The State of Education for Latino Students in Ohio
The Ohio Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs issued this report on December 11, 2017. The report was composed by:

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The Ohio Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs ("OCHLA") put forth best efforts in gathering and providing accurate and current information. This report contains data from the latest research available. Upon request, OCHLA will provide any additional information or data available.

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# Table of Contents

I. **Introduction** ......................................................................................................................... 3

II. **Latino Youth in Ohio’s Public Schools** ................................................................. 4  
   Profile of Latinos in Ohio Schools ......................................................................................... 4  
   Latino Academic Performance in Ohio .................................................................................. 5  
   English Learners in Ohio ........................................................................................................ 7

III. **Latino Representation in Higher Education** ......................................................... 9  
    Profile of Latinos in Higher Education ................................................................................ 9  
    Geographic Distribution of Latino Students ......................................................................... 10  
    Latino Academic Performance .............................................................................................. 12  
    Barriers to Higher Education ............................................................................................... 13  
    Increasing Latino Participation in Higher Education ......................................................... 16

IV. **Ensuring a Culturally Responsive Approach in the Classroom** .................. 18  
    Profile of Educators ............................................................................................................. 18  
    Standards and Preparation ................................................................................................. 19  
    Culturally Relevant Pedagogy ............................................................................................. 21  
    Attracting Latinos to the Teaching Profession ................................................................... 22

V. **Education Policy Initiatives** ....................................................................................... 24

VI. **Conclusion** ...................................................................................................................... 26
I. Introduction

The growing Hispanic population has led to an increasingly diverse student body. Today, Hispanic students comprise over a quarter of the nation’s public school students\(^1\). At the start of the 2016 school year, Ohio was home to 95,909 Hispanic K-12 students, representing over 5 percent of the total student body\(^2\). These numbers are expected to continue growing in years to come, with the graduating class of 2024 predicted to be 51 percent more Hispanic and 11 percent less white than the class of 2014\(^3\).

Despite the ubiquity of this population, a variety of barriers serve to hinder their academic success. Discrepancies in achievement can be noted as early as Kindergarten, where Hispanic students score significantly lower on the Ohio Kindergarten Readiness Assessment than their non-Hispanic peers\(^4\). This trend continues through primary and secondary school, with Hispanics scoring below average on the Ohio Achievement Assessments (OAAs)\(^5\), the Ohio Graduation Tests (OGTs)\(^6\), and the SAT/ACT\(^7\).

Nationally, Hispanic students are 10 percent less likely than their white classmates to graduate high school\(^8\), and nearly 30 percent less likely to obtain a bachelor’s degree\(^9\). While Hispanic Ohioans attain bachelor’s degrees at a slightly higher rate than Hispanics residing in other states\(^10\), barriers such as the rising cost of attendance, feelings of isolation and exclusion on campus, and lack of academic preparedness affect this community at a disproportionate rate\(^11\). Students who are undocumented and/or English Learners (EL) face additional challenges as they pursue higher education.

Perhaps due to the barriers they face along the way, Hispanics are also underrepresented among educators. In Ohio, 93 percent of Ohio’s teachers are white, 4 percent are black, and only 0.7 percent are Latino\(^12\).

In this edition of the Latino Community Report, we investigate the barriers and opportunities related to education for Latinos in Ohio. We examine the academic performance of Latinos in relation to their peers, and explore potential causes for discrepancies in achievement. We consider the unique experiences of undocumented and EL students, and emphasize the importance of culturally responsive teaching practices. Best practices for engaging Latino students will also be discussed.

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\(^3\) Livingston, D. \textit{Racial divide widens in Ohio classrooms}. Minority students less likely today to be taught by own race. Akron Beacon Journal. 4 January 2015.


\(^9\) Ibid. \textit{Digest of Education Statistics 2015}.


\(^11\) \textit{Getting In, Staying In – Community Perspectives on the Barriers to Latino Postsecondary Education}. \textit{National Council of La Raza}. 11 July 2015.

\(^12\) Gilchrist, Shannon. \textit{Ohio students are far more diverse than their teachers}. \textit{The Columbus Dispatch}. 16 Jul. 2017.
II. Latino Youth in Ohio’s Public Schools

Profile of Latinos in Ohio Schools

The public-school system is becoming increasingly diverse at both the national and state level. Twenty years ago, 13 percent of U.S. school-aged children were Hispanic, while 67 percent were white and 15 percent were African American. Nearly two decades later, Hispanics now comprise a quarter of all students, whites compromise 49.5 percent and African Americans comprise 16 percent, respectively. These figures mark dramatic growth from decades prior, and recent projections show the Hispanic community will continue to expand rapidly during years to come. By 2026, it is predicted that white students will comprise only 45 percent of national K-12 enrollment while Hispanic students will account for 29 percent.

At the start of the 2016 school year, 1,803,461 PreK-12 students were enrolled in Ohio public schools. Of these students, 71.37 percent were white, 15.98 percent were African American, and 5.32 percent or 95,909 students, were Latino. Latino enrollment was higher in urban districts than rural ones, with 6.41 percent (or 6,147) of Ohio Latino K-12 students studying in Cleveland Municipal Schools and 5.96 percent (or 5,713) studying in the Columbus City Schools system. While Ohio’s student population is less ethnically and racially diverse than the national average, our state’s non-white population is expected to grow exponentially in coming years. In Ohio, the graduating class of 2024 is expected to be 51 percent more Hispanic, 32 percent more multi-racial, 5 percent more Asian, 4 percent more African American, and 11 percent less white than the class of 2014.

