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Illinois Board of Higher Education Student Advisory Committee

To: Performance Funding Steering Committee
From: IBHE Student Advisory Committee
RE: October 24th meeting at Southern Illinois University - Carbondale

We, the Student Advisory Committee (SAC) for the Illinois Board of Higher Education hereby submit our recommendations and concerns for the "Performance Funding Steering Committee" to consider:

- Reward universities that take "At-Risk" students and educate them.
- Incentivize students to complete college in 3-5 years
 - Tax Credit (*Student or Parental*)
 - Discounted tuition for on time graduation (*i.e. In-State Graduate School*)
- Consider the location and budget of our schools.
- Students take courses at other universities and community colleges for a semester, therefore no school should be penalized for this.
 - Take general education courses then transfer to a 4-year institute
 - Attend different universities during the summer
- Students who stop and start school due to personal reasons.
- More dual-degree programs with Community Colleges.
- Transfer students should be counted in the metric, and schools should not be penalized for educating a student who transfers "In-State".
- Consideration of underserved and underrepresented student populations:
 - Veterans
 - Disabled
 - Minority students
 - Disadvantaged geography
 - Low socioeconomic
 - Dependent students coming from a single family home
- According to the "Complete College America" report – 75% of public university students in thirty-three (33) states surveyed are balancing a job, school, and commuting to class. Only, 25% of students attend school full-time, live on campus, and have few work obligations.
 - It is important that the committee adjust the metric to meet the new demographic of students.
- That "Best Practices" be shared among universities to increase student access.

It is our sincere hope is that the "Performance Funding" measure lifts educational equality for all current and future students, in our beloved State of Illinois.



Response to the Illinois Higher Education Performance Funding Steering Committee

Introduction

This document is written by the Illinois Latino Council on Higher Education (ILACHE) for consideration and review by the Illinois Higher Education Performance Funding Committee. ILACHE serves as an action oriented, independent advocacy group for Latinos in higher education in the areas of access and equity as it relates to employment, admissions, educational policy, and legislation in the State of Illinois. Through its annual conference, ILACHE provides public forums that facilitate dialogue and strategic planning for Latino higher education professionals and allies for the purpose of sharing best practices, promoting advocacy, and developing innovative ways of affecting legislation and institutional policies. Because ILACHE's primary mission is to advocate for the needs of the Latino community, it is imperative that our organization provide an official briefing paper on the status of Latinos in the State of Illinois and outline our recommendations and concerns for the Illinois Higher Education Performance Funding Steering Committee.

ILACHE acknowledges the important work of the Illinois Committee on Black Concerns in Higher Education (ICBCHE) and is aware that the ICBCHE is working on an African American Educational Agenda for the State of Illinois. ILACHE applauds and supports their efforts. ILACHE has partnered with ICBCHE to form the Illinois Alliance on African Americans and Latinos in Higher Education and we will continue to collaborate with their organization on important issues of access for our communities. ILACHE realizes that African American students face similar barriers to access and completion and we stand united in the recommendations that come from the ICBCHE. Although ILACHE speaks for the Latino community, we are not Latino-exclusive and do expect that African American students and programs be included in the efforts. We also stand in solidarity with other groups who have been historically left out of higher education; however, our charge in this document is to advocate for the Latino community we have pledged to serve.

Changing Latino Demographics and Lagging Educational Attainment

The challenges and subsequent opportunities of diversifying Illinois colleges and universities should be a shared concern for legislators, educators, and community leaders as the demographics in this country shift to a more multicultural, multiracial, and multilingual population. As census data has shown, by 2023 the U.S. K-12 educational system will consist of a majority of children from racial-ethnic-minority backgrounds, and by 2042 it is estimated that whites will comprise a minority within the U.S. population as a whole (Jones,2010). Census findings shed new light on the shifting demographics, which have tremendous implications for the future of higher education. Latino population changes will significantly play a role in this changing demography as the face of Illinois is increasingly more Latino. The Latino population in Illinois grew 27 times faster than the state's overall population and today there are more than 3 times as many Latinos in Illinois in 2010 as there were in 1980 (Saenz, 2011). Latinos account for 16% of the Illinois population, accounting for 38% of the city of Chicago. However, Latinos are not limited to urban



areas. More than 50% live in suburban communities within Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will Counties accounting for 1 in 5 suburban residents (Puente 2010). Three to five new entrants to the workforce are Latino and Latinos account for 44 billion in purchasing power in the State of Illinois. “The Latino population growth isn’t making Illinois Latino communities larger; instead it’s making all of Illinois more Latino (Puente, 2011).”

