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**Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs Project:  
Governmental Services Access and  
Delivery Critical Needs Study**

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**Terry E. Spradlin, MPA**  
*Director for Education Policy/Project Manager*

**Maria Avitia**  
*Graduate Research Assistant*

**Rachel Peterson**  
*Graduate Research Assistant*

**Maegan Shelburne**  
*Research Assistant*

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**CENTER FOR EVALUATION  
& EDUCATION POLICY**

**Center for Evaluation & Education Policy**

**Patricia A. Muller, Ph.D.**

*INTERIM DIRECTOR*

1900 East 10<sup>th</sup> Street,  
Bloomington, Indiana 47406  
**tel:** 1.800.511.6575 **fax:** 1.812.856.5890

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**web:** [ceep.indiana.edu](http://ceep.indiana.edu)



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# Table of Contents

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Acknowledgments..... iii

1. Introduction.....1

2. Methodology.....3

3. New Albany Community Profile .....7

4. Indianapolis Community Profile.....13

5. Hammond Community Profile.....23

6. South Bend Community Profile.....27

7. Lafayette Community Profile .....33

8. Evansville Community Profile.....41

9. Summary of Superintendents’ Critical Needs Questionnaire .....45

10. Findings.....53

References.....61

Appendices..... A-1

    Appendix A. Focus Group Invitation..... A-3

    Appendix B. Focus Group Pre-Session Questionnaire ..... A-5

    Appendix C. Focus Group Guide..... A-9

    Appendix D. Cover Letter to Area Superintendents and Questionnaire..... A-11

    Appendix E. Cover Letter to Locally Elected Officials and Questionnaire ..... A-15



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# 1. Introduction

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As established through a Memorandum of Understanding signed on September 1, 2012, the Center for Evaluation & Education Policy (CEEP) at Indiana University has worked with the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs (ICHLA) to study governmental service delivery and access issues, including prekindergarten through secondary education, for the Hispanic/Latino populations in the state. According to the United States Census Bureau, persons of Hispanic or Latino origin comprise 6.2 percent, or approximately 400,000, of the 6.5 million residents in the state of Indiana in 2011 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). Of the 1,056,632 prekindergarten through grade 12 students enrolled in an Indiana public school (including charter schools), 94,099 students, or 8.9 percent, were of Hispanic or Latino origin (Indiana Department of Education, 2012).

The objectives of our research were to gauge the perceptions and attitudes of Hispanic/Latino residents about their quality of life in the communities in which they reside and work. In addition, our work was designed to assist the ICHLA in increasing its understanding of the barriers and obstacles these residents (including children) face in accessing public services and fully participating in community affairs. Furthermore, local government officials were invited to share their perspectives on the primary issues or concerns they face in providing public services to support this community of residents.

The 2012-2013 Strategic Plan of the ICHLA speaks to the need for this study by stating:

*...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 of the Commission during the coming fiscal year [2013] will be on working, in unison with Indiana's largest research study team [CEEP], 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 (ICHLA, 2012).*

Generally speaking, we sought to provide answers to the question, “What are the critical needs of the Hispanic/Latino community in Indiana?” Overall, information gathered by the study and included in this report is intended to help deepen the Commission’s understanding of the

Hispanic/Latino community and focus on the critical needs confronting these residents. Furthermore, as stated in its strategic plan, the report will help the ICHLA identify and develop its legislative, policy, and administrative priorities to advocate for Hispanic/Latino Hoosiers.

This report includes an overview of the research methodology used to compile qualitative data, provides a population profile and focus group summary for each of the six cities visited, summarizes survey responses from school district superintendents, and concludes with findings and recommendations. Finally, all of the qualitative research instruments are included in the Appendices for review.

## 2. Methodology

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The methods used to conduct the research for this study were qualitative in nature and included focus groups, a questionnaire, surveys, and interviews. Information compiled from the use of these methods and tools has enabled the Project Team at CEEP to identify key themes by the frequency of citation and the emphasis participants placed on a variety of issues and topics mentioned. Hispanic residents, including both legal immigrants and undocumented aliens, and local government officials were invited to participate in this study.

### Focus Groups:

To complete the research for this study, the Project Team at CEEP administered a written questionnaire and conducted focus groups in six cities across southern, central, and northern Indiana, including:

- New Albany, November 12, 2012
- Indianapolis, November 29, 2012
- Hammond, December 6, 2012
- South Bend, December 13, 2012
- Lafayette, December 17, 2012
- Evansville, December 18, 2012

Local conveners were identified by Mr. Danny Lopez, Executive Director for the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs. The conveners were provided with an invitation to participate (in both Spanish and English) by CEEP to distribute to local residents (see Appendix A). The conveners also made personal contact with individuals to secure a target number of participants (6-10) per session who were reflective of the Hispanic/Latino populations in that community.

Before beginning the discussion for each focus group session, a brief written questionnaire (see Appendix B) was administered to compile demographic and employment information about the participants. After the completion of the questionnaire, a 60-90 minute focus group was conducted with the participants in attendance. Terry Spradlin, Project Manager, facilitated the

sessions and was accompanied by a translator (see Acknowledgments) who was fluent in Spanish to convey questions from Mr. Spradlin to the group and answers from participants back to Mr. Spradlin. Participants were informed that the questionnaire and focus group were voluntary and that they could choose to discontinue participation at any time. Additionally, the participants were informed their names would be kept anonymous in this report to the ICHLA. The focus group sessions were recorded and transcribed in English. The CEEP team has used the information gathered to identify key themes and critical issues that are summarized in subsequent sections (beginning with Chapter 3 on page 7) of this report.

#### Profile of Focus Group Participants:

A total of 53 residents participated in the six focus group sessions. The number of participants by city is as follows:

- New Albany – 8
- Indianapolis – 6
- Hammond – 10
- South Bend – 8
- Lafayette – 9
- Evansville – 12

Of the 53 participants, 49 completed the written questionnaire before the focus group sessions began. Despite an effort to have a balance of male and female adult participants to reflect the gender balance of Hispanic/Latino residents in Indiana (of 51.73% male and 48.73% female), focus group participants were mostly female and a total of 11 males and 38 females completed the questionnaire (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). The median age of the group was 38, with an age range from 26-55. The age profile of participants was also significantly different from the median age of 23.7 for Hispanic/Latino residents in Indiana (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). A total of 69% of the residents reported being married, with one widow, and the remaining participants reported that they were single. Questionnaire respondents reported having a total of 41 school-aged children. Respondents indicated that they have resided in their respective communities in Indiana for an average of 8 years, with a range from 2 months to 25 years. Concerning employment, of the 40 respondents to the question, 19 indicated that they were employed and 21

indicated that they were unemployed (reflective of the high number of participants who were mothers of young children and stay-at-home parents).

The questionnaire also posed three general open-ended questions concerning the respondents' quality of life in their community. A total of 34 respondents, or 79 percent, characterized their quality of life as good to very good, whereas 9 respondents indicated their quality of life was average to low. When asked about what they liked best about their community, 26 people indicated they felt safe and enjoyed a community atmosphere, 9 indicated the services available to them, and 8 indicated the people who reside in their community. When asked what they liked least about their community, 9 indicated violence and poverty issues, 8 stated a lack of services, 8 indicated disrespectful neighbors or feelings of isolation, and 6 indicated a presence of language barriers that deter their more active participation in the community. Responses to the focus group questions are summarized by city in subsequent sections of this report.

