and families beyond
education.

The humanities, social sciences, life sciences. The intersection between biology and culture is becoming increasingly relevant to education.

We should be bringing a perspective that informs policy, research and practice from all of these vantage points. Issues of communicating, research findings and knowledge is becoming increasingly important, especially as we consider not only what is relevant to accessing opportunities, but also what is the impact of accessing those opportunities.

And one way of gauging impact is to make that knowledge accessible and usable to different stakeholders and track the impact. So, programs, funding streams, preparation of personnel should be bringing what is called a knowledge mobilization perspective.

How do we take the knowledge we have, represented in this Commission and beyond, so that people understand it, use it and then we
document what is the impact of those efforts.

    A programmatic approach to making

knowledge mobilization central to the production
of knowledge, as well as the implementation
programs, is something that I thought will be
important for us to consider.

    There are other key ideas that I've
highlighted here, including investing in
gathering insights, perspectives and the voice of
families and Latino/Latina learners over time, to
inform these deliberations as a central piece.

    It's also included in this list. I
hope that we'll have other opportunities to
continue to refine these ideas. There will be
many other key points that Commissioners will
bring to this discussion.

    But I just wanted to put it on the
table for us to invest in the next few months.

    DR. PADRON: Thank you. Patricia?

    DR. GANDARA: Yes.

    DR. PADRON: That does it?

    DR. GANDARA: Yes.
DR. PADRON: Thank you so very much.

So we'll now move to the IRA, Post-Secondary Subcommittee. And we have Dr. Fraga and Dr. Nieves.

MR. FRAGA: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We, for our Subcommittee, had a very certain direction as to what our effort would be. The White House had issued, recently, a clear indication that it was the goal of President Obama that the United States lead the world in the proportion of college graduates by 2020.

Our mandate directly flows from that goal. That is, we were tasked with identifying policy priorities and an action agenda that would allow us to do our work.

I'm going to talk about one of our primary efforts, and Dr. Nieves will talk about the other one. But I want to begin by thanking our Committee members, Nancy Brune, Millie Garcia, Sara Lundquist and Darline Robles, for -- Doctors Garcia, Lundquist and Robles, I want to especially thank them for the
leadership that they showed in particular aspects of the work that we did.

But our other members were Marta Tienda, Francisco Sigueroa, Manuel Gomez, Monica Martinez and Ricardo Ramon. We organized two symposiums.

The first one's entitled Increasing Post-Secondary Education, held at the University of Southern California, August 16-17, in 2012.

We had some choices to make.

If we were going to identify a set of policy priorities and action agenda, and do it in a fashion that was imposed, we couldn't talk about everything that we wanted to talk about.

We had to make some choices. There are many issues, pipeline issues, issues of faculty inclusion, issues related to DACA students, all equally important.

We made some choices. For our first symposium, we decided to focus on three.

Financing post-secondary education, expanding academic competence, and empowering Latino
communities for post-secondary success.

Empowering Latino families. You'll see an overlap with the priorities of a number of our other subcommittees. We designed our symposium in a way that I think is a bit different than others symposiums that focus on these sorts of issues.

We wanted to ground our work in research, in scholarship, but we knew that that wasn't enough. We did not want to have scholars just talking to other scholars, or making policy pronouncements.

Rather, we wanted our scholarship to be enriched and expanded by policy advocates. And we wanted it to be assessed by educational practitioners.

If you will, we wanted to fashion a distinct model of how to get to the best ideas that was not dominated by any one sector, but rather facilitated discussions cross-sector.

And, among the things that we found at both of our symposiums, was that these
opportunities are rare. And that these opportunities, I think, need to increase considerably.

What we were trying to do, in other words, was to expand the analytical leverage and the policy leverage that would come from that type of intersection of ideas, backgrounds, experiences, perspectives and levels of expertise.

And we also wanted our scholars to do something that we're not used to doing. We wanted them not to focus on an analysis of the problem, but rather to focus on what we know from the research evidence as to what works and what does not work to facilitate then the identification of solutions.

So, we did something that you never ask scholars to do. We said, you have to limit your essay to 10 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font, one-inch margins.

(Laughter)

And the first paper we got back, of
course, was 53-pages, single-spaced, with an analysis of all of the problems. So I took out my red pen and went through it and said, we know a lot of the assessment, help us find the solutions.

So, just to highlight -- our next slide, please, and then we're going to go back to this one here in just a minute. From the first symposium, we identified three sets of recommendations and we requested that our policy advocates and practitioners and our scholars list their recommendations in terms of those that were immediate.

