

**PSC-ED-OUS**

**Moderator: Emmanuel Caudillo  
November 19, 2014  
1:00 pm CT**

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time all participants are in a listen-only mode until the question-and-answer session of today's conference call. At that point, if you would like to ask a question, you need to press star and then number 1.

This call is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this point.

Now I will turn the meeting over to your host, Mr. Marco Davis. Sir, you may begin.

Marco Davis: Thank you, and good afternoon everyone on the East Coast and Central part of the country, good morning to folks on the West Coast. My name is Marco Davis, I'm the Deputy Director of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics. And I'm joined by several colleagues here at the Initiative. Thank you for joining us for our Webinar today.

Two quick business matters. I want to inform and remind you that this Webinar is off the record, is not intended for press purposes. And I also want

to mention, as the operator just said, this Webinar, which by the way includes the Q&A, will be recorded, and the recording and the transcript of the conversation, along with the slide presentation, will be posted to the Initiative's Web site after the call to make the information available for anyone who was unable to join us for the live Webinar.

Now the agenda for today will go as follows. I will describe today's Webinar topic briefly in just a moment and then introduce our first presenter who will speak for up to 15 minutes. Then we will have 15 minutes for Q&A. Then I will introduce our second presenter who will also speak for up to 15 minutes, and then we'll open the floor again for Q&A for the remainder of the hour. When we open the floor for questions, the operator will come back on to remind everyone how to get into the queue for questions.

And now, onto our discussion today, on the college application process.

The President designated November as National College Application month. And in the proclamation designating it, he stated, "This fall, high school seniors across our nation are making the decision to invest in their future by earning a post-secondary degree or credential. And as they navigate the college admissions process, my administration is dedicated to supporting them with the tools and resources they need to succeed." With this Webinar, we're doing our part to help share information about those tools and resources both at the federal and local level.

This Webinar will include a presentation by Michael Itzkowitz from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Post-Secondary Education, highlighting some of the tools and resources the department has made available to students and families.

And then in the second half of the Webinar, we will hear from Alex Hitch who's the Educational Programs Manager at the Latino Student Fund, an organization based in Washington, D.C. that is providing opportunities for a strong academic foundation for pre-K to 12th grade students of Hispanic descent, to promote higher education and professional leadership. Alex will provide an overview of the Latino Student Fund's work, particularly in assisting students as they navigate the college application process.

So without further ado, let me turn it over to our first presenter, Michael Itzkowitz, Special Assistant at the Office of Post-Secondary Education at the U.S. Department of Education. Michael?

Michael Itzkowitz: Good afternoon everyone. My name is Michael Itzkowitz and I'm a policy adviser in the Office of Post-Secondary Education.

Today I'm going to be talking about a number of tools that the Obama administration has created to help students and families make more informed decisions about post-secondary education. These initiatives are all in response to the President's 2020 goal to once again be the leader in the world in the proportion of college graduates.

Now in order for us to do that, we have to help young people get into college, be able to pay for it, and then be able to complete their degrees. We know this is important to having a strong workforce and is critical to the President's goals of strengthening the middle class, and of course, the cost of an education is an important factor in achieving all of these goals.

Now at the department we've been working hard to ensure that college is accessible, affordable and attainable for everyone. The U.S. no longer ranks first in the number of people going to college, and we also have a stubborn

college attainment gap. High school graduates from the wealthiest families typically go on to higher education, but less than 10% of our most disadvantaged students obtain a college degree.

Also, tuition and fees have skyrocketed. Last year, the College Board reported that tuition at four-year public schools has risen 68% and community college tuition is up 40%. The typical college student graduates almost - owing almost \$30,000 in debt. Our nation student debt is now over \$1 trillion. It has tripled between 2004 and 2012. It's now second only to mortgage debt.

Some are starting to call this debt crisis the new normal, but here at the department we've been trying to tackle this in a variety of ways. To make college more affordable, we've expanded federal support in the form of Pell grants and reformed higher education funding to produce the largest investment in student aid since the GI bill. And over the course of this administration, the number of Pell grant recipients has jumped from 6 million to around 9 million students, more than a 60% increase. During the same time period, we doubled the number of students from families earning \$10,000 a year or less who do go on to college.

In 2012 the President worked with Congress to keep interest rates on subsidized Stafford loans from doubling and reaching 6.8%, saving 7 million college students an average of \$1,000 per year. And we've also asked states and colleges to share the responsibility for helping rein in these college costs. States need to make higher education funding a priority and challenge their post-secondary institutions to become more efficient. And higher education institutions need to innovate to graduate their students at an affordable price.

And for our nation to succeed and reach the President's 2020 goal, the federal government, states, institutions, students and their families must all play a

role. That means that students and families need to make more -- need to make informed decisions about investing in higher education.

So today I'm going to provide you with a brief overview of the valuable tools that students and families have to navigate the maze of college costs and financial aid options, and to help make the cost of college and college outcomes more transparent. We're going to talk about tools that help families get, as President Obama said, the most bang for their educational buck.

A college education is often a student's or family's second biggest investment after a home, yet students and their families typically have very little information on what -- on which to base one of their most significant financial decisions. Just as it's important to conduct a thorough inspection before buying a home, prospective students and families should be able to review all available information on the institutions that they're considering, with the hope that they will find an institution that offers them the best value and fit for their personal situation.

To help in navigating this overwhelming process, the department has developed a suite of consumer tools available to prospective students, including the College Scorecard, the College Navigator and the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet. These tools are all designed to (get) affordability and value first and provide the opportunity for students and families exploring their options with the ability to make more informed decisions and choices about their future investment.

Now we can move on to the next slide. Some of our tools we've had for a little while and some are rather new. We had the College Navigator for a number of years, and more recently, the Department of Education and Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, announced the release of their financial aid

Shopping Sheet. And during the State of the Union in 2009, the President also announced the creation of the College Scorecard.

It's a fact that there's different points in the search process for students and families as they look at college options. Each of these tools are helpful within different stages of that process. There are the early stages where people are just beginning to explore possible post-secondary options. They want to get a general sense of what each institution has to offer, possibly how far it is from their home, how much it costs, and what kind of outcomes that students obtain after they graduate from that institution.

