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Organizing Schools for Greater Achievement of Latino Students

By Leonard A. Valverde, Professor, Educational Leadership, Arizona State University

The following is an excerpt from an article under consideration for the April, 2001 issue of the NASSP Bulletin.

During the last decade of the 20th Century, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that the fastest growing and youngest population in North America was Latino. Furthermore, the Census Bureau projected that by the year 2030, if not sooner, Latinos would be the largest ethnic population, outnumbering African Americans. Contrary to common belief, Hispanics are more heavily concentrated in urban settings than rural communities. For example, a significant percent of Hispanics are found in Los Angeles and San Francisco, CA; San Antonio and Houston, TX; Chicago, IL; New York City; and Miami, FL. Latinos are also the youngest population and are half or the majority of the student enrollment in many school districts across the country, such as San Jose and San Diego, CA; Phoenix and Tucson, AZ; Albuquerque, NM; El Paso, TX; and Denver, CO.

Concurrent with above positive demographic data, the educational experience of Latinos has been historically negative. Latino youth have the highest dropout rates, among the lowest achievement scores, and low college enrollment rates. To illustrate the size of the achievement gap between Hispanics and White students, 12th grade Latino students are reading at the 8th grade level (NAEP). Only 16 percent of 8th grade Hispanics are proficient in reading versus 45 percent of White students. (NAEP). A report issued in 2000 by the National Council of the Raza found that the Latino drop out rate was 30 percent, and a 1999 National Center for Educational Statistics report indicated a 44 percent Latino dropout rate compared to only 7.7 percent for White students.

The focus of this article is to provide two kinds of information: (1) possible causes that produce the low and underachievement of Latino students and (2) actions that school leaders (primarily building principals) can take to increase the achievement of Hispanic students. The potential solutions proposed herein come from two types of

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sources: ideas reported in the educational literature and interviews with successful principals in Phoenix who have raised achievement scores of Latinos in their secondary schools, i.e., middle and high schools.

General Causes and Specific Factors for Latinos

Examining the national problem of the disparity in school performance tied to race and ethnicity, typically referred to as the achievement gap, reveals that researchers and educators do not know for certain what causes the difference in learning. However, the limited number of studies conducted do show the following factors as likely to contribute to the creation of the achievement gap. Students of color who score lower than their white counterparts attend schools that have: (1) less-qualified teachers, (2) fewer expended resources per student, (3) personnel that have a lower expectation of student achievement, (4) more and harsher

discipline [a possible reflection of racial stereotyping], (5) a mismatch between school culture and home culture, and (6) high mobility rate of students and teachers. Lastly, low achieving schools are located in communities with high poverty rates or low-income families. A College Board study (1990) found that Hispanic children are two times more likely than White and Asian children to be raised in low-income families. Two characteristics highly associated with these schools are symptoms of the problem (not causes); however, they contribute to low achievement. They are too few Advanced Placement (AP) courses and too much tracking into “blue-collar” jobs instead of a college preparation track. Even though 50 percent of the California student population is Latino, only 13 percent of Latinos are in AP courses. (*Los Angeles Times*, 1999)

Possible Solutions

Just as there is no certainty as to what causes the achievement gap, no one knows what the formula is to eliminate the achievement gap for all students, let alone Latino youngsters. However, logic tells us that putting in place some elements will close the gap for most students of color, and experience tells us that taking some actions show promise of increasing learning by Hispanic students. Furthermore, the proposed intervening strategies are divided into two categories: psychological and behavioral.

Since the 1960s when President Johnson focused the nation’s attention on education via the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the various associated titles (Title I and Title VII, Bilingual education), much has been discovered and many lessons

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From the Executive Director



Leonard A. Valverde

With this issue of the HBLI newsletter, we initiate a new format—a format that will have a look of journalism. Each issue will be thematic and the themes will feature significant issues impacting the educational experience of Latinos. Our new style of newsletter will emphasize both historical as well as current perspectives. Also, it will allow for sharing current data and knowledge.

As you will read, this issue is devoted to what may be the most plaguing and long lasting problem, if not the core problem, in Hispanic education: the achievement gap. This issue covers what can and should be done to close the achievement gap, so that Latino students K-12 can have a greater opportunity to enroll in colleges and universities as well as making it possible for them to enter the world of work at a higher level.

The rest of the newsletter looks at the role the Federal Government can play in Hispanic education and examines what to expect in the next four years from President-elect Bush.