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17 Ibid. Enrollment Data.
18 Ibid. Racial divide widens in Ohio classrooms.
**Latino Academic Performance in Ohio**

**Kindergarten Readiness**

Each year, Ohio school districts administer the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) to determine kindergarteners’ abilities in four areas: Language and Literacy, Social Foundations, Mathematics, and Physical Well-Being and Motor Development. In 2015, only 22.3 percent of Hispanic Ohio kindergarteners were “Demonstrating Readiness”, signifying that they entered Kindergarten with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed socially and academically, compared to 40.1 percent of all Ohio kindergarteners. Approximately 39 percent of Hispanic kindergarteners were “Approaching Readiness”, meaning they would need some support to be able to succeed at school. Finally, nearly 40 percent scored in the “Emerging Readiness” category, which suggests they will need significant support to succeed in a Kindergarten classroom. Overall, only 22.8 percent of Ohio kindergarteners scored this low.

Hispanic students rank lowest on this assessment when compared to their non-Hispanic peers. The majority of Asian or Pacific Islander and White, non-Hispanic students scored in Demonstrating Readiness, and the majority of Black, non-Hispanic, American Indian or Alaskan Native, and Multiracial students scored in Approaching Readiness. Hispanic students, however, were as likely to score in Emerging Readiness as they were in Approaching Readiness.

There are many well-substantiated explanations for this gap in performance. One is that children who are limited English proficient most often scored in Emerging Readiness, and Hispanic children are more likely to be limited English proficient than their non-Hispanic peers.

Another is that access to high-quality preschool education is limited for children who are English Learners and Hispanic. In 2015, only 30 percent of Hispanic children were enrolled in preschools nationwide compared to 40 percent of white children, 39 percent of African American children, 40 percent of Asian children, 48 percent of American Indian or Alaskan Native children, and 42 percent of Multiracial children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015-2016 Ohio KRA Performance by Race/Ethnicity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrating</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaskan Native</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, Non-Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiracial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, Non-Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *Annual Report on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment*

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21 *English Language Learners in Public Schools*, National Center for Education Statistics, 2017
Standardized Test Scores

For the past 10 years, 10th grade students in the state of Ohio have been required to pass the Ohio Graduation Test (OGT) to graduate from high school. The Class of 2017 was the last to have this requirement. Hispanic and African American students were less likely to test proficient than other racial and ethnic groups. Ohio’s Hispanic students typically tested 9.6 percent lower than the average student in Reading; 11.4 percent lower in Mathematics; 9.1 percent lower in Writing; 1.3 percent lower in Science; and 11.4 percent lower in Social Studies.

Similar achievement gaps based on ethnicity can be observed from scores yielded by the Ohio Achievement Assessments (OAAs), which are administered to Ohio students in grades three through eight each year, and include the sections of Reading, Mathematics, Writing, Science, and Social Studies. The percentage of Hispanic students at or above the proficient standard in 2014 was approximately 10 percent less than the average across subjects and grade levels.

Graduation Rates

The Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) is an indicator used by the National Center for Education Statistics to examine the percentage of public high school students who graduate on time. During the 2014-2015 school year, the national ACGR reached an all-time high of 83 percent, meaning that 83 percent of high school students graduated with a regular high school diploma four years after entering the ninth grade. Among Hispanic students, the rate was 78 percent, compared to 90 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander students, 88 percent of white students, 75 percent of African American students, and 72 percent of American Indian/Alaskan Native students.

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23 Ohio Graduation Tests Preliminary Results – March 2015 Test Administration. Ohio Department of Education. 2015.
24 Ibid. Ohio Graduation Tests Preliminary Results – March 2015 Test Administration.
The ACGRs for Hispanic students varied greatly across states. In New York, only 66 percent of Hispanic students graduated high school on time, whereas 87 percent of Hispanic students did so in Texas. In fact, in the states of Arkansas, Missouri, Tennessee, and Texas, the ACGRs for Hispanic students were higher than the overall national rate. In the state of Ohio, the overall ACGR was 81 percent, with Hispanic students averaging a 70 percent ACGR. Students who were economically disadvantaged or Limited English Proficient fared even worse, with ACGRs of 69 percent and 50 percent respectively.

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**English Learners in Ohio**

**Profile of Ohio’s English Learners**

On a national scale, 9.3 percent of public school students are English Learners (ELs), a term which refers to students whose native language is one other than English, and who experience challenges understanding, speaking, reading and/or writing in English that impede their ability to fully participate in a traditional classroom setting. Over 78 percent of these students are Hispanic, and over 76 percent speak Spanish at home.

During the 2014-2015 school year, 2.6 percent of Ohio public school students were ELs, a sizeable population that has nearly doubled in the past decade. In 2004, only 23,101 Ohio students (or 1.3 percent) were English Learners.

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27 Ibid. Public High School Graduation Rates.
29 Ibid. English Language Learners in Public Schools.
31 Profile of Ohio’s English Language Learners (ELL). Ohio Department of Education. 2014.
ELs, but by 2014, the EL population had grown to over 40,000\textsuperscript{32}.