#### Local Government Officials' Questionnaires

Given the nature of the research and the focus on public or governmental services that was apparent during the focus group sessions with Hispanic/Latino residents, the CEEP Project Team felt it was necessary to survey school corporation superintendents and local government officials (mayors and city councilors) to gain their insights and perspectives on the same issues. Separate questionnaires (see Appendix D and E) were created to seek greater insights on how these officials perceive their organizational roles and effectiveness in serving their Hispanic/Latino community. The responses are aggregated in total to protect the respondents' anonymity and honor the confidentiality promised to them to encourage a high response rate. This information is provided in a subsequent section of the report.

A total of 16 completed questionnaires were received from the 22 school corporation superintendents invited to participate, or a 72.7% response rate. However, only 3 responses were received in total from the 6 mayors and 74 city councilors invited to participate (including an interview conducted with one mayor). It should be noted it was discovered that there was a delay in the delivery of the questionnaire mailing and it cannot be determined whether the delay was within the university system or with the United States Postal Service. As a result, many councilors did not receive the invitation to participate until the initial survey window had already

closed on January 18, despite the mailing having been dropped on January 8. When this delay was discovered, the window for both surveys was extended to February 8, 2013. The extension helped improve the response rate from school corporation superintendents, but did not help produce a good response from the other officials.

## 3. New Albany Community Profile

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### Floyd County

**Total Population:** 74,578

**Not Hispanic:** 72,606

**Hispanic or Latino Total:** 1,972 people, 2.64%

- Mexican: 1,372 people, 1.83%
- Puerto Rican: 167 people, 0.22%
- Cuban: 47 people, 0.06%
- Other Hispanic: 386 people, 0.51%

### New Albany

**Total Population:** 36,372

**Not Hispanic:** 35,034

**Hispanic or Latino Total:** 1,338 people, 3.67%

- Mexican: 1,004 people, 2.76%
- Puerto Rican: 109 people, 0.29%
- Cuban: 21 people, 0.05%
- Other Hispanic or Latino: 204 people, 0.56%

### New Albany – Floyd County Consolidated School Corporation

- 11,458 total number of students enrolled
- 5,062, or 44.18%, students participating in Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 363 students, or 3.17%, of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 214 students, or 1.87%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

#### **Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics**

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 102 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 69.9%

Math Pass Number

- 117

Math Percent Pass

- 76.0%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 62.3%

(Source for the demographic information for all cities: Indiana Business Research Center, 2011, <http://www.stats.indiana.edu/topic/census.asp>; source for school corporation info: Indiana Department of Education, 2012, retrieved from <http://www.doe.in.gov/improvement/accountability/find-school-and-corporation-data-reports>)

### **Questionnaire Responses**

On November 15, 2012, a focus group was conducted in New Albany, Indiana, on behalf of the ICHLA. Terry Spradlin, CEEP Project Manager, facilitated the focus group and Gio Guera Pérez, Ph.D., Assistant Visiting Professor & Socio Cultural Specialist, New Neighbors Center, School of Education, Indiana University Southeast, served as the interpreter. There were eight local residents present, all of which were female. Seven of the eight individuals completed the written questionnaire prior to the focus group session.

The individuals ranged in age from 27 to 40 years old, with a mean age of 32 years. Six of the seven individuals who completed the questionnaire were married. The number of children currently living in their homes ranged from one to six children, with a mean of 2.7 children per household. All seven individuals had school-aged children. Five of the individual's children attended public school, one attended a charter school, and one attended a private school. Three of the individuals were employed, while four of the individuals were unemployed. One individual worked full-time, one person worked part-time, and one individual did not respond to the question about full-time or part-time employment. Five of the individuals in the focus group did not receive any public financial assistance or job training, while two individuals received food stamps. The seven individuals have resided in this community between 4 and 13 years, with an average length of residency of 7 years. When asked to describe one's quality of life in this community, they either responded "good," "average," or "regular." When asked about what they enjoyed about living in this community, they responded that it was peaceful, safe, familiar, or proximity to resources. When asked what they enjoyed least about living in this community, they said the lack of family, poor communication with neighbors, no public transportation, language barriers, or lack of child recreational activities.

## **Focus Group Session Summary**

### *Governmental Service Issues*

When asked about the type of government services that they were accessing and that were most important to them, the participants identified Medicaid, libraries, and parks. The library in Jeffersonville was cited by participants as a valuable resource, in particular for the availability of Internet services, library book rentals for 28 days, and that it also offers classes to assist children with reading as well as other programs to help support their children. Participants did indicate that there are limited services for afterschool care or tutoring for the children and childcare during ESL programs for the adults, making participation difficult. Finally, participants indicated that the ESL and job programs in New Albany that were previously provided by the Development of Workforce Development WorkOne Center were discontinued some thought due to a lack of participation and one person suggested it was due to cuts in state programs and services. Apparently these services remain available in Jeffersonville or Clarksville, but there is limited or no public transportation making it difficult for respondents to participate in job training or ESL programs. Also, the hours of these programs are in the evening and many of the mothers indicated that they do not have childcare available to them and it is not offered by the program. Some of the participants indicated that they are an undocumented resident and therefore do not seek services for themselves due to fear of deportation.

When asked about the method of accessing services, one respondent said that she first looks on the Internet for program information before going to the agency in person for assistance. Another person indicated that the information on the Internet is available only in English and is not in a user-friendly format, so they prefer to go in person for assistance. Another person said they either go in person or phone to ask questions.

### *Prekindergarten through Postsecondary Education*

When asked whether as parents they felt welcome in their children's schools and whether the schools provided them with timely and useful information to support their children, the participants said it varied by school. The school corporation does have a magnet ESL program that most of their elementary school children attend, the teachers are provided ESL training, and there is a teacher aide that is particularly helpful with communication between the school and

parents. Other parents indicated that they rely on their children to interpret school papers and documents and they worry about the accuracy of the translation. There was general agreement that their children needed more help with reading and writing assignments and this is an area in which the parents are less able to assist. Most indicated that teachers make a good faith effort to let them know how their children are doing academically. Some teachers will send newsletters or reports home in both English and Spanish. Even if teachers don't speak Spanish some use a Google translator tool to try to share information in Spanish. Other teachers have told the parents that if there is no communication, that indicates their children are doing sufficiently. Another teacher has a color-coded system to indicate high, average, or low performance to help parents gauge the progress of their children. Participants did express enthusiasm and interest in the possibility of parent mentoring programs (that are not being offered presently by the school district). They indicated that they would make every effort to attend if this would help them to better support the children's learning and performance.

#### *Early Childhood Education Programs*

Some conversation transpired with the group about the possibility of the state of Indiana funding prekindergarten programs and whether this would be a helpful program that they would enroll their children in. Those who commented expressed support for a broader availability of prekindergarten programs because the area Head Start programs have waiting lists and the preschool program(s) offered by the school corporation was "always full." One participant alluded to the benefit of prekindergarten helping her child with the transition to elementary school, in particular helping with English language acquisition. Most parent participants did indicate that their children were enrolled in full-day kindergarten and they thought this was helpful.

