



2012-2013 STRATEGIC PLAN

MISSION

The Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs is a non-partisan state agency working toward economic, educational, and social equity, including promoting cooperation and understanding. The Commission identifies, measures, and reviews programs and legislation and researches challenges and opportunities affecting the Hispanic/Latino community. The Commission identifies solutions and provides recommendations to the governor and legislature.

VISION

The Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs will bring together community organizations, State agencies, municipal leaders, and local activists in a collaborative way to address the various challenges facing Hispanics and Latinos and to seek proactive, creative solutions that will have lasting impacts on the State of Indiana.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past two years, the Commission has worked hard to consult and connect with local activists, organizers, and leaders within the Latino community to identify key issues and seek practical and active partnerships in an effort to begin addressing them from a statewide perspective. This has included researching healthcare issues, such as diabetes education programming, and education-related topics. Commissioners have focused on early education initiatives, worked with the state association for child care resources, and even sparked community lending initiatives specifically targeting Latino entrepreneurs and business professionals.

Still, understanding the obstacles facing real Latino families requires that candid conversations be had directly at the grassroots level, and a large part of the focus for the Commission during the coming fiscal year will be on working, in unison with Indiana's largest research study team, to make such conversations a reality. This will enable commissioners to make serious and impactful recommendations to the Legislature and the Governor in an effort to help affect policy long-term.



CHALLENGE 1: Understanding the needs of the community: Making appropriate policy recommendations at the state and local levels

Understanding the true needs of the various Latino communities throughout the state requires a thorough analysis of the expectations and sentiments of real families. Often, community organizations and governmental agencies can create policy or practice in a non-research centered way. “Best practices” are often adopted without the development or analysis of any true metrics based on the perceptions and opinions of those community leaders at the helm of these organizations.

The Commission, through its 2010 Strategy Summit process, succeeded in pooling together the perceptions of community leaders and activists. The piece missing from that process, comprehensive though it was, was the input from real families currently facing these challenges in communities all across the state.

OBJECTIVE 1: ICHLA/IU Center for Evaluation and Educational Policy Focus Groups

In an effort to bridge the gap between what policy makers and leaders tell us are chief concerns of the community and what parents and families identify as these concerns, the Commission has formulated a working partnership with the Indiana University Center for Evaluation and Educational Policy to gauge feedback garnered from focus groups conducted in six regions throughout the state. The goal is to select a true cross section of the Latino community in Indiana, and rural, urban, and suburban sites will be identified to ensure that a maximum number of perspectives are included. These focus groups, led by facilitators from the CEEP, will produced feedback to be synthesized by the partnership and used to develop specific policy recommendations for the Legislature and the Governor.

CHALLENGE 2: School Readiness and Parental Education

The challenge of engaging parents in the academic lives of their children and ensuring that educational achievement becomes central in the lives of families remains critical to the long-term development of the Latino community. Time and time again, conversations at the grassroots level reveal that parents simply lack the needed skills to be impactful advocates for their students and to serve in what many consider to be their most important role, that of first teacher to their children. The Commission has for several years recognized



this as a key piece of Latino prosperity and has partnered with organizations that have demonstrated an ability to make strides to this end locally.

OBJECTIVE 2: Partnership With El Campito of South Bend, Parents As Teachers

Working with El Campito, a Latino community organization in South Bend that serves as a facilitator for the Parents As Teachers program curriculum, the Commission is promoting the development of critical early education parent skills in Latino families. Using the Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale and relying on the School City of South Bend to track standardized test scores for children of participating families, El Campito has demonstrated the program's effectiveness and its ability to implement the various steps of the process. This partnership will allow the Commission to help engage new families and provide outreach and marketing support to the local agency.

CHALLENGE 3: Engaging English-Language Learners in Indiana's Public Schools

for best engaging English Language Learners early in their academic careers are critical to ensuring that these students will have the tools necessary to meet the benchmarks laid out in state and federal mandates. In Indiana, nearly one in four Latino families are linguistically isolated, a significant challenge for those educators working with this population. Sharing resources and information across school districts, communities, and the entire state with respect to ELL is essential as best practices are analyzed and applied to yield marked improvements for young Latino students.