These EL students come from all over the world, and many have only recently immigrated to the United States. During the 2010-2011 school year alone, Ohio public schools served nearly 12,000 students who had been enrolled in United States schools for less than three years\textsuperscript{33}. Other EL students resettle in Ohio as refugees. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services reported that nearly 14,000 refugees from countries of origin including Somalia, Burma, Vietnam, Russia, Uzbekistan, Cuba, Burundi, Ethiopia, Ukraine, Eritrea, Liberia, Iran and Sudan resettled in Ohio between 2003 and 2011\textsuperscript{34}. There has also been a secondary migration of Somali refugees to Ohio from other areas. The city of Columbus is home to an estimated 25,000-40,000 newly-arrived Somali refugees\textsuperscript{35}.

Other Ohio EL students have lived in the United States for most of their lives, but speak languages other than English in the home. While most of these students are Spanish-speakers of Mexican and Puerto Rican descent, Ohio’s EL students speak over 110 different languages, including Spanish, Somali, Arabic, Pennsylvania Dutch, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, French, Russian and Twi\textsuperscript{36}.

![Most Spoken Languages Among Ohio English Learners](source)

\textit{Source: Latino Community Report - Language Access in Ohio}

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid. \textit{Digest of Education Statistics 2015}.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid. \textit{Profile of Ohio’s English Language Learners (ELL)}.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid. \textit{Profile of Ohio’s English Language Learners (ELL)}.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid. \textit{Profile of Ohio’s English Language Learners (ELL)}.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid. \textit{Profile of Ohio’s English Language Learners (ELL)}.
III. Latino Representation in Higher Education

Profile of Latinos in Higher Education

Hispanic individuals are less likely than their white, African American, and Asian/Pacific Islander counterparts to possess bachelor’s, master’s, doctorate, and other professional degrees.37

Level of Education 18 and Over, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>African-American</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total in U.S. (Thousands)</td>
<td>157,151</td>
<td>28,369</td>
<td>37,509</td>
<td>13,723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>46,241</td>
<td>9,741</td>
<td>11,529</td>
<td>2,516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate’s Degree</td>
<td>15,957</td>
<td>2,628</td>
<td>2,565</td>
<td>850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>34,072</td>
<td>3,742</td>
<td>3,611</td>
<td>4,247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>13,904</td>
<td>1,611</td>
<td>1,099</td>
<td>1,806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate/Professional Degree</td>
<td>5,254</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>857</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Digest of Education Statistics

In 2015, only 16.4 percent of Hispanic persons aged 25-29 possessed a bachelor’s degree, as compared to 43.0 percent of whites, 21.3 percent of African Americans, and 62.8 percent of Asian/Pacific Islanders. Similarly, only 3.2 percent of Hispanics possessed a master’s degree, while 10.1 percent of whites, 5.0 percent of African Americans, and 21.6 percent of Asian/Pacific Islanders had obtained such a degree.38

Additionally, Hispanic enrollment and achievement in higher education is increasing at a slightly slower rate than students of other ethnicities. Since 1995, the

rate of individuals over 25 who have obtained a bachelor’s degree has increased from 23.0 to 32.5 percent. In comparison, the rate of all Hispanics over 25 in possession of a Bachelor’s degree has increased from 9.3 to 15.5 percent. In comparison, the rate of all Hispanics over 25 in possession of a Bachelor’s degree has increased from 9.3 to 15.5 percent. In comparison, the rate of all Hispanics over 25 in possession of a Bachelor’s degree has increased from 9.3 to 15.5 percent. In comparison, the rate of all Hispanics over 25 in possession of a Bachelor’s degree has increased from 9.3 to 15.5 percent. In comparison, the rate of all Hispanics over 25 in possession of a Bachelor’s degree has increased from 9.3 to 15.5 percent.

**Ohioans Enrolled in Postsecondary Institutions**

![Pie chart showing enrollment by ethnicity](source)

**Ohio Latino Enrollment in Postsecondary Institutions**

In 2014, 680,238 Ohioans were enrolled in degree-granting postsecondary institutions. The vast majority (503,557) of these students were white, while 22,903 (or 3.5 percent) were Hispanic. The Ohio Department of Education also reported that 32,600 non-resident aliens were enrolled in Ohio degree-granting postsecondary institutions. Compared to national rates, Hispanic Ohioans are more likely to possess a bachelor’s degree than Hispanics living in other states. In 2014, 19.7 percent of Hispanic Ohioans over 25 had obtained a Bachelor’s degree, as compared to 27.4 percent of Whites, 16.2 percent of African Americans, and 63 percent of Asians.

**Geographic Distribution of Latino Students**

At the university level, many Latino students are concentrated in Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), defined in Title V of the Higher Education Act as “not-for-profit institutions of higher learning with a full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate student enrollment that is at least 25 percent Hispanic.” Of the 276 Hispanic Serving Institutions recognized by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, 175

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41 Ibid. *Digest of Education Statistics 2015.*
are in California, Texas, and Puerto Rico. Very few are in the Midwest, and there are none in Ohio. Nonetheless, Ohio’s universities are home to thousands of Hispanic students. The Ohio State University is the largest university in Ohio and predictably enrolls the largest number of Latino students, followed by University of Cincinnati, University of Toledo, Kent State University, and Ohio University.