That is, those that could be implemented within the next two years. Those that were medium-term, to be implemented over the next three to four years.

And those that were more long-term. That was also part of the strategic judgment that we made to try to help us not just set the agenda for the moment, but set the agenda for the future.
And to begin to think more integratively and strategically about how we might promote that success, just to highlight some of our recommendations.

And the white papers that we commissioned, are all on our Initiative's website. The first symposium documents all of the papers, all of the comments, all of the recommendations are there written down and documented in the first annual report of our Commission.

The second one is in a special report.

Just to highlight a few, in finance in post-secondary education, we called for the continued improvement and simplification of the FASA for our families.

We called for an increase in work study, as a way of linking the need for our students to work while they're in college to in fact expand their intellectual capacity and professional development.

We also called for an expanded loan
forgiveness program, something that's come up already in the course of our discussions. In the area of expanding academic competence, we wanted to recognize the fact that many of our Latino students come to post-secondary education with needs for greater skill development.

And we wanted to acknowledge that and think strategically as to how to integrate it into our thinking. Among the things that we recommended was one, that we review the nature of placement exams that tend to detrimentally effect many of our students, the creation of better partnerships.

Imagine this. Two-year college professors talking with four-year college professors about their expectations, about the work that they do, as a way of facilitating that transfer.

And another recommendation, a more long-term recommendation, was the creation of what we call evidence-based innovation consortium. Where two-year and four-year
institutions would sit together, maybe once every two months, and actually share some ideas about best practices.

Actually take the time to learn from each other. And this, we saw as a particularly important to address the issue of the need for greater academic competence that focuses on, and is centered in, many of our two-year institutions who have tremendous responsibilities for trying to compensate that and very few resources.

So, the idea of maximizing that. And then, finally, empowering Latino families in our first symposium, we had a number of examples of innovative family engagement programs that don't happen very often in post-secondary education.

Where families are often seen as a detriment or a problem to be solved, rather than as the source of values, commitment and achievement that, in fact, drives all of us through the course of our post-secondary education.

As one of our community leaders told
us from Santa Ana, as I recall, identified by Commissioner Lundquist, Latino students don't go to college.

Latino families go to college. And we know that. And we know that to be true. So the need to integrate the family, whether it's through the fashion of new partnerships with post-secondary education, whether it's in the fashion for, if you will, non-traditional students to re-engage them in the post-secondary education process.

Or to redesign all of these recommendations that are listed there in detail, to redesign the way in which we transmit information about colleges to families through new venues, whether it's through text or through telenovelas or through some other means, so that the information is actually gained directly by these families.

We think we moved the needle a bit in trying to help us be creative. And we're very thankful for the partnership that we had with our
White House staff, and the way in which we're able to work together to try to get many of these ideas implemented in actual policy.

DR. NIEVES: Thank you. I'm going to speak a bit about the second symposium that we had. And I think this is probably important before I go any further to say that each one of these events happened over two days.

And this could not have happened without the support of a lot of people. And I want to recognize the Lumina Foundation, the Edwin Gould Foundation, The College Board, and many individual funders who made this possible.

I think it's really important to say, it's easy to say we want to get a cross-sectional approach of looking at a challenge and finding a solution and recommendations.

But who finances that? So, we've leveraged this Commission podium, pulpit as we say, and brought others who we know have an amplifying voice in philanthropy and have used these recommendations.
And we've seen these recommendations outlined in some of their RFPS, which is actually very inspiring when you think about a ripple effect of impact.

So I want to speak a little bit about something else that happened on the Higher Ed Subcommittee. It was on this Committee where five members actually hosted a lot of our Commission meetings.

And I want to recognize them as well, too, because I think that's another way that we've contributed towards this. Dr. Romo, Dr. Padron, Dr. Robles and Dr. Garcia, thank you for doing that.

When we thought about the second Committee symposium, we said we're going to do it on the other side of the United States. We looked at New York.

Yes, there's a bias there, right? And we were happy to see it done at the City University of New York, that opened their, as we say, hearts and minds to looking at this.
We did this in 2014, and we looked at three areas that we thought were really pressing and important, based on Commission meetings of individuals such as yourselves, and said these should be priorities we should be talking about.

So the first one was the idea of this idea the College Completion Agenda. What do we mean by a completion agenda? We've heard many people talking about that, but digging deeper into that.

We then went into looking at post-secondary education and workforce development, which is particularly my research area. My passion is how do we think about these systems not competing with each other, but being aligned and recognizing that people who go to college, particularly Latinos, also need social capital that comes from the labor market, not just higher ed.