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learned as to what improves the education of African American and Latino students. Probably the most important is teacher expectation of student learning. Without a strong belief by teachers that students of color want and can learn, then students will not learn! This is a self-fulfilling prophecy. The lesson learned has been reduced to a commonly expressed phrase, “all children can learn.” After principals ingrain this belief in the minds of teachers, then they must instill a corollary to this axiom, “*We can teach any student to learn.*”

These positive beliefs should be stressed and incorporated into the school’s mission statement and the job descriptions of school personnel. With a high expectation mindset, school personnel will no longer be complacent with low achievement scores or accept excuses or blame society for low results. More importantly, schools will add AP courses, (recall the movie of a true story—*Stand and Deliver*—of Garfield High School in East Los Angeles) and enrichment courses will not be dumbed down.

Behavior-wise, a number of concrete actions can and should be taken. From a curriculum perspective, literacy skills need to be emphasized, such as reading, writing, and speaking. Also, because of the high mobility rate, the curriculum must be aligned across the district (schools) and within the schools (grades). Qualified teachers have to be hired. If not, then teacher in-service training must be systematically organized and provided on a routine and on-going basis. The staff development training will need to have a strong student/home culture component so teachers are more than sympathetic and sensitive to a different culture, but appreciative and willing to structure the school experience to be compatible with students, i.e., the

school will be a welcoming experience, not a foreign and alienating one. Lastly, in keeping with the psychological dimension of raising teacher expectation, graduate requirements should be raised. However, to facilitate passage of higher standards, schools should implement diagnostic testing in order for teachers to have useful information about their students’ progress or problem of lack of learning certain concepts.

What Can Principals Do to Increase Student Learning?

The effort of principals to close the achievement gap can be clustered into four areas: size, time, parental participation, and study skills.

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With regard to size, repeated studies tell us that size matters, that the smaller the number of students per teacher the better. Thus principals of large high schools should restructure their schools to make them smaller, that is, schools within schools. Commensurate with smaller school arrangement, class sizes should be reduced. Smaller classes can be accomplished not just by hiring more teachers, but by adding one class period per teacher (with commensurate pay) or, better yet, by a differentiated class schedule. These two actions will ensure that students will receive more personal attention from their teachers.

The utilization of time as well as increasing learning time is another major strategy that can help increase learning by students. The easiest and most fundamental action is to stress “time on task” in class for both teacher and students and reduce general school interruptions during class periods. To increase the amount of time on learning, principals can urge and plan for year round schooling and/or put in place voluntary Saturday schooling. Associated with increased time, tutorial assistance can be provided by parents or businesses after school.

The third major intervening strategy is focused on parental involvement. At the high school level

(volunteerism) in a number of school academic programs, such as after school tutorials, Saturday study sessions, or teacher’s aide.

The fourth major action by principals is centered on learning skills. In order to facilitate learning, students need to know how to be organized to learn. A fundamental competency (skill) that all learning is based on is literacy, that is, knowing how to read, write, and speak. Therefore, literacy must be emphasized across the high school curriculum. (Writing across the curriculum programs should be put into place.) Second, students should be put into formal study groups. Study cohorts has been found to be a successful learning strategy not just in college but for students of color. Parents could be asked to monitor or supervise these study groups.

What Can Principals Do for Latinos in Particular?

Principals should do all of the above mentioned actions for all students, but for Latino students in particular, some specific actions are needed. Because the language factor is pivotal to learning in schools and since a large number of Latino youth have a different language experience, e.g., typically the home language spoken is Spanish, and Latino youth English language ability ranges from non-English speaking to fluency in English, principals need to hire as many “language able” teachers as possible, Spanish speaker preferred but not limited to Spanish. Teachers able to speak a language other than English understand first hand and appreciate the difficulty limited English speaking youth have in learning subject matter. In conjunction with hiring language able teachers, principals should organize and provide educational experiences for teachers to become culturally proficient, beyond being culturally sensitive. Teachers must come to respect and celebrate other cultures.