Additional facts revealed by the 2010 census include:

- 9.9 of every 10 people added to the Illinois population between 1980 and 2010 were Latino.
- Latinos have accounted for 99.1% of Illinois growth from 2000 to 2010.
- Without Latino growth, the state of Illinois would have lost population between 2000 and 2010 instead of increasing 3.3%.
- All 102 Illinois counties except one (Pulaski) experienced increases in Latino population
- Approximately one-third (35%) of Illinois’ growth in the Latino population was concentrated in Cook County
- Whites account for 1.2 births for every 1 death in Illinois while Latinos account for 12.1 births for every 1 death. This trend presents major implications for the widening of the growth rates between Latinos and whites in the near future
- 1 out of every 4 children under the age of 5 in the State of Illinois are Latino

If the State is to remain competitive, it is necessary to realize that a Latino agenda is an Illinois agenda. This changing demography makes one thing perfectly clear - Latinos can be the economic engine of the State or they can pose a serious threat if the current trends continue. Although educational gains have been made in the State of Illinois with more Latinos graduating from high school, the educational attainment gap is still startling. Forty percent of Latino students drop out from Illinois high schools and only 1 in 10 Latinos over the age of 25 complete a bachelor’s degree. Higher educational institutions should prepare to serve and educate the growing Latino population as well as develop strategies for the recruitment, retention, and graduation of Latino students.

Recommendations

Listed in this document are ILACHE recommendations to assist in building accountability into the public funding process and to increase the probability of Latino students graduating from college.

1. Latino students are not a deficit to the state and should not be seen as such. They bring value to college campuses and all students benefit from their participation.
2. A shift in thinking is required from a deficit model to an asset model with investments made in process and higher education institutional practice to achieve Latino student success to include support mechanisms and programs that produce graduation and retention results.
3. Latino students should not become the scapegoat of this new funding policy and colleges and universities should not penalize them by raising admission criteria and become more



selective to produce desired graduation rates as proposed by performance funding metrics.

4. Universities and colleges should follow the State Hispanic Employment Plan as mandated in Public Act 094-0594 and Senate Bill 387/Public Act 96¹ and implement action plans and processes for the recruitment and promotion of Latino faculty and staff that are bilingual and bicultural. In addition, Latino administrators should be at the management and executive levels as well as throughout the institution to provide access to important policy decisions. Reports and progress should be submitted on an annual basis to the IBHE under the guidelines of the State Hispanic Employment Plan. Studies show that Latino students need role models and a cadre of professionals who can assist them and their families with the transition to higher education.
5. ILACHE strongly recommends preservation and additional funding investment in the Monetary Award Program (MAP) and Diversifying our Facilities in Illinois Program (DFI) in order to meet the State's educational objectives. Access to financial aid is a continuing issue limiting Latino student achievement.
6. ILACHE recommends holding institutions accountable for achieving measurable success in the recruitment, retention, and achievement of Latino students, faculty, and staff. This is important if we are to change existing systems and policies that deny access and graduation of Latino students. Colleges and universities should not be held "harmless" for lack of progress in these areas. If institutions are held harmless then there is no drive to change and may, in fact, reinforce the status quo. We do understand that sanctions may need to occur in stages nevertheless, there should be a reward and consequence system to achieve desired results.
7. ILACHE recommends that funding allocation should consider the incorporation of best practices for the recruitment and graduation of Latino Students as part of the States objectives of achieving the Latino agenda. Such strategies include but are not limited to:
 - Investment in and recommitment to model programs such as the Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services Program (LARES) at the University of Illinois at Chicago and El Centro and Proyecto P'Lante at Northeastern Illinois University, which have implemented demonstrated success strategies in working with Latino students. These programs should be safeguarded and duplicated throughout the State as best practices for the educational attainment of Latino students.