And as they get more involved in the search process, there's the need for more detail. And then after they get accepted and begin to receive financial aid offers, they need to be able to easily compare costs. So it's a process that families go through, and we're trying to provide tools to support that process. It's really trying to meet the needs of students and families.

We can move on to the next slide now.

Following the President's State of the Union Address in 2013, the department launched its College Scorecard Web site. The President asked for us to do this at the State of the Union Address in 2012 and we've done a tremendous amount of work between 2012 and 2013, which led to this Web site's launch.

And this has been work across the department, including the Office of Post-Secondary Education. We've also worked with the National Center for Education Statistics, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, and a variety of other colleagues across the federal agencies to come up with a tool that would be useful to students and to families.

One of the things you'll notice is that this tool doesn't have a very federally focused front-end. We can go to the next slide.

What we tried to do here is something a little bit different with this Web site. So it is more of a graphical appeal on the front end, allowing people to use the tool not just on - not just search based on name but to recognize that people who are looking at schools are often particularly interested in pursuing certain majors, or they might be interested in particular occupations. And they can search and filter by a lot of different functions like that.

They're able to use this tool to narrow the search, to get down to a subset of institutions that are specifically designed to meet their needs, and then have an output that is also more graphical in design, as you can see.

So now, either after filtering or typing in the name of a school, users can print and take a couple of schools' scorecards and lay them side by side and very quickly and very visually understand what the various measures are. These include net price which is important, because we don't want families being intimidated by the actual sticker price and fees that the institution charges, before they apply. This will give them an output measure that reflects what the typical student actually pays for college.

One of the things that's really important for each scorecard, you can also link to a net price calculator at the institution and personalize that price based on a particular student's circumstances. This may be helpful if you have students whose family income is substantially lower or higher than the average college student.

We also feature graduation rates on this tool for each institution. It's really important that students and families understand what the likely outcome is for their son or daughter if they enroll in one institution instead of another.

We also talk about cohort default rates on the scorecard. We've been using default rates for a number of years here at the department. Putting them on the scorecard addresses the question: What's the probability that my son or daughter will have problems paying their student loans back after they graduate? What's the likelihood that my son or daughter, after graduating from this particular institution I'm looking at, will be able to find a well-paying job?

And one of the new metrics that we used on scorecard is median borrowing. Students and families often look at how much they're likely to borrow in a given year, not realizing the total accumulation of debt that will likely occur after completing a two-year or a four-year degree. So we've incorporated an outcome measure that looks at people who have completed their degree of left the institution, and what the average debt levels are for those students.

As I mentioned earlier on, we're greater concerned about the level of student debt here. For students to maintain a manageable level of debt and also provide tools at the backend so that they're able to handle the debt through repayment plans is very, very important. But it's also important that families know about the average amount of loans that students typically take out at each institution that they're considering.

There's also a link on the scorecard so people can get more information about all the repayment plans that will become available to them after they leave an institution.

And finally, we've indicated that we've been working on employment outcome measures. This is something that the department is giving very careful consideration to, and we currently do not have a planned release date for when that certain metric would become available on the scorecard.

One of the things I want to stress is that this is version 1.0 of the College Scorecard and that there will be future versions. There's a lot of interest in trying to figure out ways to make this tool more useful to students and families. We've already done some focus group work and we'll continue to improve on these tools as we move forward throughout the administration.

And one of the things that we're also considering is a comparison function that would allow users to look at more than one institution at a time to where they'd be able to compare these side by side simultaneously on their desktop.

Now going on to the next slide. I just wanted to include this within the presentation so that folks would have a good idea of where this data comes from. It comes from two data sets here at the department. One is the (IPEDS) data set which is through the National Center for Education Statistics, and another one comes from a student loan data set which is through Federal Student Aid.

So here you can see costs -- and we tried to use the most recent data available for each metric. Some of these are very recent, and they all end in the same year, which will be the most recent year which is for now it will be 2012. We look to update this as soon as possible, so you can be on the lookout for that very shortly.

So here we have net costs and graduation rate. And for example, what we do for graduation rate is we look at 150% of the time. So if you were bachelor's

degree student, we would see how many students at that institution had graduated in six years if it's a four-degree - four-year degree program, if it was an associates degree. We would - the calculation for graduation rate would be how many students have completed that three-year degree within three years of starting that program.

And going on to the next slide. You can look at our other measures which are loan default rate which, as I mentioned, are, how many students have gone into default within three years after leaving an institution? So this gives a good measure of how many - how well does that institution prepare students to be able to repay their loans after graduation.

And median borrowing rate, we look at the median borrowing rate of students that left that institution within a given time period. And within our focus groups, I can tell you that this is one of the most interesting metrics that students and families look at, just to get a better understanding of the typical student and how much they actually take out in loans at a given institution.

So if we can move on to the next slide. And this brings us into the next step of the process, where families may want to dig a little bit deeper into information on a given school.

The College Navigator provides more detailed information about institutions to help students decide where to apply. The College Navigator, which is hosted by the National Center for Education Statistics, contains the broadest data available about institutions. Here we have over 7,400 Title IV institutions and others that volunteer their data because they want to be showing up in searches when students and families are using this tool.

We launched Navigator in 2007 and we've been very pleased with the performance of Navigator since then. Looking back on our Web statistics, we have over 2.5 million hits or unique visits, and this continues to go up. We continue to provide more and more information on a regular basis. So we continue to make innovations and improve this tool.

So on the Web site there's a significant amount of information about all of these institutions, about what the campus setting is like, whether or not it's religiously affiliated, who accredits the institution, and links if you want to visit the school Web site itself. It's essentially a superset of all the data that we previously talked about on the scorecard.

There's a new innovation recently that was put on Navigator. So, not only do we report on what programs are offered at the institution but also distance programs that are now being offered. So you can find out who is offering a given program even if it's not local to you.

It also offers a glance at an institution's retention and graduation rates, which usually, tied with that price, gets the most attention among policy-makers but also others. You can search by states, pull up a map, or search by ZIP code.

In the media we read a lot about the typical college student who might be 18, but we know that that's not necessarily the case. There are also students in their 30s who are going to schools closest to their home, so a ZIP code is one of the most useful searches for a typical American looking for a college, and one of the most popular searches on this Web site. And you can also sort on a whole bunch of other obvious features.