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Principals need to turn their high schools into “full service” schools, where families get assistance with, or at least information about, city or public health services, immigration, and/or free legal counsel. Why are these types of assistance important and related to Latino youth learning? Because so many Latino communities are low income, health problems abound. Hence, when elementary-school-age children get sick, older siblings are expected to stay home and care for them while a single parent goes to work or (if a dual parent family) both parents go to work. Again because many Latino parents are Spanish speakers only, their children (typically the oldest in the family) have to accompany them to act as translators. Both of these activities take them out of school. Lastly, high schools with large Hispanic enrollment should provide assistance in finding part-time jobs for their students. By providing part-time job location, schools can keep track of such students and help to schedule a program of study and tutorial assistance to students. Such a service will help prevent the large Latino drop out rate, since so many Latino teenagers feel morally obligated to help improve the family income level by reducing the strain put on their parents who work long hours.

Lastly, it would be very helpful for motivational purposes if principals initiated a comprehensive and on-going career planning program. This means not just once a year or semester on career speaking day, but an organized program that has an identified staff (even if it is one person) who is dedicated to setting up events and scheduling guidance sessions. But it would be wise if principals would get teachers to think of themselves as counselors and get counselors to change their role of record keepers and actually provide services to students. Promising future opportunities must become a reality for Latinos!

An Interview with Dr. Kino Flores, Superintendent of the Tolleson High School District

by Kent Scribner, Executive Director of Human Resources, Tempe Elementary School District

The following is an excerpt from an interview with Dr. Kino Flores. Dr. Flores is superintendent of the Tolleson High School District and a former high school principal at Carl Hayden High School in the Phoenix Union High School District in Arizona. Over the years, the school has had a history of low scores, high drop out rates, gang activity, and serves a low-income, predominantly Latino community.

The student population in this large urban high school of over 2,000 students was more than 95 percent Latino. Dr. Flores inherited a school in despair. The high school was characterized by violence on campus (mostly fights) and within the community (mostly drug related), pervasive student apathy, and teachers exhibiting low morale and high cynicism about their school and the future of its students.

What did you view as the primary areas in which to focus your efforts upon becoming the new principal at Carl Hayden High School?

The most fundamental building block in our success was the advances we made in the areas of community building and faculty and staff empowerment. We focused on building a more positive climate for adults and students alike at the school, encouraging a culture of success, and affirming that the students who attended the high school were valued.

It seems that the school's condition was so dire that you targeted your energies on comprehensive school restructuring, not simply making few changes in specific areas.

Our restructuring efforts were significantly helped by remarkable financial support in the form of federal desegregation funding that targeted school improvement. At the foundation of the school's restructuring was a reorganization of instructional time. We worked together to establish faculty groups, a design that created common planning time during the school day that emphasized an inclusive program of “writing across the curriculum.” The content of staff development workshops and staff meetings quickly began to be directed toward analyzing assessment results in a “diagnostic or prescriptive way.” School staff identified areas of focus for tutoring and maintained their monitoring through quarterly achievement assessments throughout the school year.

How did your restructuring efforts compare to other high school's faced with similar challenges?

The school's organization took on characteristics of both elementary and postsecondary models. In an effort to recreate a smaller elementary school setting, the school-within-a-school model was implemented. Five core subject teachers, one reading specialist, and a bilingual instructional assistant served “families” of 90 to 100 students. This structure fostered more meaningful communication between students and teachers as well as a greater likelihood for teachers to establish relationships with students and their families. Conversely, the school's schedule looked much like a community college, beginning “zero-hour” classes before 7:00 A.M. and finishing

night school classes well after 8:00 P.M.

What advice would you give to a new principal faced with similar circumstances to those you encountered?

The principal must focus on instruction by steadily monitoring and providing meaningful feedback to students and teachers. I cannot stress enough the importance of leadership at the school site level. In my opinion, the most critical player to comprehensive school improvement efforts is the principal. The principal should be seen as a model for skillful communication, demonstrating compassion in dealing with the members of the school-community and having the courage to take risks, particularly in support of student learning.

What risks did you take during your tenure as principal?

I knew that despite a shortage of Latino teachers in the pipeline, I had to recruit and retain teachers who would share in the compassionate environment we were trying to establish while at the same time maintain very high standards. The Latino teacher population at our school increased from two in my first year to thirty-seven after four years. You need to know that I do not support the idea of hiring based on ethnic or racial quotas. I do enthusiastically recruit new teachers whose values, energy, respect, and sensitivity for the needs of their students were consistent with mine. And it's not just about language . . . I would prefer a teacher with a bilingual heart to a teacher who only possesses a bilingual tongue.