### Ohio Four-Year University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Number of Latino Students, 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Ohio State University (Main Campus)</td>
<td>2,049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Cincinnati (Main Campus)</td>
<td>985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Toledo</td>
<td>836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent State University (Main Campus)</td>
<td>814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio University (Main Campus)</td>
<td>754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland State University</td>
<td>731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowling Green State University</td>
<td>642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami University (Main Campus)</td>
<td>609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Akron (Main Campus)</td>
<td>554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wright State University (Main Campus)</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Wright State University - Office of Latino Affairs

Among Ohio’s two-year colleges, Cuyahoga Community College has the highest Latino enrollment, followed by Columbus State Community College, Owens Community College, Lorain County Community College, and Sinclair Community College.

### Ohio Two-Year Colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Number of Latino Students, 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cuyahoga Community College</td>
<td>1,329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus State Community College</td>
<td>1,030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owens Community College</td>
<td>882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorain County Community College</td>
<td>640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinclair Community College</td>
<td>521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakeland Community College</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terra State Community College</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest State Community College</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati State Technical and Community College</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stark State College</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Wright State University - Office of Latino Affairs

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43 [HACU Member Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities. Retrieved 22 Nov. 2017.](#)
**Latino Academic Performance**

**ACT/SAT Scores**

As with other standardized tests, Latinos score lower than their white and Asian/Pacific Islander counterparts on college readiness assessments like the SAT and ACT\(^\text{46}\). In 2015, college-bound high school seniors received average scores of 495 on Critical Reading, 511 on Mathematics, and 484 on Writing sections of the SAT. Comparatively, Hispanic students averaged a 451 on Critical Reading, a 454 on Mathematics, and a 439 on Writing. The ACT, a more commonly utilized test at Ohio’s universities and colleges, yielded similar results. While the 2015 national average for the ACT was a score of 21.0, Hispanic students averaged a score of 18.9, white students averaged a score of 22.4, African American students averaged a score of 17.1, and Asian students averaged a score of 23.9\(^\text{47}\).

**Fields of Study**

Hispanic undergraduate students most often pursue degrees in the fields of Business/Management, Education, and Social Science/History\(^\text{48}\). While white and African American students have the same preferred fields of study as Hispanic students, Asian/Pacific Islander students most commonly study Engineering and Natural Sciences in addition to Business/Management. Approximately 37 percent of all Hispanic, white, and African American students pursue degrees in STEM fields, compared to 60 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander students\(^\text{49}\).

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\(^{46}\) Ibid. *Digest of Education Statistics 2015.*

\(^{47}\) Ibid. *Digest of Education Statistics 2015.*

\(^{48}\) Ibid. *Digest of Education Statistics 2015.*

\(^{49}\) Ibid. *Digest of Education Statistics 2015.*
Barriers to Higher Education

Tuition

Perhaps the most salient barrier encountered by Latinos in pursuit of higher education is the rising cost of attendance. While financial aid is available, it is not always accessible. In fact, over 60 percent of respondents in a recent study conducted by UnidosUS found that simply understanding the process was the most challenging part of obtaining financial aid. Researching and securing loans and grants is a feat that is especially difficult for first-generation students whose parents are unfamiliar with the process. In addition to the tuition and fees required by the university, other costs such as books, food, housing, and travel home can prevent Latinos from attending postsecondary institutions.

Social Stressors

Another barrier identified by students, parents, and educators stems from the lack of social support that many Hispanic students experience both at home and on campus. Such challenges manifest early in the application process. When asked what or whom was the best source of information during the college search, the majority (43 percent) of students polled in the study answered that friends and family provided them with the most valuable information. While many Hispanic parents purport support and encouragement as their children pursue higher education, they are often unable to guide their children through the logistics of the application process due to their own lack of postsecondary education. Participating students divulged that family considerations were as influential on their decision as factors such as cost and quality of the institution, illustrating how an apprehensive or unsupportive parent could serve as a barrier.

Other social stressors include the feelings of isolation and exclusion commonly experienced by Latino postsecondary students. Many students struggle to socially integrate while simultaneously staying connected to their own culture, and some even experience discrimination and racial stereotyping that provides yet another barrier to developing a sense of belonging on campus. Research shows that second-generation Latino students are more likely to perceive their university’s racial/ethnic climate as hostile than first- or third-generation students, and are consequently less likely to develop a sense of belonging.

Lack of Preparedness

As discussed in prior sections, many Latino students are struggling academically at virtually every educational milestone. For this reason, insufficient preparation is a significant barrier to Latino students’ access to and achievement in higher education. As of 2012, nearly two in five Latino postsecondary students were required to take remedial courses due to insufficient academic preparedness.

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50 Getting In, Staying In – Community Perspectives on the Barriers to Latino Postsecondary Education. National Council of La Raza. 11 July 2015.
51 Ibid. Getting In, Staying In – Community Perspectives on the Barriers to Latino Postsecondary Education.
Fortunately, the number of students in need of remedial coursework has decreased in recent years, dropping from 37 percent to 32 percent between 2014 and 2015. This is due in large part to the implementation of the Remediation Free Standards, which went into effect in 2013 and asked Ohio’s postsecondary institutes to establish uniform standards that students must meet to be considered ready for entrance to an Ohio college or university.