If you want to see net price, retention and graduation rates, you can do that. You can also compare institutions on this Web site, up to four institutions

simultaneously. This was a feature that was greatly demanded. And if you're looking at the two closest community colleges, you're probably going to want to compare them without clicking back and forth.

The College Navigator also allows you to save a search and return to it later. Selecting a post-secondary institution maybe isn't something that you're going to do in one sitting, and we certainly acknowledge this. You can save your favorite institution and pull them up side by side.

Now going on to the next slide.

Marco Davis: And hey, Michael, we've just got a couple of minutes, so...

Michael Itzkowitz: Great. Thank you.

Marco Davis: Thought I'd let you know.

Michael Itzkowitz: Appreciate it.

So, going on to talk about the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet briefly, after students have been accepted into an institution, the Shopping Sheet provides students and families with a standardized way to see a personalized net price, what it will really cost the student or family to pay for - to enroll in a post-secondary education institution, with a clear indication of the costs and the types of grants and financial aid that students will be receiving.

Institutions can use this as their financial aid award letter or as a cover sheet, which would be supplemented with additional information about the student's award. The Shopping Sheet is a voluntary measure that now over 2000

institutions have adopted. And those institutions that have adopted it represent over 46% or over 8.7 million undergraduate U.S. students.

Now going on to the next slide. We can take a glance what we look at. The thing that I would point out here is that three of the metrics on the College Scorecard are also featured on the right-hand side of the Shopping Sheet -- graduation rates, loan default rates and median debt. On the Scorecard and Navigator, there's no personalized net price; it's presented as a general measure on those tools.

The Shopping Sheet is important because, after receiving acceptance and an aid award letter from an institution, each student who has used the Shopping Sheet will be able to easily navigate through these different offers that they received. They'd be able to see what aid they're actually receiving and what they would actually be paying out of pocket on a year-to-year basis.

So, really very pleased with the level of uptake in this. There's been over 2000 institutions that have voluntarily adopted this for their undergraduate and prospective students. At the same time, of course, we'd love to see close to 100% of all institutions adopt this.

So that brings me to the end of my presentation today. We do have the Web sites listed for all the tools that I've talked about. And we do hope that you visit the sites to find out more information.

I also have my email address listed at the beginning of the presentation. So if you do have any additional questions or want additional information, you can feel free to reach out to me.

Marco Davis: Great. Thank you so much, Michael.

And so, operator, if you could remind folks how it is they can enter the queue to ask a question, as we'll begin to open the floor for Q&A?

Coordinator: Thank you. We will begin the question-and-answer session.

If you would like to ask a question, please press star and then 1. Please unmute your phone and record your name clearly when prompted. Your name is required to introduce your question. To withdraw your request, press star and then 2. One moment please for the first question. Thank you.

Marco Davis: Great. And while folks are queuing into the question, want to thank you, Michael, for that presentation, and apologize to everyone, this presentation went a little long and I'm sorry to even have to cut Michael short, but as you can see, there's so much information that we think is really valuable, really important stuff that are important tools for students and families to use, so we wanted to make sure to make that information available to you. So we'd definitely encourage you folks to all look at the Web sites that Michael provided at the end of his segment of the slides, actually you can see, and to peruse those Web sites and look around for yourselves. And obviously, as he mentioned, if you have questions or anything is unclear for work that you all do as students and families, feel free to follow up with him, since we want to make these tools to be as useful and as used as possible.

Coordinator: Once again, to ask a question, please press star and then 1. You will be prompted to record your name. To withdraw your request, press star and then 2. Thank you.

Marco Davis: It seems you might have provided all the information necessary, Michael. We may not have questions about these three...

Michael Itzkowitz: Fantastic. But yes, feel free to reach out to me if anything comes up after the presentation, and I'll be happy to connect with all of you.

Marco Davis: We'll give it another minute or two though, in case folks are still navigating the - getting into the queue.

Coordinator: Excuse me. Our first question comes from the line of Mr. (Jose Alejandro). Sir, you may proceed.

(Jose Alejandro): Do you have any information about scholarships?

Michael Itzkowitz: We don't have any specific information about specific scholarships on the College Navigator or the College Scorecard, but what it does tell you when you look at net price, it's the actual cost of attendance minus all the grant aid that the typical student receives. So it'll give you a good indication of if there are a tremendous amount of scholarships at an institution where the student is mostly covered, or if there aren't that many where the student actually ends up paying the sticker price.

On the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet, it does give you that specific information. So it'll tell you specifically the line item amounts of how much scholarships and grants you'll be receiving, in addition to the cost of attendance. And then it would do a calculation for you to show you how much you're going to pay at the end of the day. And you would receive the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet after you've been accepted into an institution and when they provide you with their financial aid award offer to you.

(Jose Alejandro): Okay.

Marco Davis: And this is Marco, and I'll piggyback on Michael's point and mention also that, one of the things that our office did in looking at trying to be of assistance to students, was to look at sort of what was out there. And what we found is that there's really quite a few - not are there quite a few scholarships but there are also quite a few Web sites and organizations that actually both provide scholarships and provide lists of scholarships.

And so we felt that it was - that was something that was pretty well-covered, and I would recommend any kind of internet search, whether it be Google or Bing or something along those lines, and you should be able to find Web sites that are actually free of charge, that's also important to note, that it's really not something in this day and age where folks need to necessarily have to pay a fee to get lists of scholarships for which students might be eligible. So we encourage folks to look at that.

We did, however, earlier this year, our office, specifically the Initiative, issue a financial aid guide called "Graduate! A Financial Aid Guide to Success" that is available on our Web site, so I'll take this moment to do a free plug, at [ed.gov/hispanicinitiative](http://ed.gov/hispanicinitiative).

You can search there for this financial aid guide we issued, which talks about types of student aid, federal loans, federal grants and so on, but it also does mention some scholarships, and it does give a couple of examples of scholarships that are out there and lists of scholarships that exist, including some that are available for students who have received DACA deferral and for recent arrivals to the United States. So that's something that may be a useful resource as well for folks.

All right, let's go on to the next question.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from the line of Ms. (Sylvia Hope). Ma'am, you may proceed.

(Sylvia Hope): My question is, are any of these Web sites, resources available in languages other than English?