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Since Vice President Gore won the popular presidential vote by just over 300,000 but Governor Bush barely won the electoral college vote, it is clear that President-elect Bush does not have a mandate. Reinforcing this marginality is the fact that judicial intervention was applied. Similarly, Congress is evenly divided; for example, the Senate has 50 members from each party. Education analysts think that with this political landscape, the President-elect will need to move FIRST on passing an aggressive education package given the fact that education was the top domestic issue of the campaign and that President-elect Bush needs to strive quickly for conciliation to demonstrate he can unite faction politics.

While at this time speculation is favorable for education, there are two down sides. President-elect Bush's proposals for education [at least economically] are much smaller than Vice President Gore's. Secondly, and more importantly, Hispanic education needs were not emphasized by the Bush campaign. So there is no high expectation in the Hispanic education community that Latinos will get their fair share of assistance. But, maybe, President-elect Bush will be true to his statement that "The president of the United States is the president of every single American, of every race and every background." The following two views were provided at the 5th Annual Meeting of HBLI at Riverside, CA, on November 17, 2000.

HBLI Executive Director

MALDEF Talks about President-Elect Bush's Plans for Education

by Marisa Demeo, Regional Counsel, MALDEF, Washington, D.C.

Throughout Election 2000, Latinos were courted by both Democrats and Republicans, but neither party delved very deeply into Latino issues or policies. MALDEF wrote and sent a policy paper, *Policy Issues for the Presidential Candidates in the 2000 Presidential Campaign*, to both candidates outlining a number of important civil rights issues to the Hispanic community, including education.

Regardless of who sits in the White House, the federal government's role in education will be limited. For example, only 7 percent of the total funding for public education comes from the federal government. Nevertheless, the federal government can play a critical role in providing standards for states and local communities to follow, especially when this is tied to the receipt of federal funds.

This article outlines George W. Bush's response to the eight important questions regarding the issues in Hispanic education outlined in MALDEF's policy paper.

The Digital Divide

What are the plans to eliminate the digital divide?

As the number of households that have computers and internet access grows, so grows the gap between those who have access and those who do not. Fifty-five percent of white households in 1998 had a computer, of which 30 percent were connected to the internet. Only 25 percent of Latino households had computers and less than 13 percent had internet access. While income, geography, and education level are also fac-

tors in the digital divide, a child in a low income white household is four times as likely to have internet access as a child in a comparable Latino household.

MALDEF: MALDEF believes aggressive efforts need to be made to include everyone in the technological advancements that are changing the world. MALDEF is seeking support for initiatives that will bring more computers and access to the Internet into the schools and homes of Latino children. In addition, there needs to be a commitment to provide additional funds for programs that would increase Latino enrollment in computer science majors.

BUSH: Bush will work with Congress to establish a \$3 billion "Enhancing Education Through Technology Fund," and will free schools from federal restrictions. He will give priority to the most disadvantaged schools, require accountability measures in education technology, and provide \$80 million in matching grants to develop Community Technology Centers in high poverty areas.

High-Stakes Testing

What is the President-elect's position regarding the use of standardized tests?

Tests serve an important role in educational settings and are valuable instruments in assessing the needs of schools and students, but they are imperfect gauges that can create barriers to educational opportunity and progress. Some states and school districts have made standardized testing the sole determinant of student achievement and

progress—including graduation—with serious adverse consequences for individual students. The National Research Council's Board on Testing Assessment and testing experts agree that it is not appropriate to make standardized test results the sole determinant of a high-stakes decision.

MALDEF: MALDEF wants all students, including limited English proficient (LEP) students, to participate in assessments with tests that have been validated for that purpose and with accommodations designed for their special needs. MALDEF also wants to ensure equal opportunity to fair and accurate assessment by providing all students with schools that can provide the educational tools and resources necessary to compete and succeed on these tests. Students should only be tested on the materials and skills that they had

an opportunity to learn. Under no circumstances should a standardized test be used as the sole determinant for high-stakes decisions.

BUSH: Bush is opposed to a national test. He proposes that every state establish assessments and test annually in reading and math in grades 3-8, and he would require states to set up accountability systems that reward school success and impose consequences for school failure. Bush will ask states to participate in the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) exam in grades 4 and 8. Bush is an avid supporter of testing and seems unconcerned about the use of high-stakes tests and its effect on Latino students.

Limited English Proficient Students

What plans are there to educate the growing numbers of students



Speakers at the HBLI 5th Annual meeting. Max Nieman, Director of the Center for Social and Behavioral Science Research at UCR, is flanked by Marissa J. Demeo, Regional Counsel, MALDEF (left), and Elizabeth Hale, Vice President of the Institute for Educational Leadership (right).

entering elementary and secondary public schools whose primary language is not English?