¹ **Senate Bill 387/Public Act 96-1286** requires public universities and community colleges to annually report to the General Assembly the progress on efforts to hire and promote Hispanic faculty, administrative staff, and bilingual persons at public colleges and universities. This report is required as part of the larger State Hispanic Employment Plan and the Bilingual Employment Plan.



- Universities and colleges should conduct community outreach to form pipelines and pathways for Latino students by working with established Latino organizations such as: Pilsen Neighbors, Aspira, and El Valor, Mujeres Latinas en Accion, New Futuro, ILACHE, and Latino community organizations and churches. These organizations have ties within the Latino community and can assist universities and colleges with understanding the dynamics of Latino life and culture.
- Community colleges are often a starting point for Latino students. Colleges and universities should foster transition pipelines and pathways from the community college system to the university system. Strong articulation, advising, and financial counseling should be part of this transition program.
- Something should be done to ease the debt burden of Latino students and provide for financial counseling to students and families in this current economic crisis. Illinois Latinos have lost equity in their homes and in their investments and/ or are underemployed. Latinos have lost 66% of their wealth in the economic crisis or 2 out of every 3 dollars (Pew Research Center, 2011). Many Latino families are unable to help pay for their students' education and this creates a growing debt burden for Latino students. This is a troubling trend for all students but especially Latino students whose families have lost discretionary income in the current economic crisis. In addition, Latino students too often leave without a college degree and with staggering debt (Suarez, 2011).
- Colleges and universities should develop protocols and programs that engage parents to help support their students' transition into higher education. Research indicates that family involvement contributes to Latino student success in college as family is a cornerstone value of Latino culture. It is important for colleges and universities to realize that while Student Affairs literature discusses disengaging *helicopter* parents from the college age student experience, parental involvement for Latinos is key to increasing student engagement and college success. A model parent program is the Parent School Partnership program created and run by MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense Fund) and can be viewed at: <http://www.maldef.org/leadership/programs/psp/index.html>
- Colleges and universities should create an operational culture to safely admit, provide resources, and graduate undocumented students and include in-state tuition pricing as written in House Bill 60 that states, "an individual who is not a citizen or permanent resident of the United States be classified as an Illinois resident if the individual graduated from a high school in this State." Although this is current legislation in Illinois, it does not ensure that colleges and university staff have been trained to understand these issues or work with undocumented students. Unfortunately, through our advocacy work, ILACHE has heard of many cases of universities either not having practices in place or misguiding undocumented students. In some instances, students who are U.S. citizens are not allowed to apply for financial aid if their



parents are undocumented. Training should be established for admission and financial aid counselors to sensitize them to the rights of undocumented students and to instruct them that citizenship of the student or their parents should not be criteria for admission to a university. Additionally, higher education should be a sanctuary and staff should not report undocumented students or their families to federal or state authorities. Because undocumented students are not eligible for federal financial aid, they are not allowed to fill out a FAFSA. Therefore, completing a FAFSA, or producing parental W-2 form, should not be a criterion for the student to be considered for institutional aid. Lastly, trained staff should be identified who can provide guidance and assistance to undocumented students.

Conclusion

The success of the State, in large part, depends on the education of the Latino community. As the youngest and fastest growing diverse group in the State, the Latino community and Latino issues should be paramount on Illinois public educational agendas. Now is the time for expanding the support of Latino students and model programs that produce demonstrated success in the recruitment, retention, and graduation of Latino students. ILACHE strongly encourages the State of Illinois and the Illinois Higher Education Performance Funding Steering Committee as it struggles with defining practices and processes for public funding colleges and universities to consider the growing Latino community as inextricably tied to the success and prosperity of the State of Illinois.

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