Michael Itzkowitz: As of right now these Web sites are only available in English. We do have a brochure that discusses these Web sites that's called Comparing Colleges, and you can find it through the department Web site, which is available in Spanish, if you're giving out information to families or students. But the current Web sites themselves that are hosted on the department Web site right now are only featured in English currently.

(Sylvia Hope): Is there any plan to translate them?

Michael Itzkowitz: It's definitely something that we're considering, but I appreciate the feedback, and we'll continue to consider it as we do move forward.

(Sylvia Hope): Thank you.

Michael Itzkowitz: Thank you.

Marco Davis: And while I'm on the subject, the "Graduate!" guide I mentioned is actually available in English and in Spanish. And although it doesn't have the functionality of these tools, it does at least provide some good information for families and students in both English and Spanish about the college application process, about the student aid process, which is obviously a critical piece of this conversation.

All right. Next question?

Coordinator: Thank you. Our next question comes from the line of Ms. (Guzman). Ma'am, you may proceed.

(Guzman): Yes, hi. I just want to say, thank you also for a wealth of tools. My question has to do with the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet. You mentioned that about 2000 colleges and universities participate. And I'm curious about the process by which a university may or may not participate.

Michael Itzkowitz: Sure. In 2012, as I mentioned, this is a voluntary initiative. In 2012 the Secretary sent out a letter to all college presidents, and he asked them to adopt this for their students. The reason why it came about is because we saw that a lot of financial aid award letters were confusing to students and families; they didn't understand - it wasn't very clear what a grant was, what a loan was, and how much they needed to pay at the end of the day. And that's essentially what the Secretary said in the letter, and asked institutions to adopt this.

We've set up an email box which is [shoppingsheet@ed.gov](mailto:shoppingsheet@ed.gov), to where institutions write in and they let us know if they are adopting it. They ask implementation questions. We provide all the data and information that they need to actually populate the sheet themselves. So we make it - try to make it as easy as possible for them.

So, you know, the first year, I believe that we had about 600. In the second year we've done additional outreach, which got us up to around 2000 schools, which I did mention, yes, it's over 8.7 million undergraduate students that they represent. We do plan to keep doing additional outreach this year. So we are hoping that those numbers continue to increase.

Marco Davis: Great. Thank you, Michael. And as I think I heard you mention, anyone who works with an institution of higher ed that would like to try to participate, it seems like the first step might be to send an email to [shoppingsheet@ed.gov](mailto:shoppingsheet@ed.gov), and they could get then plugged in, is that right?

Michael Itzkowitz: Absolutely.

Marco Davis: Great. Great. All right. Next question?

Coordinator: Our next question comes from the line of Ms. (Dinia Dimarti). Ma'am, you may proceed.

(Dinia Dimarti): Yes, thank you. Do you have any information for graduate schools?

Michael Itzkowitz: Currently listed on the College Scorecard, it is specific to undergraduate students. Some graduate schools have reached out to us in regards to participating in the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet, which we said is absolutely allowable and we would encourage it. The information that we have available on the outcome metrics, on the right-hand side, the graduation rate, loan default rate and median borrowing rate, is only available for undergraduate students at this time.

So, some graduate schools have reached out and they are actively using the sheet itself. But as far as the outcome metrics, only undergraduate metric at this time on these tools.

(Dinia Dimarti): Thank you.

Michael Itzkowitz: Thank you.

Coordinator: Thank you. At this time there are no further questions. I would like to hand the call over back to the speakers. Thank you.

Marco Davis: Great. Thank you very much.

If more questions comes up, as Michael mentioned, his email is on the slide deck, and obviously the Web sites are a good starting place as well to try and find more information.

At this point, I do want to mention, before I turn it over to our second presenter, the slide deck we're referring to, hopefully - obviously everyone is following along on the Webex who is logged on. Also everyone who registered for the Webinar should have received a copy of this slide deck as a PDF. If you did not receive a copy of the slide deck, please send us an email so that you can have these Web sites and these email addresses afterwards. Send us an email to whieeh@ed.gov. That's whieeh@ed.gov. That's the initials of White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics. And we'll be sure to send you a copy of this PDF slide deck.

All right. Now it's time to hear from our second presenter. Our second presenter is Alex Hitch from the Latino Student Fund in Washington, D.C. And without further ado, I'll turn it over to you, Alex.

Alex Hitch: Thank you, Emmanuel. Thank you, Michael, for your presentation. And I really do want to thank the Initiative for opening up this opportunity to have this discussion. And I want to say welcome to all the listeners today who are out there to support students through this college application process.

I am Alex Hitch and I am the Educational Programs Manager for the Latino Student Fund.

Next slide.

The Latino Student Fund or LSF is a local Washington, D.C. based organization that was established in 1994, and as Mr. Davis previously stated, our mission statement is to provide opportunities for a strong academic foundation for underserved pre-K to 12th grade students of Hispanic descent and higher education and professional leadership.

And we do work with all students, especially first-generation students, be able to help them through the college application process and be able to help them with academic and social support, all the way through until higher education.

We do have four programs that we offer for the families of DMV area, that's the D.C., Maryland and Virginia region. We have a Saturday morning tutoring program that we really focus on literacy, reading comprehension and mathematics. We have an access program that helps families with educational options, looking at different private at parochial schools in the DMV region.

We also have a scholarship program which awards scholarships for students who are in private and parochial school in the DMV region. And finally, we have our college prep program which I'll go into a little bit more detail.

Next slide please.

So with our LISTO college prep program, for those of you who don't speak Spanish, listo has two meanings. One is ready, and smart. And that's exactly how we want to prepare our students. We want them to be ready for college and career. And we also know that our students are intelligent and ready to go,

and we want to be able to plug in the resources for them to reach higher education.

LISTO started in 2010 as a summer program, and we offered a weeklong summer workshops, bringing in college representatives and other people affiliated with higher education, to be able to speak to students and parents. And this was an open registration for anybody in the DMV area.

We continue to do this for the next four years, looking at how we could have more of an impact and grow. And so we decided that, along with our summer weeklong workshops, that we would offer during the academic school years. So in the fall and also in the spring, we offer the same course for students who were not able to join us during the summer, and have them be able to get these resources that we had given out, and be able to give them in the fall and also the spring.