Our educational system enters the 21st century faced with the challenge of educating an increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse student population. The majority of public schools have failed to provide an acceptable education to the over four million LEP students. Over 70 percent of these LEP students are Hispanic and speak Spanish as their first language.

MALDEF: Support for bilingual education as one tool for LEP students is critical to thousands of Spanish-speaking students; but support for dual-language programs—helping all students learn a second language—will mean a better prepared workforce for our global economy.

BUSH: Bush supports “English-Plus,” insisting on English proficiency but recognizing the invaluable richness that other languages and cultures bring to our nation of immigrants. Bush’s fundamental priority is results—whether the results are achieved from a good immersion program or a good bilingual program. Bush would support bilingual education programs and also English-Plus; however, he might give too much latitude to states to spend their money in ways that may not benefit LEP students.

School Construction

What is the federal government’s role in addressing public school overcrowding and the need for massive infrastructure repair; and what plans, if any, are there to address these pressing problems?

It has been estimated that \$332 billion is needed to repair and modernize public schools across the country. Most of this money is needed for basic improvements in the infrastructure, such as heating, plumbing, new roofs, sprinklers, and fire alarms and, to a lesser extent, for technological improvements. Many of the school districts where the majority of Latino children attend are in dire need of funding for repairs and construction. Overcrowding and the lack of adequate facilities are sending the wrong message to our children that

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Advocating for the Education of Hispanics: Creating Public and Political Will

by Elizabeth Hale, Vice President, Institute for Educational Leadership

Generally speaking, Republicans want two things: government(s) to be as small as possible, and money given to states and localities so that decisions about addressing issues and allocating resources can be made by those closer to the action.

During Campaign 2000, the Republicans proposed spending \$47 billion on education and identified the following priorities:

- 1. **Vouchers:** providing students in failing schools with \$1500 each to use for private or charter schools and/or for tutoring services.
- 2. **Preschools:** making reading the focus of Head Start
- 3. **Teachers:** providing some money for the recruitment and training of teachers
- 4. **Testing:** requiring states to administer their own reading and math tests every year and that a national test be given every two years; failure would be punished while progress would be rewarded
- 5. **Charter Schools:** doubling the number of charter schools in the next two years
- 6. **Reading:** providing funding for phonics-based reading programs
- 7. **Public Schools:** providing funding for public schools on military bases and reservations and providing tax-exempt bonds for other schools

A quick review of education support and priorities in the border states during 2000, in which three of the states have Republican Governors, underscores the fact that education is on the “front burner” in these states and enjoys tremendous bipartisan support:

- **Arizona.** Governor Jane Hull, a Republican, promoted “Education 2000” as the strategy to increase teacher salaries and reduce classroom size.
- **California.** Governor Gray Davis, a Democrat, focused on teacher training and set the bar higher for every school by holding each one accountable for the only thing that really matters: improved student achievement. He also maintained a laser-like focus on improving the gateway skill of reading.
- **New Mexico.** Governor Gary E. Johnson, a Republican, pushed an education reform initiative, “For the Children’s Sake,” to help every school-aged child succeed. He wants to dramatically improve the public schools and empower all New Mexican families with a voucher, so that they can send their children to any school.
- **Texas.** [then] Governor George W. Bush, a Republican, wanted to increase school funding, give local districts more control over their schools, hold schools accountable, support charter schools, and have all students reading by grade three.

Education will be an issue in Congress regardless of who is elected. The new Congress will deal first with two major pieces of education legislation: the reauthorization of both the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The absence of a clear majority for either the Democrats or the Republicans will make it more difficult to pass any education legislation quickly. Time will be spent debating the issues and finding common ground on

the shape and scope of the federal involvement in education.

Regardless of which party wins the election and occupies the White House, one thing is certain: there will be greater federal involvement in education. It is important to note that for the first time since the U.S. Department of Education was established in 1980, the Heritage Foundation will not call for its demise. This is an important signal about the importance of education as a national issue from a think tank that promotes conservative public policies. However, even though education will be center stage, the emphasis of federal support will shift from providing services to the poor, disabled, and needy to promoting improved test scores and teaching conditions in *all* schools.