#### *College Attainment Goals*

A brief conversation transpired about the aspirations that the parent participants have for their children's academic attainment. There was general agreement that they would like to see their children attend college, and at least one parent had a child presently in college. There were some concerns expressed about college affordability, and for this reason parents were hopeful for scholarships for their children.

*K-12 Programs and Services Needed*

The focus group discussion concluded with the questions, “Are there educational and other governmental services needed in this community that are not provided? If so, what are they?” Programs or services mentioned by participants included increased availability of sports, extracurricular activities, afterschool programs, social events, summer school or summer camps, and art and music enrichment programs. It was mentioned that by providing these additional programs and services it would help their children explore interests and develop talents that may be hidden. One person mentioned that the area YMCA offers some of these programs or services, but they are cost prohibitive. Another person mentioned that they would like more services in which parents could participate, too, like art or music. A parent concluded this discussion by adding that they do not believe the schools take advantage of how much the parents could actually offer if they were encouraged to volunteer more. “Parents have good intentions to help, but do not know how to help.”

When asked whether anyone would like to share anything else about the issues discussed, one person eloquently added the following:

*One thing I would add is...the perception of the community at large has about all Latinos is very negative. Sometimes there are a lot of stereotypes and bias about who we are and where we come from. That type of impact of the community is very detrimental to our community...So I think it is very hard for us to... break that perception [to one] that we are hardworking people who value education, who value the concept of family and responsibility. It's very hard to find that type of label throughout our community, it's always negative.*



## 4. Indianapolis Community Profile

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### Indianapolis

**Total Population (2010):** 820,445

**Not Hispanic:** 743,093

**Hispanic or Latino Total:** 77,352 people, 9.42%

- Mexican: 56,771 people, 6.91%
- Puerto Rican: 3,431 people, 0.42%
- Cuban: 739 people, 0.09%
- Other Hispanic: 16,411 people, 2.0%

### School Districts in Indianapolis:

#### Beech Grove City Schools

- 2,734 total number of students enrolled
- 1,739, or 63.6%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 150, or 5.48%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 64, or 2.34%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

#### Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 58 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 80.6%

Math Pass Number

- 58

Math Percent Pass

- 80.6%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 72.2%

#### Metropolitan School District (MSD) of Decatur Township

- 6,316 total number of students enrolled
- 3,831, or 59.5%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 516, or 8.17%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 243, or 3.85%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

#### Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 164 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 64.6%

Math Pass Number

- 182

Math Percent Pass

- 71.7%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 56.3%

### **MSD of Pike Township**

- 10,918 total number of students enrolled
- 6,586, or 59.5%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 2,049, or 18.77%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 1,805, or 16.53%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

#### **Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics**

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 584 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 64.0%

Math Pass Number

- 672

Math Percent Pass

- 71.8%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 55.0%

### **MSD of Washington Township**

- 11,194 total number of students enrolled
- 6,186, or 55.3%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 1,645, or 14.69%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 1,562, or 13.95%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

#### **Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics**

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 385 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 56.5%

Math Pass Number

- 467

Math Percent Pass

- 68.2%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 47.9%

**Franklin Township Community School Corporation**

- 8,478 total number of students enrolled
- 3,025, or 35.68%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 523, or 6.2%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 264, or 3.11%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

**Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics**

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 170 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 72.6%

Math Pass Number

- 181

Math Percent Pass

- 77.4%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 66.2%

**Indianapolis Public Schools**

- 31,998 total number of students enrolled
- 26,381, or 82.45%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 5,904, or 18.45%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 4,034, or 12.61%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

**Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics**

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 1,640 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 63.4%

Math Pass Number

- 1,883

Math Percent Pass

- 72.2%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 56.0%

**MSD of Perry Township**

- 14,448 total number of students enrolled
- 8,319, or 57.6%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 1,761, or 12.2%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 2,149, or 14.87%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

**Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics**

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 513 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 63.4%

Math Pass Number

- 564

Math Percent Pass

- 68.9%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 55.3%

### **MSD of Warren Township**

- 11,899 total number of students enrolled
- 7,914, or 66.5%, students participating in Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 1,186, 9.97%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 722, or 6.07%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

### **Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics**

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 358 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 70.2%

Math Pass Number

- 413

Math Percent Pass

- 81.0%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 63.7%

### **MSD of Wayne Township**

- 16,277 total number of students enrolled
- 11,508, or 70.7%, students participating in Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 3,035, or 18.65%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 2,140, or 13.15%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

### **Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics**

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 841 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 63.7%

Math Pass Number

- 929

Math Percent Pass

- 70.3%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 55.1%

### **School Town of Speedway**

- 1,624 total number of students enrolled
- 841, or 51.78%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 182, or 11.82%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 152, or 9.36%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

### **Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics**

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 52 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 72.2%

Math Pass Number

- 64

Math Percent Pass

- 85.3%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 72.2%

### **Questionnaire Responses**

On November 29, 2012, a focus group was conducted in Indianapolis, Indiana, on behalf of the ICHLA. Terry Spradlin, CEEP Project Manager, facilitated the focus group session and Maegan Shelburne, CEEP undergraduate research assistant, served as the session interpreter. There were six participants in the session, three female and three male adults. All six individuals completed the written questionnaire prior to the focus group session.

The individuals ranged in age from 28 to 55 years old, with a mean age of 45 years. Three of the six individuals were married, and three people were single. The number of children currently living in their homes ranged from zero to two children, with an average of one child per household. Four of the individual's children were school-aged. Three of the individual's children attended public school and one attended a private school. Four of the individuals were employed while two of the individuals were unemployed. Of the four employed individuals, two people worked full-time, one person worked part-time, and one person did not respond as to whether their employment was full- or part-time. One of the full-time workers was employed at a bank. The other full-time worker did community service. The part-time worker cooked and cleaned while the other employed individual was an outreach worker for the health department. One of the individuals in the focus group received food stamps, one individual did not receive any public financial assistance, and four people did not answer the question pertaining to public

assistance programs. The six individuals have resided in this community between 1-11 years, with an average length of residence of 6 years. When asked to describe one's quality of life in this community, they either responded "good," "average," or "pleasant." One person said the quality of life was poor due to few stable work opportunities and neighborhood crime. When asked about what they enjoyed most about living in this community, some responded that it was safe, had a number of sidewalks/walking paths, or public schooling opportunities for their children. When asked what they enjoyed least about living in this community, the answers ranged from unfriendly neighbors, neighborhood crime, lack of lighted areas, high prices of public services (e.g., water, electricity, gas), or lack of school resources. One individual did not respond to the question.

### **Focus Group Session Summary**

#### *Governmental Service Issues*

When asked about the type of government services that they were accessing or that were most important to them, the participants identified and agreed by consensus that education, public safety and health care services are essential services. One participant stated, "Education is very important, as parents we want our children to have better futures. This also means safety as well, as we want a safe community for our children." As the conversation progressed, participants also cited public libraries and parks. A respondent stated about these services, "The libraries are excellent, the parks are excellent, but we don't have time for these things. Our children are spending so much time alone because we are working."