We decided this year, for the first time, that we would have a more intensive year-round program that would have 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grade students at a local D.C. school work on college preparation. And we wanted to be able to incorporate all of the areas and components that we had in our summer workshops as well as during the school year and be able to bring that in on a full-year basis for those students.

And we really had - we really wanted to focus on our unique approach, and we've looked at our goals for short term and for long term, and our short term being let's offer these services to anybody who would like to learn more about the college process during the summer, but also in the long term, to be able to say, hey, we're able to follow our students from 9th grade and get them prepared for the college application and ultimately to enroll in a higher educational institution.

Next slide please.

To our program model. And one of the main tenets for our program model and the reason why we changed over to an intensive full-year program was the cohort model. And we really based it on research and we looked at the 2014 White House report on increasing college opportunities.

And one of the biggest reasons that we thought that we really wanted to follow our students was that a college-going culture that they had found had the biggest positive enrollment impact on students. And that if students are in a college-going culture, they're going to be more likely to grab their friends and say, "Let's continue to pursue higher education."

So we decided, let's have a cohort model to be able to work with our students, be able to continue this conversation and that they themselves would continue that conversation within the group.

We also wanted to keep the flexibility of the workshops that we had during the summer, and also have that on Saturdays. This allowed students who were very actively enrolled in their school activities, to be able to have a chance to get this information on the weekend. We also wanted to have parent involvement, which we find very important at the Latino Student Fund, especially for college prep, to be able to have the chance for parents to be participants in our programs. So we offer Saturday workshops, and that's college reps, that's looking at financial literacy as well.

On top of that, as with the cohort model, we really wanted to have our students to have voice. And that's the thing about college applications, is that we really need to look at promotion of our students. It's elevating their

accomplishments, making sure that their accomplishments were being seen by these higher ed institutions.

And that kind of goes into the next point which is, with the exposure to a variety of colleges and universities we're bringing in, as well as visiting colleges, so we've brought in college reps from local universities to be able to run some of our workshops that are based on themes that we created.

So for example, we've had financial literacy or we have had a financial - excuse me, a college rep come in and speak about the difference between early action and early decision. And these students get the chance to be able to say, "I have a question about this," and ask a representative right there in a much closer situation and environment than a college fair.

And this is a dual benefit, and it goes back to the promotion of our students. The reps are seeing our students and the students are here, are getting their questions answered.

In terms of the actual model for all grade levels, we do have objectives for our students. Ninth grade is all about GPA, and that is the number one indicator to research for admissions officers and representatives, when they look at applications, they look at GPA first. It's not entrance exams, it's GPAs. So, starting off 9th grade with a strong GPA will go wonders for the student.

For 10th grade, we want to look at self-promotion and be able to work on communication. We also focus on for 11th grade is the entrance exam, is be able to have students who have great GPAs, be able to have the accompanying high scores for their ACT or SAT.

And then for a 12th grade, we have a mentor who's being able to work with our 12th grade students, to look at their applications. And we want them to apply to at least four universities that allows for greater selection based on their financial, educational and social profile and how they're able to fit in.

And on top of that, we have our community connections. We work with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute. We work with other - partner with other strong non-profit organizations in the D.C. region, to be able to bring workshops, as well as we look for private corporations to come in to talk to our students about careers. So we brought in PwC and Granger and Verizon to be able to speak to our students about careers and where they - and how to attain that with a degree.

On top of that, we've been very lucky to be able to have affiliation with our public school that we work within. But again what we've seen is that, if there is affiliation with a public school, that you're able to work with that school to be able to plug in and help promote the resources that the school has, and that you're able to provide for the students.

And as I mentioned before, for our 11th graders, is that we do provide professional instruction for ACT, because we know that a lot of times our students are not able to get the prep that they would need, so we want to bring that to them, to be able to bolster their application for the next year.

And then finally, as I said before, what we really is want to bring that to that cohort model, and so we offer summer orientation. This allows our students from every grade level, 9th through 12th, to be able to do a college visit, but also to really reinforce the idea that everyone's going to be talking about college and we're going to start in the summer. It's not just one thing that starts

when school starts. It's going to be that they're going to have a chance to meet each other and work with each other. So we have this summer orientation.

Next slide please.

So the key objectives of our programs is, as I said before, is to facilitate the successful transitions to and through high school, and we find that very important, to be able to connect the students to counselors, to staff and to administration. We also, as I said, have mentors who come in, and we want to have participants have successful college applications and admissions and understand the transition process. So we connect them with students who are current college students, be able to speak to them.

And as was brought up by Michael, we really want to promote financial literacy and financial aid awareness. Again that is a big - student, that is a big topic. And so we want to be able to bring that information early to our students and so they can utilize and take advantage of financial resources as we've seen through the initiatives, as we've seen with FAFSA, and be able for students and their families to understand the process and not be afraid of the sticker price but understand what the prices are and where are the resources that they can find for financial support.

And finally, we want to be able to prepare students to enter competitive global economy. We've seen and we know that students need to have post-secondary education, some level of that, whether that's two-year, four-year, for a certificate. And that we want them to be competitive when they get out of those programs or that institution. So we are connecting them with professionals who have gone through the process, be able to say, "This is what you will need to be in this career."

Some quick points is that, for our 12th grade, especially for applications. We want them, as I said before, to apply to at least four universities or institutions. And that allows for students be able to look at their target, to be able to look at their safety, and to be able to look at (read) schools and be able to make a good decision on where they would like to go.

And then finally, that we want 100% of our 12th grade regular participants to graduate and be accepted into a post-secondary institution. There are institutions that accept at 100% rate, there are some that accept at 7% rate. We do know those. But we want students to have that belief that they've gotten in and we work towards working with them in that area.

Next slide please.

Specifically what we've seen on the ground level, working with Hispanic students -- and I want to open that up as well to first-generation students -- is that we are here to be able to supplement for high school resources and it is absolutely important and - part for us that we work with the school and be able to have the student and family be comfortable with getting resources from the school itself.

So we really work on being able to say, "Can you go talk to your counselor, ask for a transcript there?" We ask parents and try to help parents be able to say, "Go to the school to be able to talk to the school." We are there to supplement. But high school, it's extremely important for the student and the family to go to for those resources and where they have to supplement.