Some of the conclusions of the recent report of the President’s Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, *Creating The Will*, focused on what the government can do to improve the education of Hispanics. These recommendations included: support states in fulfilling their responsibility to educate all of our children, deploy federal resources to provide opportunities for all children to succeed, make the educational excellence of Hispanics a national priority, and continue to implement a concerted and targeted outreach to Hispanic communities.

In keeping with the general tenets of the Republican Party, the language of Campaign 2000 suggests that a Republican President would try to figure out how the federal government could help the states improve their education systems. Those concerned about the education of Hispanics will need to advocate at both the state and federal levels in order to create the political and public will that is required to bring about needed changes.

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their education is not a priority.

MALDEF: MALDEF supports a significant federal investment in the construction and rehabilitation of our public schools.

BUSH: Bush will provide \$923 million for a Tribal School Capital Improvement Fund, and \$310 million to “Impact Aid” for schools on military facilities. Bush will leverage \$2.8 billion in bonds for general school construction and repair and will establish a Charter School Homestead Fund. He will also change 60 federal grants into 5, and he give states more flexibility with the funds. Bush failed to discuss how he would target the funds to ensure that urban schools where Latino students are concentrated will receive the funds over suburban well-off schools.

Equity in Federal Higher-Education Programs

What are the plans to increase the number of Latinos in federal higher-education programs, to ensure the students can afford higher education, and to provide financial assistance to those students who choose to serve low-income communities after graduation?

Hispanic educational attainment is currently the lowest of any major population group in the United States. Latinos have the highest dropout rates from high school and the lowest graduation rates for college. Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), which are colleges and universities that have a significant Latino enrollment, need a substantial increase in funding to strengthen these institutions. Currently Hispanics comprise 30 percent of the students eligible to participate in the Federal TRIO programs (Upward Bound, Talent Search, Student Support Services, Educational Opportunity Centers), yet make up only 15 percent of the participants. Increased support for programs such as TRIO and the HSIs must be coupled with targeted efforts to increase Hispanic enrollment in colleges and universities.

MALDEF: Increased support for programs such as TRIO and the Hispanic Serving Institutions must

be coupled with targeted efforts to increase Hispanic enrollment in colleges and universities. More financial assistance is needed for those who are accepted into higher education institutions. MALDEF also supports the creation of federal loan forgiveness programs for higher education graduates who work for indigent populations.

BUSH: Bush supports “affirmative access”—not quotas, not double standards, because those divide and balkanize, but access—aggressive efforts to reach out, include people from all walks of life, and to give a fair shot to every single person. Bush signed laws in Texas to boost access for disadvantaged and minority students, and increase funding for higher education. There are concerns with the programs and accomplishments that Bush takes

parental involvement means programs that provide vital information to Latino parents so that they can become knowledgeable partners, participants, and advocates of change for their children.

BUSH: Bush would reform Title I by giving parents with children in failing schools scholarships of about \$1,500 a year for things like tutoring or tuition. Bush will give states more flexibility to use federal funds for choice programs—including private school choice. Bush also supports charter schools. He would also expand Education Savings Accounts for grades K-12. Bush does not understand what is needed, particularly for Latino and limited English proficient parents; therefore, he has not proposed solutions that will adequately ensure parental involvement from our community.

“Regardless of who sits in the White House, the federal government’s role in education will be limited. . . . Nevertheless, the federal government can play a critical role in providing standards for state and local communities to follow, especially when this is tied to the receipt of federal funds.”

credit for in Texas, not because they are not good programs but because he was reactive, signing legislation that was brought to him, and not proactively creating these solutions. It is unclear if he will proactively seek similar programs and funding once in the presidency.

Parental Involvement

What are the plans to increase school parental involvement of Latino parents?

Three decades of research have shown that parental participation improves student learning, regardless of the child’s age, the family’s economic status, or whether the parents finished high school. Parents must be adequately informed about how their children are instructed, what options are available, and what best practices educators employ in their every day teaching.

MALDEF: We need a presidential candidate who will ensure that

Charter schools, seen as one solution to the problem, are less likely to enroll Latino students, LEP students, or students qualified for the free-lunch program (an indicator of indigent students). Even if charter schools improve the education of the students who attend them, the Latino community is less likely to be enrolled.

MALDEF: MALDEF is not for or against vouchers *per se*. If a candidate favors vouchers, we would need to know the specifics of the particular voucher proposal that the candidate supports before we could take a position on the proposal.