When asked about the method of accessing services, many respondents indicated that they do use the phone or Internet (especially with library material renewal) initially when seeking services. In-person visits to public agencies are also a common practice to seek information about enrollment or participation in government programs. One participant stated a concern that many in the Hispanic/Latino community in Indianapolis are not technology savvy and generally don't know how to find program information:

*I have access because I have computer skills. However, a large part of the Hispanic culture does not have computer skills and do not know what these technologies offer. They do know about the parks, the libraries, the healthcare,*

*but they don't access these resources easily. They don't have computer skills; they don't know what's out there.*

One person added that it would be helpful for community organizations to provide training on the use of technology to gain knowledge about public services and community events. They expressed a sentiment that this would help them acclimate more fully in the community. Another participant stated that there is a reluctance to seek or enroll in public services or programs because “it is scary for those of us who are undocumented and it prevents us from accessing.”

Finally, the focus group discussion illuminated a growing concern that their children were becoming fluent not only in English, but also with the use of technology; while beneficial for their children, the concern is that this “knowledge gap” is creating an additional divide between the parents and their children.

#### *Prekindergarten through Postsecondary Education*

When asked whether as parents they felt welcome in their children's schools and whether the schools provided them with timely and useful information to support their children, the participants shared that they thought the schools were doing an excellent job, especially compared to the schools in their native country, in making them feel welcome. In addition, there was a high level of satisfaction that educators in the schools were making a genuine effort to communicate with parents. One participant said on this issue:

*Yes, I like being in my children's schools. The teachers in schools are very nice and attentive. They try to inform us about what's going on. They send me messages or if my son goes to the nurse they tell me. There is communication. I appreciate the education here that others do not have.”*

Another participant said, “The interaction is phenomenal, especially compared to our native country.” It was added that many of the teachers speak Spanish, too, and there are occasions where there will be an interpreter present. It was also mentioned that it is not uncommon for newsletters and other written communication to be sent home in Spanish. Overall, it was apparent to the group that the educators in the schools their children attend in Indianapolis are being intentional about communication, outreach, and inclusion efforts.

However, one participant stated that there is not a culture of education in the Hispanic/Latino community. They stated: “For our community, our generation, the lack of education gives us jobs that are very long hours and very tiring. So, we do not always have time to communicate with the schools or we are too tired to communicate with the schools. We do not have the culture of education. Education has to start in the home.”

The discussion on parental involvement in schools and the broader community concluded with one participant adding:

*I think that it is the role of the community (organizations) to facilitate the communication. But also, it is the role of the immigrants coming into a new culture to educate themselves on the new culture and language. It is the role of the school to help educate the children.*

#### *Early Childhood Education Programs*

Although the focus group guide included a few questions to gauge availability of and interest in early childhood education programs (e.g., preschool and full-day kindergarten) in the community, no parent had children in the 3-7-year-old age range and therefore these questions were skipped for this group.

#### *College Attainment Goals*

A brief conversation transpired about the aspirations that the parent participants have for their children’s academic attainment. There was general agreement that they would like to see their children attend college. One parent has a child graduating from college and planning to pursue a master’s degree, and her younger child will go to college, too, and plans to be a lawyer. For all parent participants, college enrollment was the expectation they have established for their children. However, one participant expressed concern about the financial viability of college for their family, “If they aren’t documented or do not have Social Security, they cannot receive scholarships or work studies, even if they are the most gifted, or talented, or intelligent. This means higher education is a dream.”

This prompted a brief conversation about legislation passed by the Indiana General Assembly in 2011 that requires out-of-state tuition fees to be charged to illegal immigrants, regardless of whether the student graduated from an Indiana high school. A participant stated in this regard, “There are children that want to better themselves, that are brilliant, intelligent, and capable, but this financial barrier is stopping them.”

*K-12 Programs and Services Needed*

Suggestions for programs and services that would enhance the quality of life and contribute to a deeper integration into the Indianapolis community by the participants included educational programs for parents offered in schools or by community organizations, such as ESL, GED, and technology classes; information on financial aid for college expenses; and health clinics/fairs at schools to make these services more accessible.



## 5. Hammond Community Profile

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### Hammond

**Total Population (2010):** 80,830

**Not Hispanic:** 53,267

**Hispanic or Latino Total:** 27,563 people, 34.1%

- Mexican: 22,684 people, 28.06%
- Puerto Rican: 3,081 people, 3.81%
- Cuban: 140 people, 0.17%
- Other Hispanic: 1,658 people, 2.05%

### Hammond Schools

- 13,744 total students enrolled (2012)
- 11,042, or 80.34%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 6,406, 46.6%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 2243, or 16.32%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

#### **Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics**

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 1,796 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 63.3%

Math Pass Number

- 1875

Math Percent Pass

- 66.0%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 53.2%

### Questionnaire Responses

On December 6, 2012, a focus group was conducted in Hammond, Indiana, on behalf of the ICHLA. Terry Spradlin, CEEP Project Manager, facilitated the focus group session, and Eve Gómez, EG Spanish Interpreting and Consulting, LLC, served as the session interpreter. There were 10 people present, one male and nine females. Of the 10 individuals in attendance, eight completed the demographic/employment questionnaire prior to the focus group.

The individuals ranged in age from 26 to 46 years old, with a mean age of 38 years. All of the individuals were married. Five of the individuals had two children and three people had three children currently living in their homes, with a mean of 2.3 children per household. They all had school-aged children. Six individuals had their children enrolled in public school, one individual home-schooled her children, and one individual's children were enrolled in both private and

public schools. Two of the individuals were employed, compared to six unemployed individuals. Only one of the employed individuals worked full-time. Only one individual commented on the type of work she did, which she explained as “housekeeping and assisting in the children’s school.” Five of the individuals in the focus group did not receive any public financial assistance or job training. One individual received Medicaid, one person received public financial assistance or job training, and one person did not reply to the question. The eight individuals had resided in this community between 8 months and 12 years. The average length of residence in this community was 7.4 years. When asked to describe one’s quality of life in this community, one person said “fine,” one individual did not respond, one person said “normal,” one person said “it could be good,” and three people said “good.” When asked what they enjoyed about living in this community, they responded that it was either quiet or safe. When asked what they enjoyed least about living in this community, they replied that it was too quiet, consisted of disrespectful community members, lacked sufficient transportation, was unsafe, had too few Spanish speakers, or too few work opportunities.

### **Focus Group Session Summary**

#### *Governmental Service Issues*

The respondents from Hammond were initially asked based, on their experiences in the community, what governmental services were most important to them. In general, the respondents agreed that the most important issues pertained to medical care, school services, public transportation, and public safety. They noted the lack of public transportation (buses) that run regularly. Many of the participants also do not qualify for health insurance through their work and wondered where to go to receive discounted medical services. When asked if any of the participants have participated in any type of English language acquisition or job training, three participants noted that they had not attended English classes. Two other participants stated that while they had been previously enrolled in ESL classes, due to lack of funding they could no longer be a part of the program. Another respondent said that a lot of Hispanics do not attend these classes because they require a Social Security number and a driver’s license, which many of them do not have.