We also want to highlight the college application process and financial aid process, about what FAs are out there, scholarships. So we work on scholarships early. We have 11th graders look at the scholarships. We have

our 11th graders understand the financial literacy. We also bring in those components for our 10th graders as well. And it really does come down to selection and early selection.

As I said before, we have the connection with other Hispanic college students and professionals, as well as first-generation students. Their stories is incredibly important for our students to hear, so they know that they're not alone in the process. And we really look forward to doing that. And we, as I said before, we've partnered with CHCI to be able to talk to our students through the process, and that has been very valuable for our students to be able to hear.

Really briefly, for staff accessibility, as you guys know, we're moving towards texting and emailing and Facebook. So we use texting a lot and we use Facebook, be able to have our students, if they have any sort of questions, that they can come to us and say, "Hey, I have - I'm really nervous about me getting into this school." Well, we're going to respond within 24 hours. It really helps our student to have the confidence to continue with the application process.

Again it's - there are barriers that we have to set, but they know that they can email one of my great colleagues in the program at any point to be able to get their questions answered. And that kind of goes in with our staff, retaining and hiring staff who are bilingual, and that's really important. And again it's not just being able to look at one factor, that we have a variety of backgrounds in our program right now, age, what degrees we have, if they're first generation. We have a colleague who's actually in college right now, and that kind of brings in the college-going culture.

So there's different areas that our students can go to, to be able to ask questions and they feel comfortable doing that.

And then finally, as I said, the exposure to multiple higher educational options, is that we really look at trying to do fly-out programs which is really important for our students, where a lot of institutions are looking for students to come out and that they're providing applications and opportunities for students to go check out a school. That doesn't necessarily mean the student is going to look at it, but that the student can get the feel and the understanding of what it's like to go to a smaller university, a private university, compared to a public. And a lot of these schools will apply students out. So we want to expose our students to these options that are out there.

We also want them to look at online resources that we'd be able to push through the initiative or push through the government or the other private foundations that offer these opportunities to compare schools.

And then finally, we bring in the college representatives. But I will go on to say that these fly-out programs are fantastic for students to be able to see what it's like to be in college. And universities and institutions are willing to be able to fly them out.

Finally, for our key improvement areas, what we've seen, especially for our first year doing this sort of intensive cohort program, is that we really do want to have parent involvement. Again this decision for higher education institutions and being able to apply to schools is a whole family approach, and everybody must be on the same level. And so we really want to have parents and students involved. So we need to try to figure out how we can get parents involved on a much greater level.

We also know that, with today, the communication mediums change constantly, and that we want to be able to capture and promote and be able to have our students get this information that we're giving out, as well as what their schools are giving out.

And then what we'd like to do as well is that, for a lot of students that we've seen on the ground level, is that they're looking at regional schools. There's not much looking out at other national schools. And we want to be able to expand their college options. We're looking to be able to how we can be able to promote other schools that could be a good fit for them. And so we really try to look at schools that aren't necessarily just in the DMV region but in other places, just as an option.

And then finally, we're looking at trying to help students and the school be able to set a little bit higher bar for themselves. Again we're looking at self-promotion in our program and the idea that the cohort's going to be able to elevate our students. And we need to be able to do it on all the levels. Some of the students have been told that they're not going to make or that they're not good enough, and we want to be able to say, "Hey, you need to look at this, because you are good enough. These are options. There's a school that'll be able to fit for you."

Next slide please.

And so finally, I just want to say, I know this is very brief, but I do want to say thank you guys for being able to listen to me. This is a great opportunity for us, to be able to have this conversation and dialogue, and for us to be able to refine our program to be able to better serve the community and as well as the department for Hispanic students and for first-generation students, and we are really looking forward to solidifying this model, because we do feel that it

has had success and that, through our organization for the number of years that we've been doing it, that we've had a high level of success working with students, especially now with the college application process.

So again I want to thank you so much, and you can see all the details of our organization and my email if there are other questions.

Marco Davis: Great. Thank you very much, Alex. That was a really I think helpful and instructive presentation.

So we'll now open the floor to Q&A for folks who have questions for Alex and the Latino Student Fund. And operator, if you wouldn't mind reminding folks how to get into the queue?

Coordinator: Okay, thank you. Once again, to ask a question, please press star and then number 1. You will be prompted to record your name. To withdraw your request, press star and then 2. One moment, we have one - we have questions on queue.

Our first question comes from Mr. (Ansen). Sir, you may proceed.

Mr. (Ansen): Thank you. It seems this program is excellent, but centered in the DMV region. So, how might this be extended or how might we build one to align with yours in other parts of the country?

Alex Hitch: That's a great question. And what I would suggest is being able to look at any of the regional institutions that are around you, to start setting up representatives that could come in, and then looking, as I said before, to try to affiliate your program wherever you are in the country to set up a space or

have those students from that one school be able to come to you and work on setting up a college prep.

Again it really is all about having support from the local school as well as local institutions.

Marco Davis: All right. Let's go on to the next question?

Coordinator: Our next question comes from the line of Ms. (Patricia Velasquez). Ma'am, you may proceed.

(Patricia Velasquez): Yes. We had a small glitch in our audio. And so we heard that the 8th grade, you try to work on the GPA, and then we got the 11th and 12th. But 9th and 10th grade, what do you focus on? That's kind of when our glitch lost our audio, none of us got it.

Alex Hitch: Sure. So actually we start with 9th grade, and 9th grade is the focus on GPA. So we actually offer three-day a week study halls, so that our students are able to get their homework completed and also have the chance to understand their work and be able to speak to staff about, you know, where they should be - where they should be at this time with their studies, as well as be able to speak about who should they talk to for classes for next year, for courses next year, for organizations that are within the school and without.

And for the 10th graders, it's very much aligned to our 9th graders, where we do want - we do offer optional study hall, and then for one - excuse me, for two times a month, and then the other two times we work on public speaking and communication, to be able to talk about self-promotion, to be able to understand that they're going to need to work on promoting themselves for

internships, promoting themselves for scholarships, being able to look at what is going to be required of them for SAs, for scholarship SAs.

So again it's really starting to look at the student, 9th and 10th grade, is what we really wanted to focus on, is really building that dialogue on going to college.

Marco Davis: Great. Let's go on to our next question.