BUSH: Under Bush’s plan, if a child remains trapped in a persistently failing school that fails to improve after three years, the federal funds would be given directly to the parents to make the best decision on how to educate their child, including mentoring, tutoring, or selecting another public, charter or private school. Since Bush’s voucher program will be targeted to students at failing schools, it will likely benefit Latino students. Nevertheless, his plan does not provide the level of detail needed to fully evaluate what effect his voucher program will have on Latino students. What remains to be seen is whether his other public school reforms can decrease the demand for vouchers in the Latino community.

Affirmative Action

Does the President-elect support affirmative action initiatives?

Discrimination manifests itself in a variety of ways in education, and it is particularly evident in access to institutions of higher learning. Statistics reflect an inability for Hispanics to obtain higher education at the rates that they should. As compared to whites or Blacks, Latinos are less likely to obtain an associates degree, a bachelors degree, or an advanced degree. Out of the more than 30,000 doctorate degrees conferred in 1997, only 4 percent went to Latinos. All of this underrepresentation in education translates into fewer opportunities in the workplace.

MALDEF: Support for the Latino community must include the ability to unequivocally support affirmative action measures in higher edu-

cation and employment that ensure a diverse student body and workplace, and which address the inequities of past and present discrimination.

BUSH: One way a president can improve race relations is by setting a positive and inclusive tone, and by sending a clear message that bigotry and intolerance are unworthy of our country. The things that set us apart have never been a match for the one thing that binds us together: we are all Americans, united by a common destiny, determined to do what is right and just for all of our citizens. When evaluating support for traditional affirmative action, Bush comes out against them.

Summary

To sum up, George W. Bush plans to spend far less money on education than Gore would have, and he wants to shift control from the federal government to the state and local districts. Bush also favors public funding for vouchers, and, in the area of affirmative action, Bush has come out against affirmative action, which will affect Latino access to higher education.

Antojitos....

NAP Members in *Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*

Two HBLI National Advisory Panel members recently appeared in the December 4, 2000 issue of *Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*. On the cover, Dr. **Miguel Nevarez** (pictured right), President of University of Texas - Pan American, is featured for being the first Hispanic president at UTPA. Dr. **Ricardo R. Fernandez** (pictured left), President of Lehman College, was featured as part of an article highlighting the college.



HBLI Fifth Annual Meeting

HBLI held its 5th Annual Meeting on November 16-18 at Riverside, California. In attendance were members of the National Advisory Panel, the Coordinating Council, and Fellows from ASU, NMSU, UCR, and UTPA.

Speakers included **Marissa Demeo**, Regional Counsel for MALDEF from Washington, D.C., who spoke about how each candidate responded to a position paper given them by MALDEF on the issues of education. **Elizabeth Hale**, Vice President of the Institute for Educational Leadership, spoke about the role of the federal gov-

ernment in reforming the education of Hispanics (see pages 4-5 for excerpts from both talks). Joining them was **Max Neiman**, Director of the Center for Social and Behavioral Science Research at UCR, who provided the Republican perspective on the election. There were three sessions for Fellows that dealt with internship opportunities, dissertation preparation, and employment after graduation. Dr. **Jaime Chahin** presented a documentary, "The Forgotten Americans," on the poverty conditions along the Texas-Mexico border, and actress **Evelina Fernandez** concluded the meeting with a humorous portrayal of her life and experiences.

HBLI School Board Training Project

As part of HBLI's mission, the consortium has joined with the Rural Schools and Community Trust (RSCT) to direct a thorough and inclusive planning process to explore the design of a focused, responsive, and relevant leadership enhancement program for rural school board members in the border states of Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas. The region is particularly important because a significant percent of all the school in the border states (from 6 percent in California to 28 percent in New Mexico) are in rural areas.

The thousand-mile border has primarily an agricultural economy with some tourism and just a few urban centers, such as San Diego, El Paso, and Brownsville. The outcome of the planning phase will be the creation of an outreach and development program designed to increase local citizen participation on schools boards, enhance the leadership abilities of school board members, increase advocacy for local schools, and increase community involvement in local schools.

HBLI has solicited the services of Dr. **Jose Leyba** to serve as planning coordinator for the HBLI School Board Training Project. A former superintendent and a community leader, Dr. Leyba has participated in the Federal Relations Network Conferences sponsored by the National School Boards Association. He has also served on the planning committee for the

Celebrating Opportunities for Hispanics Conference and at the National School Boards Association Conference.