### *Prekindergarten through Postsecondary Education*

When asked whether as parents they felt welcome in their children's schools and whether the schools had good forms of communication, the majority of the respondents expressed a need for better communication. Many times notes are sent from the teacher to the parents through the student. Parents requested that the teachers contact them directly and allow opportunities to meet with the parents' in person, so that they could take a more proactive approach. One respondent stated:

*I would really like that all teachers in general would take a little bit of their time to focus on students that need more in school. Unfortunately, even though one teaches their child communication and confidence to ask for help but a lot of time we also need to hear from the teachers. I don't think that one should have to wait to receive the report card or a progress report to know that they student is not doing good... Because by the time you get the report card you can't do anything. And I have found a couple times when I have gone to my daughter's school and I talk with certain teachers and they say they don't have time. And they don't even know who you are referring to.*

### *Early Childhood Education Programs*

All respondents expressed an interest in having their children attend full-day kindergarten but did not know full-day kindergarten programs were offered or felt they were not accessible. There was also agreement that if states funded preschool programs, they would enroll their children.

### *Summer School and Afterschool Programs*

The participants were highly supportive of the idea of afterschool childcare and tutoring. About half of the participants advocated for a year-round school calendar, while the other half did not. Despite the disagreement, all participants agreed that if school was not provided during the summer, summer programs should be provided to their children to assist with their academic achievement and social engagement.

### *College Attainment Goals*

There was a general consensus that the participants were unaware of services available to them in terms of funding and scholarship opportunities. One participant noted that, "A lot of times my daughter's friends go and ask and it's like the counselors don't care (about finding them scholarships). They say 'I'll help you later' or 'I'll look for it later.' They (the students) have the

initiative to look for information on their own but they are not receiving support from their counselors.”

*K-12 Programs and Government Services Needed*

The focus group discussion concluded by asking what other concerns the Hammond residents wanted to address. Security, particularly the lack of street lights and lighted areas in the community were big areas of concern. As one respondent stated, “There is not light and there isn’t any vigilance.” They also wanted more tutoring opportunities for their children in the areas of mathematics and English that were affordable so that their children would have an opportunity to succeed academically. One person suggested that the school breakfasts and lunches should be of a higher quality with more healthy options available to students. Another suggestion concerned students who were suspended or expelled. In these instances, parents expressed a desire that instructional materials and assignments continue during the appeals process. Finally, a lengthy conversation transpired concerning the desire for temporary driver’s licenses for undocumented residents, which participants contended are needed to get to work and take children to school. One person stated that “we are working and paying taxes, but without the ability to apply for a driver’s license it feels like we have lost rights.”

## 6. South Bend Community Profile

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### St. Joseph County

**Total Population (2010):** 266,931 people

**Not Hispanic:** 228,141

**Hispanic or Latino Total:** 19,395 people, 7.2%

- Mexican: 15,338 people, 5.8%
- Puerto Rican: 1,074 people, 0.4%
- Cuban: 259 people, 0.097%
- Other Hispanic: 2,724 people, 1.0%

### South Bend

**Total Population (2010):** 101,168 people

**Not Hispanic:** 88,052

**Hispanic or Latino Total:** 13,116 people, 12.96%

- Mexican: 11,025 people, 10.89%
- Puerto Rican: 525 people, 0.51%
- Cuban: 111 people, 0.11%
- Other Hispanic: 1,455 people, 1.44%

### St. Joseph County Schools

#### John Glenn School Corporation

- 1,854 total students enrolled
- 769, or 41.5%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 94, or 5.1%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 18, or 0.97%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

#### Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 30 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 81.1%

Math Pass Number

- 31

Math Percent Pass

- 77.8%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 77.8%

#### New Prairie United School Corporation

- 2,822 total students enrolled
- 1,026, or 36.3%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 224, or 7.93%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 80, or 2.83%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

**Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics**

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 92 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 77.3%

Math Pass Number

- 97

Math Percent Pass

- 81.5%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 67.2%

**Penn-Harris Madison School Corporation**

- 10,654 total students enrolled
- 2,805, or 26.32%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 271, or 2.5%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 295, or 2.8%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

**Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics**

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 104 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 83.9%

Math Pass Number

- 108

Math Percent Pass

- 81.6%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 74.2%

**School City of Mishawaka**

- 5,139 total students enrolled
- 3,211, or 62.5%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 290, or 5.6%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 71, or 1.38%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

**Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics**

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 87 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 74.4%

Math Pass Number

- 95

Math Percent Pass

- 81.9%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 69.0%

**South Bend Community School Corporation**

- 20,156 total students enrolled
- 14,073, or 69.82%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 3,564, or 17.68%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 2,431, or 12.06%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

**Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics**

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 926 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 62.8%

Math Pass Number

- 1,041

Math Percent Pass

- 70.4%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 54.2%

**Questionnaire Responses**

On December 13, 2012, a focus group was conducted in South Bend, Indiana, on behalf of the ICHLA. Terry Spradlin, CEEP Project Manager, facilitated the focus group session, and Marisa Cortez, PAT Program Coordinator, El Campito, Inc., served as the session interpreter. There were eight people present, six of which were female and two participants were male. All eight individuals completed the demographic/employment questionnaire prior to the focus group.

The individuals ranged in age from 31 to 54 years old, with a mean age of 39 years. Six of the eight individuals were married, two were single. Two to four children currently lived in their homes, with an average of two children per household. Six of the individuals had school-aged children, one did not, and one did not respond to the question. Six of the individuals' children attended public school, two of the individuals did not respond to the question. Two of the eight individuals were employed, one individual did not respond. Of the two full-time workers, only one of them worked full-time, as a seamstress. Five of the individuals in the focus group received public financial assistance in the form of food stamps. Two individuals did not receive any assistance, and one individual did not respond. The individuals had resided in this community for

between 4 and 25 years, with an average length of residence of 11.5 years. When asked to describe one's quality of life in this community, they either responded "good," "average," "so-so," or "normal." When asked about what they enjoyed about living in this community, they responded that it was calm/safe, the proximity to stores and services, and comprised of respectful neighbors. When asked what they enjoyed least about living in this community, they said the language barrier, violence, or racism. Four of the individuals did not respond to this question.

### **Focus Group Session Summary**

#### *Governmental Service Issues*

When asked if any of the South Bend representatives have participated in any type of English language acquisition or job training, two participants noted that they had attended English classes. Two other participants expressed an interest in enrolling in an English language class, but were unable to because of a lack of child care or day care options. Some participants noted the language barriers that make it difficult to access governmental services. Another participant noted that she utilizes the Indiana health center in South Bend, despite its poor service, because it is the only place in town that accepts Medicaid and offers services in Spanish. She revealed that patients wait for hours and sometimes the doctor is not available, so they have to be attended to by an assistant who is not as qualified. When asked about what broad services the local or state government could provide to improve their quality of living, the participants emphasized issues related to transportation, home ownership information and public housing, safety, access to identification and licenses, inexpensive public daycare, and access to education. In terms of transportation, individuals expressed the need for buses that travel to further destinations and run more frequently so that they do not run the risk of getting caught driving without a driver's license. When asked about the method of accessing services, three respondents use the phone, two of the respondents go directly to the offices, while one individual first attempts to access a translator.