Coordinator: Thank you. Our next question comes from the line of Ms. (Robin Roman). Ma'am, you may proceed.

(Robin Roman): Thank you. How did you decide to provide preparation for the ACT versus the SAT?

Alex Hitch: That is a fantastic question, and that we have been guided by the organization that we use that, with bilingual speakers, the ACT is actually better for our students, it actually follows the curriculum that our students are going through for 11th grade. So we've decided to do the ACT in spring, which would follow with the map that would show up on the ACT.

What we've also seen is that the ACT is a bit easier to explain, especially for answers, it's a little bit more logical. And so we went with the ACT instead of the SAT.

And just for everyone out there who are helping students for the college application process, universities accept equally ACT or SAT.

Marco Davis: Great. Let's go on to the next question?

Coordinator: Our next question comes from the line of Ms. (Myleen). Ma'am, your line is open.

Ms. (Myleen): Yes, hi. I was wondering if the LISTO college prep is going to be located in somewhere other than the D.C. area for the easy commute for other people?

Alex Hitch: That's a fantastic question as well. We would love to be able to help out as many students as possible. We are, as I said, just focusing on our first year, and it's something that we want to be able to have even more of an impact later down the line.

I'm sure that there are other organizations that do very similar work to us. I'm not sure where you are calling from. But that is something that, once we do have a great alumni database and that shows that we've had success all the way through after this first year, that we would look for potential expansion. But that won't be for a couple more years.

Marco Davis: All right. And going on to the next question?

Coordinator: Our next question comes from the line of Ms. (Louise Green). Ma'am, you may proceed.

(Louise Green): Yes, hi. Is LISTO program model available or open to Puerto Rico?

Alex Hitch: So in itself is that, for the LISTO program model, is something that we are more than happy here as a staff to be able to speak a little bit more about how we've decided to put in our components. It is not currently in the idea of mobile, being able to move around. It is something that we are more than happy to discuss and are willing to.

So again as you can see with the PDF, our phone number is on there and as well as the email for further questions about that.

Marco Davis: And this is Marco. Just to sort of piggyback a little bit on that, and apologies if this wasn't fully clear. So we selected Latino Student Fund to share a little bit about their model just as an example of a program that is achieving results with the Latino communities, that is focused on this issue and has had some practice and some experience with it, and we were hoping that this information would be useful for folks in terms of figuring out ways to incorporate into your existing activities and programs or work, or ways to learn from and to adopt as you design and build and create new programs.

I think for folks who are interested in the program that don't have one in their community, also feel free to reach out to us. We're happy to try and help - try to help you track down either an actual program, organization that does similar work in your community, or to try to help, at least to the extent possible, try to connect you to institutions that Alex was mentioning, that might be supportive of helping you create programs like that.

But yes, the Latino Student Fund isn't necessarily an organization or a program that is looking to expand or to replicate throughout the country, but again we want to make sure that work like this is done in as many communities as possible, with as many students as possible. So to the extent that we can be helpful to you all in terms of doing work in your communities, feel free to reach out to us as well.

All right. Let's go on to the next question?

Operator, do we have any more questions?

Coordinator: Yes. We also have questions from the line of Ms. (Sherry Acevedo). Ma'am, you may proceed.

(Sherry Acevedo): Hi, Latino Student Fund. I just want to congratulate you on great work in your community.

Alex Hitch: Thank you.

(Sherry Acevedo): Our organization is Latino Youth College Access and we're in New York State, in the suburb of Winchester County, also focusing on Latin youth and college access. I'm very interested in learning about your program implementation strategy in terms of the number of students that you serve and where you deliver your services, if they're in the schools or if they're in outside locations or in a central location.

Alex Hitch: Sure. So where we deliver our services are actually within the school itself, so we're in the high school. And we also partner with another organization and deliver our services with students that are part of that organization who are on the outside. So we do work in a public school and we also work with - partner with another organization to provide college access information.

We work with about 75 students in total, cut down in the middle between both programs, so, 75 students in total.

(Sherry Acevedo): Seventy-five between the elementary program and your college access program?

Alex Hitch: Sorry, excuse me. Seventy-five for just for the college access, within the public school and with the partner organization.

(Sherry Acevedo): Got you. And how many times do your students meet?

Alex Hitch: That's a great question. So we meet three times with our 9th graders -- Monday, Tuesday Wednesday. With our 11th graders, since they are busy and involved in school activities and we know that we really want them to be involved and encourage them to be involved, they meet twice a month on Tuesdays, a little bit more when we do our ACT prep. For our 10th graders, we have an optional study hall which they come to, but they're also required to come two times a month on Wednesdays. And then we dedicate just Thursdays to our 12th graders.

(Sherry Acevedo): So one final question.

Alex Hitch: Sure.

(Sherry Acevedo): As we've been - as we have been attempting to establish collaboration with our school districts, we're getting some pushback from the guidance department. Have you experienced that?

Alex Hitch: Prior, it took a lot to cultivate, and we understood that we are there to supplement the resources that...

(Sherry Acevedo): Correct.

Alex Hitch: ...the school is giving out. And so we went with that approach. It was never that we were going to come in with all the answers, is that we really did want to help out the students. So we were very lucky not to have the pushback.

But I have heard and actually have experienced in a prior organization a little bit of that pushback and I understand that, and I think it's being able to talk

about the fact that this is a supplemental service and it's to benefit for the student and for the school itself, to be able to work with them for - progressing to a higher educational institution.

(Sherry Acevedo): Absolutely, it benefits everyone.

Alex Hitch: Yes.

(Sherry Acevedo): If you would post your email, I'd love to correspond separately later on.

Alex Hitch: That's great. My email is located on the contact details on the last slide. So I'd love to hear from you.

(Sherry Acevedo): Great. Thank you. Because I could keep you talking forever.

Marco Davis: Great, great. Well, and we encourage you all again to follow up like that and to go more in-depth and to continue sort of networking in ways that benefit students overall. Thank you for that.

We'll go on to the next question?

Coordinator: Thank you. We also have question from Ms. (Karen Sylvester). Ma'am, you may proceed.

(Karen Sylvester): Thank you very much for taking me, and thank you for your great service. I just want to know, besides helping the student to navigate through the system, when they get in college, do you have any kind of contact or assistance to them?