HBLI will hold a Listening Summit in the spring of 2001 to prioritize and select topics to be covered in the workshop for late fall 2001. If you have questions or are interested in participating, please contact the HBLI office at 480/727-6364 or email Dr. Leyba at jleyba@qwest.net.

University of Texas - Pan American News

During the summer of 2000, UTPA hired Dr. **Maricela Oliva** as Director of the Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership. A native of the Rio Grande Valley, Dr. Oliva has degrees from Yale (B.A.), the University of Houston (M.A.), and the University of Texas at Austin (Ph.D.). Once she arrived at UTPA, it was decided that Dr. Oliva should also be the campus director for HBLI in order to provide consistent oversight of academic and fiscal matters related to the doctoral program.

The UTPA Fellows, with the support and cosponsorship of the Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership, have initiated a Speaker Series called *HBLI Enlace Educativo*. Two speakers have been part of that series to date: Dr. **Rodolfo Rocha** of UT Pan American and Dr. **Flora Ida Ortiz** of UC-Riverside. Upcoming speakers include Dr. **Patti Lather** of Ohio State University on February 1-3, 2001, and Dr. **Michelle Young** from the University of Missouri-Columbia and Executive Director of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) on March 4-6, 2001.

With the support of Dean **Medrano**, Dr. Oliva initiated discussions at UCEA to make UTPA a partner member of the association. This requires that a full member institution nominate UTPA as a partner member. Dr. **Jay Scribner** of the University of Texas Austin has expressed his willingness to nominate UTPA as partner and expects to visit the UTPA campus soon to further discuss this. This development should give more visibility to the doctoral program and to HBLI Fellows, and will better connect them to national developments in the educational administration field.



UTPA President Miguel Nevarez (center, seated) and Campus Coordinator Maricela Oliva (center, standing) at dinner with UTPA doctoral Fellows (from left to right) Chris Cavasos, Glendelia Zavala, Diane Ramirez, and Alfredo Salinas at the 5th Annual HBLI meeting in Riverside, California.



HBLI Congratulates the Following Graduating Fellows:



Carlos Nevarez
 Arizona State University

Dissertation: "Latino Undergraduate Participation and Graduation: The Effects of Institutional Practices"

Abstract: Historically, postsecondary institutions evaluated participation and graduation outcomes based on students' backgrounds. This fails to explain latino success or failure as the issues facing latino students go beyond personal characteristics to institutional strategies. This study identified institutional strategies that improved participation and graduation outcomes for undergraduate latinos in 97 four-year colleges and universities in nine states between 1980 and 1995.

If you are interested in Carlos' research, please feel free to contact him at nevarez@asu.edu.



Fernando Quiz
 New Mexico State University



Miraim Quiz
 New Mexico State University



Esiquio Uballe
 Arizona State University

Adelante

What's in this issue?

- Page 1 Historically, Latino students have had a negative educational experience for a number of reasons. What can be done to reverse this? Dr. Leonard A. Valverde discusses strategies secondary schools can employ to reverse the negative trends of Latino students.
- Page 3 Principals play an important role in strategizing education for Latinos. Kent Scribner interviews one successful principal, Dr. Kino Flores, now superintendent of the Tolleson High School District in Arizona.
- Page 4 Marissa Demeo, the Regional Counsel for MALDEF in Washington, D.C., talks about what to expect from President-elect George W. Bush based on his campaign promises and how he responded to MALDEF.
- Page 5 Elizabeth Hale, Vice President of the Institute for Educational Leadership, talks about the role the Federal Government can play in promoting Reforms in Hispanic education.
- Page 7 HBLI held its fifth annual meeting at Riverside, California, last November and has joined with the Rural Schools and Community Trust (RSCT) on a new project.

The HBLI *Adelante* Newsletter is published three times a year (fall, spring, summer) by the Hispanic Border Leadership Institute, headquartered at Arizona State University. The editor and staff writer is Roy Rukkila. HBLI is a consortium of 8 IHEs: Arizona State University, California State University-Bakersfield, Maricopa County Community College District, New Mexico State University, Palo Alto College, Southwest Texas State University, University of California-Riverside, and University Texas-Pan American. Funded in part by W.K. Kellogg, HBLI's six-year mission is to improve Hispanic education through leadership development, by shaping policy, and by influencing systematic change. HBLI is guided by a four-member coordinating council and a twenty-four-member National Advisory Panel. It also has a national network of scholars and expert practitioners. Your comments and suggestions are welcome; please contact us at:

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