#### *Prekindergarten through Postsecondary Education*

When asked whether as parents they felt welcome in their children's schools and whether the schools had good forms of communication, three of the participants said, "Yes." Another

respondent said there is a bilingual teacher in the school that is particularly helpful with communication between the school and parents. Two other respondents cited that they felt the schools were not providing enough safety to their children and reported incidents of discrimination and bullying. All of the respondents indicated that they receive information regarding their child's academic performance from letters from the school written in English. There was general agreement that communication from schools and teachers was better in the elementary schools than in the high schools. The participants generally are happy with the quality of education that their children are receiving but they would like the teachers and faculty to make more of an effort to learn and communicate in Spanish, though the participants said some teachers are making such an effort which is greatly appreciated. One respondent said, "I think it would be important that the teachers that are Americans that only speak English should know a bit of Spanish."

They also indicated that their children are not familiar with the cultural rules, such as asking permission to use the restroom and only eating during certain times of the day, which results in the teachers reprimanding and punishing their children. One participant shared that:

*There have been two cases when my son has had an accident and gone to the restroom because he tells the teacher, but she doesn't understand him. The first time I asked him, 'Why didn't you tell the teacher?' And he said, 'Mom, I told her I had to go to the bathroom but she didn't understand.'*

They expressed a lack of understanding and sensitivity by educators to the Hispanic and Latino students who may be unfamiliar with these rules.

The respondents were generally aware of the flexibility in choosing to enroll their children in other school systems, but noted transportation as a limitation in doing so. When asked about their opinions regarding year-round schooling, the participants were supportive of the idea, mentioning that being in school is more beneficial and makes students more productive.

### *Early Childhood Education Programs*

Some conversation transpired with the group about the possibility of the state of Indiana funding prekindergarten programs and whether this would be a helpful program for which they would chose to enroll their children. Those who commented expressed support for a broader availability

of prekindergarten programs because the area Head Start programs have waiting lists and the preschool program(s) offered by the school corporation was “always full.” There was also a general consensus that school bus transportation should be provided for these programs to support access and good attendance.

#### *College Attainment Goals*

A brief conversation transpired about the aspirations that the parent participants have for their children’s academic attainment. Only one respondent had a child who was presently in high school. Her son is interested in attending culinary school but has not received any support or information about the college application process from the school or counselors.

#### *K-12 Programs and Services Needed*

The focus group discussion concluded with the questions, “Are there educational or other governmental services needed in this community that are not provided? If so, what are they?” Respondents mentioned better up-keep of the parks, as well as community safety. In terms of public parks, one individual noted that the equipment was old and broken. Another cited parks as a hangout for “bad kids” and “troublemakers.” In regard to community safety, participants advocated for speed bumps and increased security. One person stated, “...there are a lot of kids playing in the street and there are a lot of cars that pass by without looking...people don’t respect the speed limit.” Finally, more summer programs and summer school sessions were desired to keep children active and progressing academically.

## 7. Lafayette Community Profile

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### Tippecanoe County

**Total Population:** 172,780

**Not Hispanic:** 159,833

**Hispanic or Latino Total:** 12,947 people, 7.49%

- Mexican: 10,271 people, 5.94%
- Puerto Rican: 581 people, 0.34%
- Cuban: 163 people, 0.09%
- Other Hispanic: 1,932 people, 1.12%

### Lafayette

**Total Population:** 67,140

**Not Hispanic:** 59,033

**Hispanic or Latino Total:** 8,107 people, 12.07%

- Mexican: 6,965 people, 10.37%
- Puerto Rican: 253 people, 0.38%
- Cuban: 78 people, 0.12%
- Other Hispanic or Latino: 811 people, 1.21%

### Lafayette School Corporation

- 7,037 total number of students enrolled
- 4,683, or 66.54%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 1,540, or 21.9%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 906, or 12.87%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

#### Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 480 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 69.8%

Math Pass Number

- 553

Math Percent Pass

- 80.1%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 63.9%

### **Tippecanoe School Corporation**

- 11,844 total number of students enrolled
- 4,138, or 34.9%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 1,309, or 11.1%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 703, or 5.94%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

#### **Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics**

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 401 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 65.7%

Math Pass Number

- 428

Math Percent Pass

- 69.5%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 56.7%

### **West Lafayette School Corporation**

- 2,138 total number of students enrolled
- 284, or 13.9%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 112, or 5.23%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 105, or 4.91%, English Language Learners (of any native language)

#### **Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics**

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 47 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 94.0%

Math Pass Number

- 47

Math Percent Pass

- 90.4%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 88.0%

### **Questionnaire Responses**

On December 17, 2012, a focus group was conducted in Lafayette, Indiana, on behalf of the ICHLA. Terry Spradlin, CEEP Project Manager, facilitated the focus group, and Maria Avitia, CEEP Graduate Assistant, served as the interpreter. There were nine people present, two males and seven females. All nine participants completed the written questionnaire prior to the session.

The individuals ranged in age from 26 to 46 years old, with a mean age of 36 years. Six of the individuals were married, one person was widowed, one individual was single, and one person was cohabitating. The number of children currently living in their homes ranged from two to six children, with a mean of three children per household. They all had school-aged children except for one individual who did not respond to the question. Seven individuals had their children enrolled in public school, one individual did not respond. Two of the individuals were employed, compared to six of the individuals being unemployed, and one person who did not respond. Of the two employed individuals, one worked part-time and the other did not respond. The part-time worker cleaned houses and the other person took care of children. Three of the individuals in the focus group did not receive any public financial assistance or job training. One individual had financial assistance and food stamps, three more people had food stamps, one individual had school assistance (LARA), and one person did not respond. The individuals had resided in this community between 6 and 19 years with an average length of residence of 9 years. One individual was unaware of her length of residence. When asked to describe one's quality of life in this community, four people said "good" or "very good," one person said, "regular," one person said, "normal," one person said, "perfect," one person said, "unsure," and one person said, "so-so." When asked about what they enjoy about living in this community, they responded that it was calm/peaceful, had good community support, or availability to activities and events. When asked what they enjoyed least about living in this community, they cited racism, violence, and safety. Two individuals did not respond to the question.

### **Focus Group Session Summary**

#### *Governmental Service Issues*

When asked about the type of government services that they were accessing and that were most important to them, the participants identified the school system and health services.

Because the discussion would return to education later in the session, the participants began citing other examples of government service utilization such as the bus system, public library, and parks. Although the participants had not encountered a bilingual library staff member at the library's help desk, it was noted that the mobile library did have someone who spoke Spanish. However, the mobile library was less frequently available. One individual was satisfied with the

parks, but someone else said the south side needed more parks and more places where children could play. Participants related this to current offerings in the schools, where they would like to see opportunities for children in sports or music.

Access to public health care and Medicaid was also discussed. One participant stated that there is discrimination in the health care system based on race/ethnicity and personal income. Some frustration was expressed about the perceived limitation in Medicaid coverage for treatments of chronic or severe health ailments. Another participant suggested that a greater emphasis be placed on preventative health care and that full Medicaid coverage should be expanded to immigrant children born outside of the United States.

When asked about the method of accessing government services, one respondent said they first look on the Internet for program information before going to the agency in person for assistance. Another person indicated that the information on the Internet is available only in English and is not in a user-friendly format, so they prefer to go in person for assistance. Another person said they either go in person or phone to ask questions.