**Immigration Status**

The vast majority of Hispanic students in Ohio are living in the United States legally. An estimated 98,000 undocumented immigrants reside in Ohio, which equates to less than 1 percent of the state’s population. While limited data exists on undocumented students, it can be inferred that they comprise but a small fraction of Hispanic students, as research shows that over 75 percent of undocumented immigrants fall between the ages of 25 and 64.

In the United States, educational agencies are required to provide all children with a free K-12 public education. The Supreme Court’s 1982 ruling in Plyer v. Doe clarified that a state may not deny access to public education on the basis of race, national origin, or legal status. Furthermore, school districts may not request or use information from students and their families to deny access to education. Districts cannot deny education to students who do not provide or possess a birth certificate or social security number, nor can they deny education to students who have records indicating a foreign place of birth. These protections do not, however, extend to postsecondary students.

To bridge this gap, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) was introduced in 2012 by the Obama Administration to provide eligible immigrant youth with temporary deferred action from deportation for renewable periods of two years. DACA has helped nearly 800,000 young immigrants receive work authorization and pursue higher education. In the state of Ohio alone, over 4,442 applicants have been granted deferred action since the program was established.
On September 5th, 2017, under the Trump administration, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) initiated the phase out of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. Those who currently have DACA will retain coverage until it expires, and the United States Custom and Immigration Services (USCIS) will review applications submitted on or before September 5th, 2017, and renewal requests submitted on or before October 5th, 2017 from applicants whose DACA expires between September 5th, 2017 and March 5th, 2018. In most other cases, the DACA process is no longer available. The termination of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals is anticipated to have adverse effects on the Ohio Latino community, as the vast majority of DACA recipients are Latinos. These young immigrants make immense economic contributions to Ohio, and if DACA workers are removed, the state of Ohio will experience an estimated annual GDP loss of $251,609,158.

Even more significant will be the loss of access to educational and professional opportunities that will occur among young, undocumented Latinos. Students like Manny Bartsch, who graduated at the top of his class at Heidelberg University in Tiffin, Ohio, understand that losing DACA will mean losing the ability to contribute to society and provide for their families.

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63 Ibid. Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals 2017 Announcement.
“Losing DACA would mean losing the tools I have to live life. Instead of being a contributing member of society, I would return to living in limbo. With no way to progress in life, I would become unable to provide for my wife. It would make everyday life a struggle, and I would constantly have to depend on other people. The biggest thing that would be the hardest pill to swallow would be not taking care of my wife.” - Manny Bartsch

The state of Ohio has various systems in place to make higher education more accessible to DACA recipients. In July of 2013, the Ohio Board of Regents declared that DACA recipients who meet all other criteria for residency under Ohio Law qualify for in-state tuition.

The Ohio Latino Affairs Commission recently signed a formal resolution urging Congress to act on matters regarding DACA. The resolution, which was sent to Ohio’s Congressional delegation, underscores the educational and professional opportunities made accessible by DACA and the adverse effects of the termination of DACA. The Latino Affairs Commission maintains a directory of legal resources and other pertinent information on the DACA rescission that can be found at ochla.ohio.gov.

Increasing Latino Participation in Higher Education

Economic Impact

Increasing Latino participation in higher education would have a substantial impact on the state's economy. The Alliance for Excellent Education deduced that if just half of Ohio’s 2010 dropouts had graduated, they would have generated $450 million in increased home sales, $20 million in increased annual auto sales, 1,400 new jobs, $236 million increase in the gross state product, and $18 million in increased annual state tax revenue.

Similarly, continuing to increase the number of Ohio high school graduates that are adequately prepared for postsecondary school would save the state the millions that it spends each year on remedial courses.

Best Practices

Experts have suggested practices that postsecondary institutions and community organizations could implement to address the barriers preventing Latinos from accessing postsecondary education. The first such practice is to develop culturally competent methods of distributing information and resources so that parents and other community members can better understand the admissions process. This would allow them to more effectively guide and support Latino youth as they apply to colleges and universities. Similarly, financial aid should be made more accessible to Latinos by increasing the output of comprehensive information on relevant grants and loans. This information should be provided to parents well in advance, and available in Spanish.

68 Ibid. Education and the Economy: Boosting Ohio’s Economy by Improving High School Graduation Rates.
69 Ibid. Getting In, Staying In – Community Perspectives on the Barriers to Latino Postsecondary Education.
Reforms to remedial education can increase Latino academic preparedness, which would in turn reduce the financial and emotional costs of falling behind\textsuperscript{70}. Similarly, colleges and universities should assure that special support systems exist for first- and second-generation students. These systems can be academic or social, but should address the challenges of being a racial or ethnic minority student. Mentorship from Latino graduates could be an effective tool in assuring support systems for Latino youth.

\textsuperscript{70} Ibid. \textit{Getting In, Staying In – Community Perspectives on the Barriers to Latino Postsecondary Education}
IV. Ensuring a Culturally Responsive Approach in the Classroom

Profile of Educators

As discussed previously, the Latino population is the largest ethnic group in the country at over 54 million (or 17 percent of the population)\(^{71}\). Despite the fact that they account for a quarter of all U.S. public school students, Latinos make up just 7 percent of the nation’s teachers\(^{72}\). African American teachers account for the same percentage, and white Americans, while comprising less than half of public school students, represent 83 percent of teachers\(^{73}\). This implies that U.S. students are over three times more likely to be Latino than their instructors.