So, those as key. And then, the last one is really looking at this performance-based rating system. What does that mean? How do we
think about the ideas of data?

And how do we compare them across
different colleges. We had close to 200 people
that had attended this particular symposium in
New York.

I will say, what was exciting as well,
was not just the people who were in the room. It
was some of the people who also anchored it too.
It was our first Under Secretary's outing, as we
say, as an Under Secretary.

We had our new Chancellor for the city
University of New York there as well. And every
single session was started and opened by a
college student.

Critical to remind ourselves that the
voice of who we are supposed to be serving and
advocating for is never far from us. It should
be central to the discussion, to our hearts, to
our minds.

And that was also a very telling
point. I will say, Dr. Carnevale from Georgetown
also was one of our keynote addresses at the
second symposium, which was important.

He talked about what does it mean, even unintentionally, the perpetuation of privilege by seeing where Latino students are being trapped in the higher ed system.

And so, that is a voice that's come up over and over again. I'm going to go quickly to some of the recommendations. No surprise, so much of what --

This happened -- this is where we saw quite a bit of impact in looking at different requests for proposals as well. Two, incentivizing models around completion, particularly bridge programs that say, you finish your community college degree, what is the relationship it's going to have to a four-year degree?

And that was important as well. We saw that, and that's a huge recommendation for us, particularly for low-income students with a real emphasis again on transfer students.

They get lost in this. Not just those
who don't complete, particularly Latinos, but the
Latinos who do complete. When they transfer --
oh my goodness, can you imagine being let down
again and not completing then.

Right? And we've seen this. So that
is something we want to incentivize. The second
recommendation is looking at workforce
development.

And thinking about this and aligning
high school and college curriculum to workforce
demands, right? This has been a challenge where
for so many low-income first generation Latino
students, work has been central to their lives.

And I would say, higher ed has been a
little schizophrenic in responding to this, and
almost shaming that as it being central. And so,
I posit that we shouldn't shame that, we should
make it central and figure out how we can have
more, as we say, internships, high academic and
high vocation types of opportunities in higher
ed.

And the ways we have not seen before.
We do know already, based on research, that that actually incentivizes students to continue and persist.

And I don't think it's about a trade-off anymore. We're beyond trade-offs now. So how do we think about that, particularly as it can marry and match and support how we think about building a teacher corps, right?

If we think of it also as vocation, how would we teach differently that respects work essential for Latinos. The last one is looking at this performance-based rating system.

This idea of a national advisory commission to review College Scorecard and other metrics, information dissemination and considering it to be culturally responsive and informed.

We've talked about this at length. We heard it earlier. We're talking about HSIs. And, most importantly, not taking out of there this notion of what does it mean to be quality and not defaulting to definitions that were put
in place 20 years ago.

What does it mean to be serving Latino students today. I will end with saying that it has been an unbelievable honor to serve on this Commission.

I thank Dr. Padron for taking the risk of having me as co-Chair with Luis. It's been an honor to serve with you. And for all of the Committee members that we've worked with on here.

Our work is just, as we say at the beginning, not at the end. Thank you.

DR. PADRON: Thank you for that wonderful presentation. We now get to the point where we're going to have public comments. And we have seven individuals that have signed up to do it.

We're going to give each one two minutes to present their comments. And if they have anything in writing they want to contribute for our records, we'll be truly appreciative.

So you're going to be the -- okay, good, thank you. First, Susana DeJesus, NYU.
DR. DeJESUS: Hi, good morning, good afternoon. I'm just hoping that this thing will start up again. I was losing that. I wrote my statement here on my cell phone, but I lost battery.

So, there you go, technology once again. I'm a Scholar in Residence at NYU, and I do research at the Metro Center for Education Equity.

Previously, I was on the faculty -- a professor on the faculty of the University of Puerto Rico in Rio Piedras. And my area of specialization is, here it comes, early childhood education and language acquisition programs.

Especially focusing on dual language and other programs that support what we call the L1, the native language. We know, despite the fact that some naysayers don't understand this, we in the community know that the surest way to English language proficiency achieving on the academic level is to support, enhance and develop the home language.
And this may be counter-intuitive to people outside of our community. But I think that, especially now in terms of what we may be facing in the future with regard to the Department of Education, and other naysayers in Congress, et cetera, that it's important for us to not only preach to the choir, but also to find ways to discuss and neutralize these naysayers and present them with data documentation and other evidence that will either neutralize or change their point of view.

Because we know that, in this highly digitalized automated economy, the lack of an effective education is tantamount to depriving a student of their ability to enter the middle class and to achieve professional or economic success.