Several participants considered themselves bilingual in Spanish and English. They felt it was important to have language acquisition programs such as those offered by the Lafayette Adult Resource Academy (LARA), but one participant felt it was challenging to find the time to attend classes. Another participant said LARA helped improve reading skills but could provide better training in fluency and communication, such as practice opportunities.

Most participants indicated that they access government services in person, particularly because of not having strong language skills. In some, but not all cases, in-person assistance in Spanish is available. Individuals said this was easier than trying to call or research on the Internet.

None of the participants utilized job or training programs.

### *Prekindergarten through Postsecondary Education*

When discussing educational services, participants cited the need for assistance in providing textbooks, school lunches, and scholarships. However, individuals noted the long waiting list for Head Start and wondered whether the government could do more to help in early education. Participants indicated they would contribute to such programs if that would increase accessibility.

When asked whether as parents they felt welcome in their children's schools and whether the schools provided them with timely and useful information, participants said information on their children and schools was readily available from conferences, emails and the Internet, "Friday folders," and even text messages. These parents indicated that they were satisfied with the teachers and the quality of information. However, due to the lack of translators at the schools, one participant said it is difficult to understand the school staff and teachers. As a result, it is hard to participate in their child's education. One participant said a translator often was arranged to attend planned conferences, but at other times, no translator was present and communication with the teacher was challenging. Some teachers try to accommodate the language barrier by sending home information in Spanish. Participants said some families have to rely on their children to communicate with the school and suggested that more translators be made available. Another parent indicated that the frequency or volume of information share by high schools is less than that received by elementary or middle schools, and most of the communication was via email. While different, the parent perceived this as sufficient.

### *Early Childhood Education Programs*

When asked whether they would enroll their children in a state-funded preschool program, all of the participants said yes. One participant said that parents were waiting for this kind of opportunity. Another individual supports sending children to school earlier to become better acclimated to the "school rhythm." A participant noted that current programs have long waiting lists, and current half-day programs may lack appeal due to transportation issues. When asked if they would still be interested in a state-funded program that was half day, participants still said they would support the program. One participant has been on a waiting list for two years. Another participant has a son who was retained in first grade and wished he could have been

accepted into Head Start. This parent felt even a half-day program would be good if it helps children. Regarding access, in addition to the waiting list problem, a participant indicated that many family incomes are just above the income threshold for Head Start eligibility and that something should be done to provide early childhood education options to those families as well.

One individual whose daughter had attended both Head Start and a private program voiced support for increasing the rigor of Head Start. The daughter learned how to write her name in the private program, but in the Head Start program, children primarily spent time drawing shapes or coloring. This led to a discussion about school readiness and the importance of preparing students for kindergarten and grade 1. Otherwise, children risk being left back a grade. One participant said these programs should provide greater literacy instruction – “more than just shapes and colors.” This parent noted that, back in South America, children seemed to learn reading and writing at an early age.

When asked whether they enrolled their children in full-day kindergarten and whether full-day programs were more available after greater state investment, participants noted that the full-day program filled quickly. Some could not enroll their children. One parent had two children attend full-day and one attended half-day kindergarten. One parent indicated that only children who didn't speak English qualified for full-day kindergarten. Another said that English language proficiency, as well as income, was taken into account for full-day eligibility. In growing communities, participants noted that schools face significant space limitations.

One participant asked the group whether their schools provided a reading program to children. It seemed several schools provided similar programs (to the ICAN program in the Tippecanoe School Corporation) but under different names. One participant felt that all schools should have such programs. Other programs offered by the school corporations in Tippecanoe County included afterschool programs in Lafayette School Corporation and teacher home visits in West Lafayette Schools.

### *College Attainment Goals*

A few participants mentioned that they have older children enrolled in higher education in Indiana, with Ivy Tech most frequently mentioned. While given the opportunity to speak about college admissions and affordability, or other relevant issues, the discussion turned to additional comments about K-12 education, and school safety in particular.

### *K-12 Programs and Services Needed*

The focus group discussion concluded with the questions, “Are there educational or other governmental services needed in this community that are not provided? If so, what are they?” Respondents shared concerns about school safety. One parent suggested that the schools purchase and use metal detectors and that they like that school visitors must be “buzzed” into the schools. Another parent mentioned that one school principal has done a good job in sharing the school safety and building access procedures via a school newsletter. Student bullying, fighting and racism were other issues of concern mentioned. While security in schools is visible, there was some concern that the security staff doesn’t intervene in a timely fashion in some cases and are subjective in doling out discipline. One parent requested that her child be transferred to another school due to a problem with ongoing bullying, but the school corporation denied the request.



## 8. Evansville Community Profile

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### Evansville

**Total Population:** 121,582

**Not Hispanic:** 120,190

**Hispanic or Latino Total:** 1,392 people, 1.14%

- Mexican: 788 people, 0.65%
- Puerto Rican: 122 people, 0.1%
- Cuban: 79 people, 0.06%
- Other Hispanic or Latino: 403 people, 0.33%

### Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation

- 22,798 total number of students enrolled
- 12,920, or 56.67%, students participating in the Free or Reduced Lunch program
- 675, or 2.96%, students of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 364, or 1.6%, English Language Learners (of 34 native language)

#### **Students of Hispanic or Latino origin ISTEP+ (grades 3-8) statistics**

English Language Arts (ELA) Pass Number

- 162 students

ELA Percent Pass

- 61.8%

Math Pass Number

- 158

Math Percent Pass

- 60.3%

Pass Both Math and ELA Percent

- 51.7%

### Questionnaire Responses

On December 18, 2012, a focus group was conducted in Evansville, Indiana, on behalf of the ICHLA. Terry Spradlin, CEEP Project Manager, facilitated the focus group, and Maria Avitia, CEEP Graduate Assistant, served as the interpreter. There were 12 people present to participate in the session, four of which were male. Ten participants had completed written questionnaires prior to the commencement of the focus group session, with one questionnaire filled out to represent two participants (for a husband and wife who participated).

Of the eight individuals who responded to the question regarding their age, they ranged in age from 29 to 55 years old, with a mean age of 40 years. Five of the individuals were married, three people were single, and one person did not respond. Of the eight individuals who responded, the number of children currently living in their homes ranged from 1-4 children, with an average of 2 children per household. Eight of the individual's children were school-aged, one person did not respond. Eight of the individual's children attended public school and one person did not respond. Six of the individuals were employed while three of the individuals were unemployed. Of the six employed individuals, one person worked full-time, one person worked part-time, and four people did not respond to whether the employment was full- or part-time. The full-time worker assisted waiters and the part-time worker did not respond to the type of employment. The other individuals said they participated in community service, took care of children, worked in a restaurant, or were a homemaker. Two of the individuals in the focus group received public financial assistance or job training, three people did not receive assistance, and four people did not respond. Of the eight people who responded, they have resided in the community between 2 months and 20 years, with an average length of residence of 8 years. When asked to describe one's quality of life in this community, they responded "very good," "regular," "between poor and average," "so-so," "low," or "calm." Two individuals did not respond to the question. When asked about what they enjoyed about living in this community, they said the people, good public safety, the environment, and the work. When asked what they enjoyed least about living in this community, they said the language barriers or lack of services for the Hispanic/Latino community. Two individuals did not respond to the question.