In Ohio, this discrepancy is even more apparent. **93 percent of Ohio’s teachers are white, 4 percent are African American, and only 0.7 percent are Latino**\(^{74}\). According to these figures, there are eight Latino students in Ohio public schools for every Latino teacher\(^{75}\).

![ ohio primary and secondary teachers, 2015 ]

Source: The Columbus Dispatch

On a national level, racial and ethnic minority teachers are more likely to work in urban districts, and Ohio is no exception. Yet in Franklin County, home to the second most Latino-populated school district in the state, schools such as Upper Arlington and Groveport Madison are home to teaching staffs that are


\(^{72}\) Ibid. White Paper: Improving Diverse and Inclusive Teacher Pipelines with a Focus on Latinas/Latinos/Hispanics.

\(^{73}\) Ibid. White Paper: Improving Diverse and Inclusive Teacher Pipelines with a Focus on Latinas/Latinos/Hispanics.

\(^{74}\) Ibid. Ohio students are far more diverse than their teachers.

\(^{75}\) Ibid. Ohio students are far more diverse than their teachers.
over 98 percent white\textsuperscript{76}. In comparison, racial/ethnic minority students comprise 14.1 percent of Upper Arlington students, and over half of all students at Groveport Madison\textsuperscript{77}.

\section*{Standards and Preparation}

The passage of Ohio Senate Bill 2 in 2004 mandated the creation of the Educator Standards Board to inform education policy and create standards to be met by all Ohio teachers and principals\textsuperscript{78}. These standards include guidance on exercising cultural humility in the classroom.

\subsection*{Ohio Standards for Teachers}

Section 1.4 of The Standards for Ohio Educators states that teachers must “model respect for students’ diverse cultures, language skills and experiences”, and lists eight ways in which teachers should do so\textsuperscript{79}:

\begin{itemize}
\item[1.] Teachers display knowledge of the interests or cultural heritage of groups of students and recognize the value of this knowledge.
\item[2.] Teachers set clear rules to respect individuals and individual differences and avoid the use of bias, stereotypes and generalizations in their classrooms.
\item[3.] Teachers build relationships with students by establishing and maintaining rapport and valuing each student as an individual.
\item[4.] Teachers respect and value the native languages and dialects of their students and use students’ current language skills to achieve content-area learning goals.
\item[5.] Teachers analyze their own cultural perspectives and biases and develop strategies to diminish the impact of those biases.
\item[6.] Teachers implement instructional strategies that support the learning of English as a second language and the use of standard English in speaking and writing in the classroom.
\item[7.] Teachers foster a learning community in which individual differences and perspectives are respected.
\item[8.] Teachers challenge disrespectful attitudes by modeling behavior for others and working to ensure that all students are recognized and valued.
\end{itemize}

Source: The Ohio Department of Education

\textsuperscript{76} Ibid. Ohio students are far more diverse than their teachers.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid. Ohio students are far more diverse than their teachers.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid. Ohio Standards for Principals.
**Ohio Standards for Principals**

Similarly, section 5.4 declares that Ohio principals must “establish expectations for the use of culturally responsive practices that acknowledge and value diversity”, and gives four examples as to how:

1. Principals model appreciation and respect for the cultures of the school and community to create an environment that supports high achievement levels for all students.
2. Principals support cooperation by using strategies to remedy instances of intolerance of individuals and groups.
3. Principals use proactive strategies to promote tolerance and address incidents of intolerance to create an environment that supports high achievement levels for all students.
4. Principals, in collaboration with staff, students and parents, integrate culturally responsive practices into the day-to-day school operations to support high achievement levels for all students.

*Source: The Ohio Department of Education*

**Teacher Preparation Programs**

Before meeting the above standards, aspiring Ohio educators must receive a baccalaureate degree (or higher) from an approved educator preparation program, as well as pass the requisite Ohio Assessments for Educators. Of the nearly 15,000 students enrolled in Ohio’s 13 public and 38 private approved teacher preparation programs, less than 500 were Latinos during the 2013-2014 academic year.

**Hispanic Enrollment in Teacher Preparation Programs by State, 2014**

*Source: U.S. Department of Education*

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80 Ibid. *Ohio Standards for Principals.*


Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

The process of engaging with students in a way that is consistent with and considerate of their cultural identities is known as culturally relevant pedagogy. This approach to teaching encourages educators to draw from their knowledge about diverse cultures and their experiences working with diverse students to make learning more relevant and inclusive.

Educator and researcher Geneva Gay points to five key characteristics of a culturally responsive teacher. First, they acknowledge the legitimacy of their students’ heritages, as well as the ways in which these heritages can affect their style of learning and attitude towards subject matter. Next, they build bridges between their students’ home and school environments, as well as between academic concepts and their lived experiences. Culturally responsive educators use a variety of teaching strategies in order to accommodate multiple learning styles. They teach students to know and appreciate their own heritage and, finally, they educate other students about diversity by incorporating multicultural materials into coursework.