And, therefore, it becomes a proxy for a two-tier, or maybe a multi-tier, system of education where you have not just the have and have nots, but you have the really forgotten have nots.
And pushed into a category that is going to enable them to do very little with their lives, since most jobs -- I shouldn't say little with their lives.

But most jobs are either service jobs or professional jobs. So those lacking education are really stuck in the middle. Consequently, we need dual language education.

I support what has been said previously, among others. We need dual language education, we need free public effective education for all. Thank you.

DR. PADRON: Thank you so much. Thank you. Next, Juan Navarro of Lennox School District Board. Welcome, Juan.

MR. NAVARRO: Good afternoon everyone. My name is Juan Navarro. I'm a Lennox School District Board Member. So I'm not used to being at this side of the line.

(Laughter)

Well, it's a huge opportunity for me to be here talking to you. And it's even a
better opportunity for me to talk about the
success that we're having in the school district.

Making sure that our students get the
quality education they deserve. Without
regarding their socioeconomic status. We are a
97 percent free and reduced school district.

And we really take pride in what we do
for our students, since six years ago we started
implementing the dual language program in
Spanish. So, now we're having a trial for
Mandarin too as well.

And also, we just recently opened the
school year -- two schools of engineering through
elementary school sites. And one at the middle
school.

Because we believe that we have to
make sure that everybody has some kind of access
to engineering, to the STEM field. And also, we
were trying to make sure that we built
partnerships with NASA and other companies.

But more importantly is that we have
to make sure that we have our female students
participate in these fields because, the bottom line, it's a male-dominant field.

And there's much discussion about having these topics throughout the nation. But we need to more address is having equal pay for women too, as well.

Because we say okay, we want more women, but we need to be more than willing to go the next step and make sure that all of the pay is equal.

And just to end, I think we also need to look at the early childhood and early childhood investment. I mean, we do have some preschools at our sites, but preschools should be funded equally as a K-12, because it's not.

And I mean, there's so much -- because our kids, their brains develop between zero and five years of age. So if we don't take opportunity of that, and not fund it equally and have more programs for our parents and our students at that early age, we're going to start falling behind in our communities.
So I just want to thank you for the hard work that you're all doing for our students, and let's just keep on working together. Because it shouldn't matter the quality of education that the students get.

What should matter is that we all work together to guarantee that no matter where our students come from, they have access to a great education.

DR. PADRON: Thank you, Juan. Next one is Kevin Armstrong of Juarez & Associates.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Buenos tardes. It's a pleasure for me to address this group. And congratulations. Everything that this Commission has done has been superb.

And the whole initiative of the White House has been spot on. I'm just going to reinforce the Subcommittee's of Dr. Acavedo and Dr. Gandara, in making this statement.

I also wish to say that I am a Senior Foreign Service Officer with USAID, and I've just recently retired. 20 of those years were done
probably working in and living in Latin America.

And I served the poorest of the poor
and the most vulnerable. Since 1978, Juarez &
Associates has been implementing child
development initiatives that address health and
education, both domestically and internationally.

Particularly, early childhood
education, ECE, a foundational experience that
impacts child's life projectory. In 1978, J&A
evaluated that Head Start bilingual, bi-cultural
curriculum development project.

One of the first research projects to
assess ECE bilingual, bi-cultural curriculum
models developed for Spanish-speaking children.
The study was considered a methodological
landmark in mixed methodology research.

The rapid pace of advancements in
technology, the continuously growing demands on
the workforce, and the increasing complexities of
social life call for citizens that are properly
skilled, emotionally adaptable and sophisticated
in their abilities to successfully navigate
change in their environments.

As supported by the National Association for Education of Youth Children, NAEYC, decades of research clearly demonstrate that high quality developmentally appropriate childhood programs produce short and long-term positive effects on a child's cognitive and social development.

According to Newton Heckman Cameron, Schonkoff, world-renowned economists and child experts, the most efficient strategy for strengthening the future workforce, both economically and neurobiologically, and improving its quality of life, is to invest in the environments of disadvantaged children during the early childhood years.

In addition to the conviction that ECE is essential for quality of life, the interconnectedness of cognitive and physical and social and emotional development has more recently been at the center of a paradigm shift towards a more ecological position.
And that emphasizes the dynamic interaction between programs focused on children and their parents. That is, programs that address the family as a system instead of those that are solely child focused.

Juarez & Associates fully supports this ecological approach. Juarez & Associates international education projects have, for decades, been incorporating family interventions to support parents by guiding their efforts to develop skills that improve the environments in which children live and grow.

