

White House Initiative Services

The White House Initiative believes that two essential factors in the effort to increase education attainment for Hispanic children and youths and to close the achievement gap between Hispanic students and their non-Hispanic peers are partnerships and family involvement.

To effectively reach these families, it is necessary to coordinate efforts, fortify relationships and make optimal use of the resources that various agencies, organizations and businesses offer. This is achieved through:

Conferences

These events focus on the ways in which various stakeholders are working to meet the education needs of Hispanic families and cover topics ranging from early childhood development to postsecondary education.

Weekly E-Newsletter

Partners receive valuable education information via a weekly e-newsletter that includes: information on new publications; *No Child Left Behind* updates; scholarships, grants, and other funding opportunities; upcoming events; news clips; and information about member organizations, U.S. Department of Education programs and offices, and key federal departments and agencies.

Education Information

A variety of education resources in English and Spanish, such as the *Tool Kit for Hispanic Families*, are available to parents, students, educators and organizations.

More information about these resources and other useful education information is available on the White House Initiative Web site at <http://www.yic.gov>, and through its network of partners.



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WHITE HOUSE INITIATIVE ON EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE FOR HISPANIC AMERICANS

About the White House Initiative

On Oct. 12, 2001, President George W. Bush signed Executive Order 13230, creating the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. In this executive order, the president also established the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans (White House Initiative) at the U.S. Department of Education. The White House Initiative was designated as the office that would provide staff support and assistance to the commission in fulfilling its charge to examine the underlying causes of the education achievement gap existing between Hispanic American students and their peers.

The commission's work resulted in two reports, the second and final of which was submitted to the president in March 2003. Titled *From Risk to Opportunity: Fulfilling the Educational Needs of Hispanic Americans in the 21st Century*, the final report contained six recommendations for increasing the education achievement of Hispanic Americans. These recommendations spanned the entire education continuum, from early childhood development to postsecondary education.

The recommendations became the basis for the White House Initiative's pilot program, Partners in Hispanic Education. Formed in July 2003, this program teamed the White House Initiative with leading Hispanic organizations, corporate leaders and national private entities.

The purpose of the pilot program was to expand public understanding of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* to improve education outcomes for Hispanic American students. To do this, a series of education fairs, or *ferias educativas*, were held in seven cities across the country. Building on the experiences and lessons learned from the pilot program, the White House Initiative launched the Partnership for Hispanic Family Learning.

Partnership for Hispanic Family Learning

Announced in June 2005 by U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, the Partnership for Hispanic Family Learning is a national network of public and private organizations that have joined together to disseminate useful education information to Hispanic parents, families and communities nationwide.

This information, when placed in the hands of parents and families, is a powerful tool that enables them to make informed decisions on the options and opportunities associated with their children's education. In the process, they become powerful allies in our efforts to close the academic achievement gap for Hispanic children and youths.

The partnership, comprising the business, community, faith-based, education and government sectors, focuses on: early childhood development and early reading; parent and family involvement; academic preparation and high school graduation; college enrollment, affordability and completion; adult literacy; and workplace literacy.

Partner organizations are drawn from:

- Hispanic parent and family involvement groups;
- Community, nonprofit and faith-based organizations;
- Hispanic-serving schools and school districts;
- The corporate sector and the Hispanic business community;
- Local, state and federal agencies;
- Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs); and
- Local, state and regional Hispanic organizations.

Academic preparation, particularly in the core subjects of math and science, emerged as an important focus of the partnership.

STEM Education for Hispanics

The impetus for improving education for Hispanics in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields was the American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI), announced by President George W. Bush in his January 2006 State of the Union address.

The ACI is a comprehensive strategy designed to: 1) increase federal investment in critical research; 2) ensure that the United States continues to lead the world in opportunity and innovation; and 3) provide American children with a strong foundation in mathematics and science.

To that end, the White House Initiative has actively engaged important stakeholders, including HSIs, federal agencies, K–12 public schools, the technology industry, and Hispanic science and engineering associations in furthering the goals of the ACI.

In April 2007, the White House Initiative convened a conference on the ACI at the University of Texas at El Paso. The conference focused on helping HSIs expand the capacity and infrastructure needed to meet the nation's need for innovative research and more Hispanic talent in the STEM fields.

The same stakeholders have convened events around the country to address collaborative efforts that build on the foundation established by the White House Initiative's April 2007 ACI-HSI conference. These efforts were given a significant boost when President Bush signed new legislation in August 2007—the *America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education and Science Act (America COMPETES Act)*—which reflects the goals of the ACI.