Nearly two decades after Gay’s publication, researchers and educators are still working to determine the best practices for teaching ethnically diverse students. One study conducted specifically on Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) suggested that requiring all students to take an ethnic studies course is an effective way to serving Latino students through curricula. The importance of mainstreaming and maintaining culturally-responsive support services was also emphasized. While the abovementioned practices have engaged and empowered countless students in recent decades, the vast majority of relevant literature is focused on reaching African American students, and research regarding how to best teach Latino youth is lacking.

Bilingual Education

Few education issues have proven more controversial over the years than how to best teach English Learner (EL) students. While proponents contend that bilingual education contributes to a student’s academic growth as well as the acquisition of a second language, others feel that it impedes the integration process.

While legislation such as the No Child Left Behind Act and the Every Student Succeeds Act imply that mastery of the English language should be the focus of bilingual education strategies, this has not always been the case. In fact, in 1839, Ohio became the first state to formally authorize bilingual teaching in U.S. public schools. During this time, the nation was home to a growing population of...

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84 Ibid. Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research and Practice.
85 Ibid. Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research and Practice.
86 Ibid. Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research and Practice.
87 Garcia, G., Otgonjargal, O. Culturally relevant practices that “serve” students at a Hispanic Serving Institution. Innovative Higher Education. 2015.
89 McCabe, Mike. First in the Midwest: Almost 180 years ago, Ohio opened the door to bilingual education. CSG Midwest. April 2016
90 Ibid. First in the Midwest: Almost 180 years ago, Ohio opened the door to bilingual education.
German immigrants, and by the end of the 19th century, a dozen more states were implementing bilingual education in their schools.

Today, Ohio is home to a variety of bilingual education programs, including Columbus Bilingual Academy and SMART Bilingual Academies located in Dayton and Toledo. Nonetheless, few teachers elect to pursue a career as a bilingual educator. Of the more than 7,000 educators that were licensed in Ohio in 2012, only 12 graduated with the qualifications necessary to teach English as a second language. This is compared to the thousands of teachers that chose to specialize in Math, Science, Social Studies, and Language Arts, and the hundreds who focused on Physical Education, Career Technical Education, Foreign Languages, and the Arts. Even fewer choose to specialize in bilingual, multilingual, or multicultural education, with less than 0.1% of 2011 Ohio graduates doing so. This has adverse implications for the more than 40,000 EL students that attend Ohio’s public schools.

**Attracting Latinos to the Teaching Profession**

*Importance of Latino Representation in the Classroom*

Numerous studies have revealed that “race matching” between teachers and students is linked to favorable academic and social outcomes, such as reduced rates of absenteeism and suspension. One reason for this may be that on average, teachers have lower expectations for Latino and African American students than their white and Asian American peers. Research shows that when teachers underestimate their minority students, these children often begin to doubt their abilities as well.

In contrast, minority teachers are able to use their own knowledge about language and culture as well as their experiences as people of color to engage and empower minority youth. They tend to expect more from minority students, and are often more understanding of cultural differences that may impact a child’s education. While the task of reducing racial and ethnic disparities within the education system should not fall solely to teachers of color, increasing diversity among teachers is an important step towards achieving education equality.

*Recruitment and Retention*

Many experts have provided recommendations for diversifying the teacher workforce on a state level. Some prioritize affordability, and recommend strategies such as providing more scholarships for minority students in pursuit of degrees in education. Others suggest creating more avenues through which Latinos can enter the teaching profession. Perhaps the most important and effective way of...

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92 Ibid. *2013 Teacher Supply and Demand in Ohio.*
93 Ibid. *2013 Teacher Supply and Demand in Ohio.*
94 Ibid. *2013 Teacher Supply and Demand in Ohio.*
95 Ibid. *White Paper: Improving Diverse and Inclusive Teacher Pipelines with a Focus on Latinas/Latinos/Hispanics.*
97 Ibid. The Importance of Minority Teachers: Student Perceptions of Minority Versus White Teachers.
98 Ibid. The Importance of Minority Teachers: Student Perceptions of Minority Versus White Teachers.
100 Ibid. *White Paper: Improving Diverse and Inclusive Teacher Pipelines with a Focus on Latinas/Latinos/Hispanics.*
increasing the number of Latinos that pursue careers as educators is removing the barriers to education that they face along the way. These barriers range from the implicit biases that lead teachers to expect less from Latino youth to the federal and state laws that make it difficult for some Latino graduates to pursue a higher education.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, teacher retention rates are higher among white teachers than for African American and Hispanic teachers\(^{101}\). In 2013, minority teachers experienced an annual turnover rate that was 4 percent higher than that experienced by their white co-workers\(^{102}\). One reason for this may be that minority teachers are more likely to teach in urban and/or high-poverty schools, which have higher turnover rates due to the unique challenges that accompany positions at such institutions. By increasing oversight of teacher preparation programs, introducing diversity and offering opportunities for professional development, schools can ensure that teachers enter the classroom with all the tools they need to be successful. They should also provide an inclusive work environment with continual efforts to increase diversity.

\(^{101}\) Ibid. \textit{White Paper: Improving Diverse and Inclusive Teacher Pipelines with a Focus on Latinas/Latinos/Hispanics}

\(^{102}\) Ibid. \textit{Ohio students are far more diverse than their teachers}. 
V. Education Policy Initiatives

In 2015, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), a bipartisan measure that replaced the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and shifts much of the decision-making power back to states and local school districts\(^\text{103}\). ESSA provisions require that schools develop and implement Local Improvement Plans that include meaningful input from parents and community members\(^\text{104}\). OCHLA recently partnered with the Ohio Standard Coalition, Fordham B. Institute, and UnidosUS to host a workshop for community leaders on how to engage parents in ESSA. Over 80 Latino community leaders from across the state attended the training, which discussed ways to ensure that Latinos are heard, informed and involved in crafting local plans to meet the needs of students under ESSA.