On domestic projects, Juarez & Associates has also been working in research to identify best practices in family visitation programs designed to directly target improved conditions for childhood development, via support and parental education.

Within the last few years, science has consistently shown the importance of an approach to child development that factors in intervention and improved parenting.
The logic underlying the potential success of this approach is based principally on the theory of proximal environments central to ecological theory.

This implies that not only is the family unit an ecology within itself, a functioning system of both interdependent and interacting parts --

DR. PADRON: If I could interrupt for a second. I think it's wonderful that you have that in writing. We're running short on time. There are other people who want to testify.

So I would ask you if you don't mind to leave that documentation with us.

MR. ARMSTRONG: I'll submit this. And thank you very much for your time. Thank you very much.

DR. PADRON: Thank you very, very much. Elizabeth Alaniz? I cannot read your district, your independent school district --

MS. ALANIZ: Weslaco Independent School District, South Texas.
DR. PADRON: Oh, wonderful.

MS. ALANIZ: So go to the tip of Texas, and that's where I'm from.

(Laughter)

So, my name's Elizabeth Alaniz and I'm from Weslaco ISD, which is in deep south, South Texas. That's the heart of Texas, not San Antonio, I'm sorry.

(Laughter)

Growing up, my parents worked two jobs each. And so, I'm definitely a product of coming from an early high school college. I'm a first-year graduate of college.

The only generation that's been able to do it. I'm a public education teacher, and not an administrator. I graduated college when I was 19, and started teaching at 19.

And I attribute that to being in an early college high school. I did my Master's right after that, in 18 months. I'm 32, and a central office administrator for the last 6 years.
And that's something that I can be proud about to say as a Hispanic woman. And taking those opportunities through our public education budget.

I'm a strong supporter of our current students, and the students that we have in our area. They're very different from any of the Hispanic students throughout our nation.

The parents that they have are very supportive and they believe in college. But as many of you know, they have to go back and give back to their families and give back to their families in Mexico.

I believe that when you support strongly a pre-K program or early education program, a lot of parents speak Spanish and are only fluent in Spanish.

A half a day is not going to cut it. A half a day is three hours. By the time they eat breakfast, and get into the classroom and settle them down, it's down to two hours of instruction.
I believe when you fund a full day of early childhood program, that's the only time they get to practice English. They have time to socialize and have the English language. Because once they go back home, it's back to Spanish. A lot of these parents, I believe, we need to educate. And having the exposure for literacy activities.

They speak Spanish, but they can easily do literacy activities without Spanish as well. I believe that we also need to have -- and I saw it today -- more of the guidance when it comes to higher education attainment.

It's great that there's now a guide out there. But we need to push it a little stronger. And having that guide especially in high school, and having them get there.

It is critical academic interventions for Hispanic youth have become a national priority. And implementation evaluation of these interventions may be sensitive to generational status and differences among Hispanic subgroups.
Data indicates that every level of education is needed to help their children achieve academic success. In the Hispanic community, it's not that it's unknown. We know what the problem is. But rather how to make the change that's necessary for Hispanics to prosper. Thank you.

DR. PADRON: Thank you very much.

(Applause)

Next, we have Juliet from the City of Houston. I apologize, I cannot read your handwriting of your last name.

MS. STIPECHE: I am not a school teacher. My name is Juliet Stipeche, and I'm the Director of Education for the City of Houston. First and foremost, I want to say thank you. Thank you, very much, for the Commission's work and for the report that you have provided us today. It brings great honor and hope for me to be here today to share this experience with you.

I think that there is no greater
measure for the health and well-being for a city
than the education level of the population.
Houston is now the most diverse city in the
country.

And we also have another fact that
I've found extraordinarily troubling. We're now
becoming quickly one of the most segregated
socially-isolated cities in the country.

And that's why Mayor Sylvester Turner
has appointed me as Director of Education, the
first in the City of Houston. We have a city
that has 17 different school districts, at least
42 different charters and multiple non-profits
and for-profit organizations that focus on
education.

We have a wide vast array of some of
the most fantastic institutions of higher
learning in the country. From the University of
Houston to Rice University to San Jacinto
Community College to Houston Community College.

And we are in a time in which the
mayor is asking for transformative, innovative
ideas. We know the importance of early quality childhood education.

Universal pre-K. Dual language instruction. A pipeline of talented teachers that will be able to educate our children, regardless of zip code.

And yet, we face all of these different challenges. And for too long, we've been working in silos. We have one county organization working on one thing.