OBJECTIVE 3: Implementing the New Neighbors Model Statewide

The New Neighbors program has been shown to be an effective model for improving educational performance of ENL students as well as for engaging their families in the educational process. This includes increased performance on standardized tests and better rates of curricular participation on the part of parents, both of which are sure to have long-lasting tangible positive consequences for the growing Latino populations of southern Indiana.



The purpose of this partnership is two-fold. First, the additional resources will allow the Commission to connect with local Latino families as the New Neighbors facilitators continue to provide their curricula through the schools. Promoting the initiatives and vision of the Commission is an important element to ensuring that all Latinos throughout the state understand the resources available to them through State agencies. Second, the assistance will enable program organizers to expand their model into other regions of Indiana, serving as a support hub to provide training and other resources to adopters and implementers.

CHALLENGE 4: Civic Education and Latino Youth

One of the most pressing obstacles to long-term civic engagement in the Latino community can be traced back to the lack of early civic education. Ensuring that Latino students have a full appreciation for the roles played by lawmakers and agency personnel at the State as well as the overall process of legislating and governing is an important first-step to building true leadership capacity among Latinos in communities throughout Indiana. Making sure that Hispanic affairs are significant considerations at the State level requires a long-term investment in developing a sense of leadership and civic duty among Latino children, a process that can only take root if these children are exposed to the system in the first place.

OBJECTIVE 4: Statewide Latino Youth Day at the Statehouse

This continued partnership will enable the program coordinators to expand their reach across the state in an effort to engage more Latino students from a greater geographically diverse area. In 2012, nearly 100 students attended the day-long event. For 2013, the goal should be to expand participation to 125 students and engage schools from Evansville, New Albany, Bloomington, Lafayette, and Fort Wayne to encourage their participation. Resources spent will also allow the Commission the opportunity to connect with young Latino students about the role it plays in State government.

CHALLENGE 5: BUILDING BRIDGES ACROSS LATINO COMMUNITIES IN INDIANA

State and local economies throughout Indiana have been dealing with a new economic reality, one in which scarcer and scarcer resources have forced the re-evaluation of programming and the elimination of duplicated services in lieu of past practices. Metrics,



systematic evaluations, and comprehensive collaborations are all critical elements to the future success of social service and community organizations in communities across the state.

Building on the successes of the 2010 INversión Statewide Virtual Strategy Summit, ICHLA will look to bring the results of that meeting – as outlined in the Statewide Strategy Guide – to communities to engage local participants and create some tangible, measurable impacts.

OBJECTIVE 5: 2011 INversión STATEWIDE VIRTUAL STRATEGY SUMMIT

The vast majority of the feedback received from the 2010 summit was positive. Participants enjoyed the opportunity to hear about what initiatives are currently in place in other parts of the state, and the interactive and engaging nature of the meeting was a nice contrast to the monotony so often associated with traditional conferences.

Still, participants did mention a need to engage greater representation geographically. This year, the goal for the Commission will be to include sites from Lafayette and Evansville, at least, and perhaps other sites throughout Indiana. This way, community organizations can continue to learn about strategies being implemented that might be well-suited for their own regions.

MARKETING, MEDIA, AND OUTREACH

The Commission will continue its aggressive push to garner earned media and greater and greater opportunities to connect with a variety of parent groups, non-profit organizations, and governmental agencies at all levels. In 2011-2012, the Commission participated in more than 30 media-related activities and has capitalized upon an ongoing partnership with the Indiana Civil Rights Commission and the Indiana Department of Education to maximize use of a full media studio for message development.

In 2012-2013, the Commission will look to enhance its presence statewide by producing at least 10 video and radio public service announcements, in both English and Spanish, to be distributed and aired on outlets across Indiana. The focus of these PSAs will



include the various initiatives upon which the Commission is focused, as well as more general topics such as business engagement and professional development, parental engagement and accountability in education, and preventative healthcare and nutrition.