At the state level, legislators are also attempting to make significant modifications to education policy. Senate Bill 216 is a hotly debated initiative under consideration that would make major changes related to school assessments, the teacher evaluation system and the reporting of student performance data on the state report card. Main provisions of the legislation would eliminate the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, and increase from ten to 30 the minimum number of students (“N”-size”) in a group for student performance data to be reported. The latter provision would be especially impactful on English Learners, as their performance would not be reported as a cohort if the school has fewer than 30 students who are English Learners.

House Bill 176 is under consideration in the Ohio House and would ban standards derived from Common Core, eliminate teacher and principal evaluation systems as well as graduation requirements\(^\text{105}\). Similarly, House Bill 181 would prohibit the use of Common Core standards, and would require new state elementary and high school achievement assessments to be administered beginning in the 2018-2019 school year\(^\text{106}\). Finally, House Bill 235, which passed in the House and is currently under consideration in the Senate, would prohibit the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) from implementing its ESSA state plan if the General Assembly has adopted a concurrent resolution disapproving the plan. The ODE would not be permitted to change any policies or procedures regarding the state’s implementation of ESSA unless the General Assembly has adopted a concurrent resolution approving the proposed change\(^\text{107}\).

The Ohio Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs (OCHLA) is proud to support initiatives that seek to improve educational outcomes for Latino students, while also equipping educators with the cultural sensitivity to effectively engage Latino students and their families. The Commission works closely with the Ohio Department of Education, Ohio Department of Higher Education, and Latino-serving organizations across Ohio to improve communication and understanding of Ohio’s educational standards.

The annual Latino Education Summit is hosted by OCHLA and convenes educators, administrators, non-profit leaders, parents and policymakers to discuss prevailing issues regarding the education of students in Ohio.

104 Ibid. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).
Ohio’s Hispanic students. The conference features workshops where selected participants share “best practices” for use in the classroom. The Ohio Department of Education has sponsored the event since its inception, and previous summit hosts include The University of Cincinnati, The University of Toledo, The University of Akron, Wright State University and The Ohio State University. Over 50 “best practices” have been shared over the past five years, featuring presentations like “Changing a Generation – Bridging the Gap for Latino Students”, “Applying Language Learning Modalities, Domains and Standards in the Diverse Classroom”, “¿Qué ESSA? What Does ESSA Mean for English Language Learners in Ohio?” and several more. In 2018, the Latino Education Summit will focus on teacher recruitment in the Latino community, as well as ensuring that teacher preparation programs in Ohio colleges and universities are inclusive of the Latino perspective as related to culturally responsive pedagogy.

For the second year in a row, OCHLA has partnered with The University of Cincinnati to host the Latino Student Summit. Unlike the Latino Education Summit, the Student Summit is focused on instruction for Latino students across Ohio. The event provides a forum to connect, empower and build community while enhancing the Latino student leadership experience in Ohio. The conference hosts nearly 200 high school and college students, and has featured a workshop on advocacy presented by OCHLA.

The Commission has also offered an educational workshop focused on providing tangible tips for educators to use in the classroom. In 2016, OCHLA partnered with the Franklin County Education Service Center (ESC) to offer a workshop for area teachers titled “Educational Considerations for Students with Undocumented Immigration Status”. The workshop provided a basic overview of undocumented children, unaccompanied minors, and the educational rights of all students to a free, public education, as well as how to support these students and their families. The workshop was facilitated by professors at The Ohio State University as well as the Stark County ESC, and convened over 60 teachers from Central Ohio school districts.
VI. Conclusion

As Hispanic enrollment in Ohio schools continues to increase, so does the importance of addressing the significant barriers and opportunities related to academic achievement. Educators, families, and community and state leaders alike must purport the support and guidance needed to ensure that Latino students succeed from the day they enter the Kindergarten classroom until the moment they walk across the stage to receive their diploma.

By improving communication with Latino parents, administrators can help them to better understand the education system, and more effectively guide their children through primary, secondary, and post-secondary school. Similarly, they should develop and promote programming that offers social and academic support to Latino students to increase preparedness and reduce feelings of isolation and exclusion. Finally, administrators should work to augment the accessibility of financial aid to Latino students as they apply to colleges and universities.

Educators can reduce achievement disparities by implementing culturally responsive teaching practices in the classroom. Incentives should be created to encourage teachers to specialize in bilingual, multilingual, or multicultural education, and special attention should be given to the recruitment and retention of Latino teachers.

The Ohio Latino Affairs Commission works to break down barriers to academic success for Latinos through our partnerships, initiatives and workshops focused on reducing educational disparities. We stand ready to assist the State of Ohio in improving educational outcomes for Latinos, and are committed to equipping state leaders with key information on Ohio’s Hispanic communities. Latino Community Reports are part of the Commission’s work to fulfill its statutory mandate to advise Ohio’s government on issues affecting their Hispanic constituents.
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