The school district's working on another. And no one working together in concert, trying to coordinate, communicate and collaborate in a most effective way possible.

We know the sense of urgency. We must make the transformative, innovative solutions available to all now. We don't have time to wait, right?

And so, as things go in Houston, so they shall go for the rest of the nation. And I think that it is -- what is it, the old curse that says may you live in interesting times.
And we do live in extraordinarily interesting times. But we know that we face great challenge with tremendous opportunity. And I cannot thank you enough for serving as a national guide on collaboration, coordination and communication, under the leadership of a White House Initiative.

How I just am deeply appreciative to be here, and also joined by members of the Houston Hispanic Forum. So I just want to say, thank you once again.

We look forward to continuing the work. We shall read the reports. We are deeply grateful for your scholarship and service. And we just thank you for this opportunity.

DR. PADRON: Thank you so very much.

(Applause)

Next, we have Dr. Claudette Haynes, from Johnson Prep School for Boys.

DR. HAYNES: Good afternoon. I'm here on a dual mission. And, first, I'd like to say
thank you for the White House Initiative group 
for the work that you have done, for the research 
that you've done, for the data that you've 
collected.

Because, this is what we have been 
looking at for quite a while. And everything 
you've said here is in line with what we were 
thinking.

I'm a professor at the university here 
in Takoma Park, Maryland. And we have Hispanic 
students who come in. And one of the drawbacks, 
of course, is the language barrier.

And the reason why there is such a 
high turnover and failure and dropout rate is 
because we are not in sync with what our students 
need. And they would come in because of the 
language barriers and we are not ready to deal 
with some of the issues.

And so, they drop out. And I would 
love to see us, on everything that we've said 
here today, maybe put some more resources into 
universities and institutions so that we who are
standing behind the desk can reach our students
so that they don't feel like, well this is what I
want to do, but it's too difficult because I
can't do it.

My next role, my next reason for being
here, is that right before President Obama
launched his initiative on the My Brother's
Keeper, we had done our research also, and came
up with most of what you have presented this
afternoon.

And we decided that we were going to
start a school for boys of color in this area,
because there was none. And we all know that our
boys are at risk.

And so many of them were failing, so
many of them were dropping out of school, and
nothing was being done. And so, we thought that
we were going to go in with a different mindset,
so to speak.

And our mindset was, number one, the
dual language. And as I sat there and as I
listened to just what all of you talked about
dual language, and I thought that's what is
needed.

When we tried to take away their
culture and say, we don't want you to speak
Spanish, you have to speak English. Now, we are
who and what our culture is.

And if it's our first language, and
trying to erase that from children, it's like
trying to train a river to go in a different
direction.

So, we are proposing dual track in our
school, where they'll come in and yes, it's
college preparation. But for those kids who may
not want to go to college, we will still provide
them with life skills.

So, when they leave high school,
because we're offering -- our education would be
from K-12. Prepare them with life skills, that
even if you're not ending up in college, you will
end up with life skills that can take you
through.

That you can still be a viable source
of income for your families and be a productive
person in society. So, we would like to
collaborate with whatever agencies there are,
following up on this initiative, to say we're on
the same side.

We need for you to support us in what
we're doing. And for everything that I heard you
say this afternoon, right there. You can go to
our website, johnsonprep.org, and take a look and
see what we're offering.

And see some of the things that we can
probably collaborate on to get this initiative
not just on paper, but to make it a reality for
our children.

DR. PADRON: Thank you very much, Dr.
Haynes. Thank you.

DR. HAYNES: Thank you.

(Applause)

DR. PADRON: The last presenter today
is Dr. Vanessa Ramirez from California, but now
in Rockville, Maryland.

DR. RAMIREZ: Yes. Buenes tardes,
good afternoon. I'll be brief. But I just wanted to share something with you all. I'm a first generation Mexican American Latina PhD scientist.

And straight out of Compton, as I tell my students when I present to them. So, straight out of Compton, made it to an Ivy League, Brown University.

But I attended California State University Dominguez Hills, which a lot of people are talking about today, where I got my Bachelor's in biology.

Then I did a post Bach program, thinking that I was going to go to medical school. Because that's that I was told -- oh, you know, you have this opportunity.

But not knowing that there's a lot more in STEM education. So, now, as a Latina scientist, I'm involved in genetics in education, through the National Human Genome Research Institute at NIH.

And also part of the American Society
of Human Genetics. And, as part of this program, we're trying to build bridges and partnerships with schools.

And one of the schools that we're working with is Wheaton High School, which is in Montgomery County. I'm also part of the SACNAS Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science.