Alex Hitch: That's a great question. We're trying to - that's a great question. In short, no. Not right now. And we're building to get there.

We want our students to be prepared, and so that's what we look at with our programming, especially for our 12th graders, about transition. But in short, since this is our first year in terms of the intensive program, we are going to be - we've implemented a small component of a mentor who works with a 12th grader who will follow up for the first year with their student, to make sure that they're doing okay.

And that the student who goes into the higher educational institution knows that they have a network back at home. And that's why the cohort is so important and why we value our mentors, is that they know that they have a network that they can immediately access.

So we have instituted that, but in terms of a comprehensive, no, we do not.

(Karen Sylvester): Okay. Thank you.

Marco Davis: Great. We have time for a couple more questions, so we'll go on to the next one.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from the line of Ms. (Rosemarie Flores). Ma'am, you may proceed.

(Rosemarie Flores): Hi. Thank you. The information has been very valuable today. I only wish I would have found out about your organization before now. I have twin daughters that are both applying for college at the same time, so as you can imagine, that's a huge financial undertaking for us.

Alex Hitch: Yes, huge...

(Rosemarie Flores): And I have found too that the counseling office is, they're not very helpful. They were actually allowed only one meeting to prepare for college applications, and no assistance whatsoever. And through my own research I was able to find out that you can actually apply for financial need and get a waiver on college application to some colleges, which has helped. We're able to get that with one of our children.

But I guess my question is, and one of the concerns I have as a mother, and especially having two daughters that I would like to go out of state for college, is, does your program do anything to help in preparing students, specifically students that have grown up in a kind of a conservative environment, attending a Catholic school since kindergarten, in the prevention of sexual assaults and just overall school safety if they were to, let's say, get into a large university?

And second question I guess would be, is there any sort of resources or help -- I did just go in and sign up for your newsletter as you were talking -- to help now and helping them make the best decision, and which college they should go to when they start receiving those letters in the mail hopefully soon?

Alex Hitch: So to answer your first part of your question, no, we focus on the idea of - we just focus on college applications and prep. We are not focusing on the idea of the, as you brought up, the sexual health or the idea of going to a large university, that aspect of it. We really only focus on the college prep aspect. And we do talk about transitions, but we want them to connect when they do enroll into a university to the offices on that university who will be able to give out information, professional information and information that will be good for the student.

In terms of for your second question, which had to do with selection. Yes, we do work with our students, starting in 11th grade, to be able to build a college list, and then - which we're looking at about five to ten schools that, as I said before, we really want them to look at the academics, we want to look at the viability financially and socially for them, and then, once they hit 12th grade, that they've looked at these schools, that they know exactly where they need to be.

Now again, that list may be adjusted, but we really want them to hone in on the schools that are a good fit for them. And we've used programs that help us that are free models, that help us and the student be able to choose those schools that would be the best fit for them.

So, yes, we are focusing absolutely on the fit for the student. We're not just asking them to apply to 10 just so we can get 10. We're not asking them to apply to four just so we can say they've hit four. We want those four to be something that they've decided and that they've researched.

(Rosemarie Flores): Okay, great. Thank you.

Marco Davis: Great. So I think we have time for one more question before we wrap up.

Coordinator: Okay. Our next question comes from the line of Ms. (Peggy Bunker). Ma'am, you may proceed.

(Peggy Bunker): Yes. Hi. Great presentation. Thanks so much. I'm with (New Message Foundation) in Puerto Rico. We do have a program here; I sent the links through the chat.

And my question, I had two questions. One was on the fly-out program. If you had any recommendations for assistance or is it mostly through the universities themselves that offer admitted students a chance to go visit the school or you have Trio funding or some other source.

And secondly, whether the ACT offers waivers on the cost of the exam. Thank you so much, and great program, great presentation.

Alex Hitch: Thank you so much for that, I really appreciate, those are great questions.

One, in regards to fly-out programs, this is through the universities, and it is an application process, I do want to let you guys know that and it does take some research, but there are a couple of Web sites that are out there if you do type in "fly out" through Google or Bing, about fly-out programs. And as well as for admitted students, they do have days that they will bring in admitted students to be able to get the feel again, which will be in the springtime for the university that they've been accepted.

But as I've mentioned, again, these fly-out programs are through the universities, and there are a lot. They're usually in the fall. There might be some remaining right now. But again they are in the fall. And it starts really in June, to be able to look at these fly-out programs. And there are a lot, there are a lot, and there are very different universities, so a student who is very active will be able to get a good swathe of the schools and be able to see a large school, small school, ones that are focused on business or ones that are focused more on liberal arts. So it's a great opportunity for our students that we pushed.

In terms of the ACT, what we do is that we, again, it's supplemental services, is that we really lean on the school to be able to help us out and help us with

these fee waivers. So again we do not offer the fee waivers ourselves, we want to work with the school, to be able to get our students the fee waivers for ACT. What we are going to offer is that - is professional instruction for the ACT, for eight weeks, to get them prepared for the test.

But again for fee waivers, we want to work with the school as to show the student and to show the school and show the family that we're all in this together, and that includes fee waivers for college applications, we work with the school, as well for the SATs.

Marco Davis: Great. Thank you so much, Alex.

And unfortunately, that's all the time we have for today's Webinar. So I do apologize to any folks who were still in the queue with questions. If you had a question that you weren't able to ask either of our presenters, of Alex or Michael, as was mentioned, their contact information is on the slide deck, so you can follow up with them directly, or reach out to us through our office.

As I mentioned also, if you did not receive a copy of the presentation deck as a PDF, please send us an email at [whieeh@ed.gov](mailto:whieeh@ed.gov), and we'll be happy to send that out to you again.

I want to thank our presenters, I want to thank my colleagues, I want to thank the operator, and certainly want to thank all of you for taking the time out to join us today and participate in this Webinar on such an important topic. We wish you all best of luck with your work with students and families, and of course we wish luck to all the students applying for post-secondary education this fall, that hopefully they will find and achieve their dreams of going on to higher education.

We will be in touch again soon to share the theme and the details of our next monthly Webinar, and we hope you will participate in that when you get that information as well.

So with that, thank you very much everyone, and have a good day.

Man: Thanks all.

Man: Thank you guys.

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

END