And, also, part of the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students, where I do a lot of mentoring. But two things that really concern me, and I need your help.

What will happen to STEM programs in schools located in under-served communities for students from K-12 to college level? And, secondly, what can we do as scientists and professionals to keep funding, and resources to continue promoting, STEM education and programming?

Because if it wasn't for programs that were funded through NIH, or mentors, I wouldn't
be here today. And how, as a Latina scientist, not because I'm Latina means that I'm going to just helping Latinos, but any community that needs my help.

And I was once told in grad school, and I feel comfortable in sharing this, my third year of grad school I had to switch labs, which means that I had to start over again.

And one of my professors told me, hey Vanessa I need to tell you something. You're one of the nicest students here in the program. But I don't think you have the skills that are needed to be in a PhD program.

But, yet, with a Master's degree, you can make such a big difference in your Latino community. It was really tough. But, that kind of gave me the motivation that I also needed -- I had a lot of motivation, but that push that I needed to get this PhD. And not only did I publish a first publication, but I published three.

And, as a post-doc, when I finished my
post-doc at NIH, my publication was accepted on
November 8th.

(Applause)

Thank you. So, now, what can we do to
increase STEM education in under-served
communities? Let's do it together. I can't do
it by myself, I need your help. Gracias.

DR. PADRON: Thank you very much.

Well, we're now past our closing time. And I
know some of you have airplanes to catch,
including myself.

But I'd like to take a couple of
seconds to express a couple of views. Number
one, this has been another outstanding,
invigorating meeting.

And I continue -- I don't cease to be
amazed about the talent, the commitment, the
heart. I think it was -- let me see if I can
quote her.

Lily, who said the best minds and the
best hearts. That's what Lily said when she
spoke. It is a privilege, it's been for me, but
I know it is for many of you, to be able to know you and to work with you in putting together an agenda that is an agenda for the future.

But it's an action agenda. And we need to be reminded that our tenure does not end until September 17th. And even when that tenure ends, our work is not done.

As a matter of fact, we now have an agenda, I think, it is important for us in whatever forums, whatever connections we have, whatever networks we work with, to use this again to advocate.

And to continue to raise our voices.

I think that people that we represent need us now more than ever. And one of the things that I intend to do is to get these recommendations that we have, this agenda, in very simple language in bullet format, to be able to distribute to as many people as possible.

Maybe little by little, through social media, maybe in printed form, we all have so many connections to the outside world, that I think it
would be a waste if we don't use these to really educate our communities so they can be better be advocates, they can be better fighters for their rights.

So, I'm really counting on all of us to be able to do that. We don't know what's going to happen to this Commission. We don't know what's going to happen once we finish our tenure.

But we know one thing. Or two. And that is, we know what we need to do, and I hope nothing will stop us from doing that. Once again, it's been said many times before, but what a privilege it's been to have a staff that really feels, has a heart and has been so wonderful in keeping us together and providing us the opportunities to gather and to come up with an agenda that I know is a source of pride for all of us.

I know there have been many commissions. I, myself, have been on this Commission in the prior Administration. And I
can tell you, this Commission, the work of it, 
you can feel extremely proud. 

Because it has made a big, big 
difference. And that's because of the great 
support also that we have from the staff. So, I 
know this year's ended December 31st, and the 
holidays are coming. 

So, as your Chair, thank you for the 
privilege of doing this work. And happy holidays 
to you, safe travels, we shall keep in touch, we 
shall continue to find ways of getting together. 

And this Commission is not dead until 
somebody kills it. 

(Laughter) 

(Applause) 

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter 
went off the record at 2:04 pm.)
announced 58:12
annual 66:18 67:9 68:8
78:20 153:22 167:10
201:9
answer 29:13 63:16
97:9,10
answers 80:9
anticipate 82:7
anticipation 112:21
Antonio 136:22,22
189:8
anxious 100:7
anybody 95:14
anymore 138:15 177:5
anytime 5:18
AP 69:11
apidata.gov 158:1
apologize 192:11
apparent 112:21
appreciation 80:9
applied 150:7
articulation 22:7 37:13
Artiles 1:16 44:14
103:20 147:4 154:18
152:3,6,10
arts 77:13 150:8
Asian 144:17 157:22
Asian-American 134:21
aside 38:5
asked 71:4 109:7
asking 99:15 130:18
193:22
aspects 163:1
assess 86:11 101:8
105:17 185:13
assessed 164:15
assessment 67:10 87:9
100:12 101:16,17,19
102:7 103:13,14
166:4
assessments 67:15,17
68:2,4,12 86:5,6,8,12
86:12,15 99:21 100:1
100:15 101:5 102:10
105:18,22
asset 94:22 143:20
assessing 156:1
asset-base 10:5
assets 94:18 126:20
assistance 44:15 45:2
65:14 84:21 89:6,10
89:13 106:14 107:3
Assistant 2:14,17
112:13
assisting 36:12
Associate’s 61:19
Associates 2:8 184:11
185:4 187:6,7,14
Association 1:10 2:11
5:3,13 8:8,19 108:5
154:1 186:3
assure 96:4
asymmetry 51:18
asymmetry 51:21 52:1
attach 60:21
attainment 39:18 40:5
151:22 152:12,15
191:13
attempt 31:8 39:6
31:15
attend 30:4,9,16,22
60:7 74:1,1 123:9
attendance 59:22 69:5
attended 174:4 200:9
attending 30:12
attention 40:15 62:22
83:6 103:11 104:6
112:20 119:16 159:9
attribute 189:18
audience 131:9
Auditorium 1:11
audits 67:20
August 41:4,4 148:12
148:19 163:9
Authority 7:2
authorized 23:13 26:20
authorizes 76:20
automated 180:13
automatically 52:16
available 24:2,14 25:6
32:7 51:9 150:22
194:17
average 21:8 25:2
50:22
award 21:8 25:15 50:22
awarded 21:17
awards 24:15,20 25:15
aware 33:17 34:14
134:1,5
awareness 19:21
148:20
B
B 21:12
BA 7:7
Baccalaureate 36:14
36:22 37:4 39:12,14
40:5,6 60:4
Bach 200:13
Bachelor's 200:12
back 41:4 65:16 67:4
73:13 124:17 125:1
128:13 165:22 166:7
190:11,12 191:5,6
background 23:5
backgrounds 30:20
165:7
balance 59:1
ban 156:10
Bank 6:20
bar 120:21
barrier 196:12
barriers 196:17
base 6:1
based 71:7 72:4 77:4
83:17 85:7 90:13 96:7
97:20 173:3 177:1
188:2
basically 15:10 29:14
147:20 154:7
basis 100:20
battery 179:5
Bea 9:16 18:18,20 95:5
Beatrice 29:21 34:22
35:3 45:9 49:17
Beatriz 2:9 3:7
beautiful 109:18 149:9
beauty 110:1
becoming 49:11 104:1
134:1 148:9 160:4,10
193:7
began 41:11
beginning 50:13 54:6
59:9 61:7,11 65:11
93:9 94:8 112:10
133:14 145:13 178:11
behavior 5:12 15:2 16:3
115:3,13 129:15,20
129:21,22 130:1,2,17
130:19 132:16 133:11
133:20
believe 17:2 28:8 51:1
53:21 55:11 182:16
190:10,14 191:1,7,11
benefit 102:11
benefits 136:20 137:19
137:22 138:1,5
153:19 159:13
best 27:19 28:3,18
29:15 30:11 32:3 34:7
34:9 35:12,18 37:11
40:13 42:2,14 44:20
60:20 109:1,1 120:10
164:18 169:3 187:15
203:20,21
better 28:13 52:21
61:22,22 68:1 127:16
127:21 143:3 145:17
151:18 152:11 153:16
168:12 182:1 205:2,3
beyond 33:10 62:5
115:11 159:22 160:21
177:5
bi-cultural 185:10,13
bias 172:19
big 22:9 59:20 65:17
84:5 85:5 136:15
141:14 202:15 206:3
206:3
bilingualism 96:14
bilingual 43:10 95:18

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foundations 171:11, 12
foundational 185:8
founding 33:19
four 142:20
four-year 22:12, 17, 19
four-year-old 23:2, 22, 23:21
fourth 107:14, 16
freely 150:22
frequent 96:3, 5
fresno 128:4
freshman 22:21
Friday 73:6
friend 114:1
frightened 110:4
front 131:7
fronts 129:6
fuel 50:19
Fuentes 1:19 6:9 7:10
fulfill 16:20
fulfilled 15:19
fulfilling 128:19 150:15
full 46:21 72:14, 18
full-tilt 93:21
full-time 91:3
fully 79:8 187:6
function 153:16
functioning 188:7
fund 22:4 23:21 24:2, 3
24:6 28:12 71:13
92:16 183:19 191:1
funded 21:7, 13, 15 22:2
24:4 39:5 183:15
201:22
funders 171:13
funding 13:5 21:5 24:2
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>First Appearance</th>
<th>Last Appearance</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
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