### **Focus Group Session Summary**

#### *Governmental Service Issues*

When asked about the type of government services that they were accessing and that were most important to them, the participants identified public transportation, Medicaid, food stamps, and the public library. There was a general agreement among the participants that public transportation was important for their families, especially because many of them did not have government-issued driver's licenses. Participants did indicate that there were limitations to public transportation because of inadequate routes, the bus not operating on Sundays, the bus

stops running before participants are off of work, and the frequency of the bus (every hour or 30 minutes) is limited. There are also limitations to services when participants do not possess government-issued forms of identification. One participant spoke about the difficulty of enrolling his children in school without proper identification. Additionally, there is a desire for more interpreters at public places, such as the schools and clinics to decrease the occurrence of communication barriers due to language. When discussing job training programs offered in the community, none of the participants had attended any programs either because they were not offered in Spanish or they did not know about them.

When asked about the method of accessing services, the participant's answers ranged from going directly to the office, calling the office, or receiving mail from the office. The participants stated that if the information from services could be presented in Spanish, as well as English, it would be easier for them to understand. The group acknowledged the importance of learning English, but one participant used the phrase "you can't learn if you are hungry" to emphasize that working and supporting their families comes before educating themselves. Also, English language programs are held at limited times and often occur while the participants are at work.

#### *Prekindergarten through Postsecondary Education*

When asked whether as parents they felt welcome in their children's schools and whether the schools provided them with timely and useful information to support their children, the participants said it varied by school. One parent stated that their children's school was extremely helpful to the family and to their child with special needs. Other parents indicated that they rely on their children to translate school papers and documents, as well as parent teacher meetings, and they worry about the accuracy of the translations. Participants felt unwelcome by members of the school because they do not speak English. They all shared this sentiment, with similar experiences such as being hung up on when trying to place a call to the school. They all feel that the schools do not care about difficulties they are experiencing in their lives. Participants did express enthusiasm and interest in the possibility of parent mentoring programs (that are not being offered presently by the school district). They indicated that they would make every effort to attend if this would help them to better support the children's learning and performance.

Participants stated that these programs would be most effective if held during a variety of times based upon an availability survey from all Hispanic parents in their region.

#### *Early Childhood Education Programs*

Some conversation transpired with the group about the possibility of the state of Indiana funding prekindergarten programs and whether this would be a helpful program that they would enroll their children in. Full-day kindergarten programs, which the Evansville community has, were the most preferred because their children learned more and they were more convenient for the working parents. In regard to school choice scholarship vouchers, none of the participants were aware that they could be eligible to send their children to private schools at a cost funded by the government if their child was receiving free or reduced lunch.

#### *College Attainment Goals*

A brief conversation emerged about the aspirations that the parent participants have for their children's academic attainment. There was general agreement that they would like to see their children attend college. There were some concerns expressed about parents not receiving information about college preparation and steps/programs that parents and students can engage in to enhance the possibility of acceptance into colleges.

#### *K-12 Programs and Services Needed*

The focus group discussion concluded with the questions, "Are there educational services needed in this community that are not provided? If so, what are they?" Programs or services mentioned by participants included increased availability of sports, extracurricular activities, and afterschool programs. The lack of public transportation and legal parent transportation limits their children's ability to become involved with these activities because often students do not have rides between school and their homes. Again, the issue of obtaining a legal driver's license was presented. Parents also discussed a concern about programs for homework help. They often do not understand their children's homework and would like them to have access to a program that would assist with this.

## 9. Summary of Superintendents' Critical Needs Questionnaire

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As stated in Chapter 2 (Methodology), the CEEP Project Team surveyed school corporation superintendents and local government officials (mayors and city councilors) to gain their insights and perspectives on service delivery issues concerning programs that support Hispanic or Latino families and children. The responses are aggregated in total to protect the respondents' anonymity and honor the confidentiality promised to them to encourage a high response. A total of 16 completed questionnaires were received from the 22 school corporation superintendents invited to participate, a 72.7% response rate. There was an insufficient response rate from the other local government officials to include findings from that survey in this chapter.

### General Themes from Survey of Superintendents

- 1. Please describe the educational programming provided to the Hispanic/Latino students in your school corporation. Do you have targeted programs or support services for this student population? If so, please describe what they are and how you fund them.**

Fifteen of the superintendents<sup>1</sup> questioned provide some form of academic support for Hispanic/Latino students. This ranges from entirely ESL classes, pull-out instruction, to Spanish/English immersion classes, depending on the specific school. One administrator noted:

*[Our corporation] currently provides Core Curriculum to all students and then English Language (EL) services are provided for those students needing these services. Students who need EL services are provided with direct instruction in language acquisition skills in writing, reading comprehension, speaking and listening skills. They may receive support within their classrooms or be pulled out into a small resource classroom. We also have afterschool tutoring programs as well as summer programs that are funded through our grants: Title III, Immigrant Influx, Refugee, and NESP.*

One school corporation indicated that it does not offer separate educational programming within the academic schedule, but does host monthly family nights for Hispanic/Latino families that are

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<sup>1</sup> In a few instances, superintendents delegated completion of the survey to other administrators, but because the survey was anonymous we do not have a precise number of designee respondents.

led by an EL tutor. These nights are spent with language instruction and cultural immersion for families who are new to the country or community. Another administrator responded that they have no targeted programs specific to Hispanic/Latino students, but they do offer school and district materials such as letters and pamphlets in Spanish. Of the educational programs offered by school corporations, four respondents indicated they are funded by the General Fund (though all school corporations likely use General Fund dollars for these programs to some extent), which supports ELL tutors, ESL teachers, and bilingual assistants. One school also cited the use of the Non-English Speaking Programs grant to fund ESL teachers. Two school corporations use the Refugee Immigrant School Impact grant to provide support for refugee students and their families. Five programs are primarily state funded through the NESP grant<sup>2</sup>, which covers the financial costs of creating programs that engage students in all domains of language acquisition (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) while learning through inquiry within meaningful contexts and authentic experiences. Title I and III grants, which five school corporations cited as primary funding sources, provide for supplemental activities and services such as smaller classes and one-on-one instruction in the areas of fluency, vocabulary development, phonics, comprehension, and phonemic awareness.

**2. What are the obstacles or barriers you face in meeting the learning and developmental needs of the Hispanic/Latino students in your school corporation?**

There are a number of obstacles and barriers that school corporations face in meeting the learning and developmental needs of their Hispanic/Latino student population. One fourth of respondents said there is a lack of trained educators to effectively work with this population of students. This includes cultural competency and knowing the ‘best practice’ approaches to teaching EL students. For example, one administrator noted that their schools need “to work with our teachers in ensuring we are offering quality services in teaching English language development, as well as regular classroom teachers to use sheltered<sup>3</sup> instructional strategies to make content comprehensible.” Fifteen percent of the school corporations said the small number

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<sup>2</sup> The state-funded Non-English Speaking Program (NESP) provides supplemental funding to eligible school corporations to serve limited English proficient (LEP) students. The purpose of this grant is to provide monies for K-12 instruction focused on English language development.

<sup>3</sup> Sheltered English instruction is an instructional approach that engages ELLs above the beginner level in developing grade-level content-area knowledge, academic skills, and increased English proficiency. In sheltered English classes, teachers use clear, direct, simple English and a wide range of scaffolding strategies to communicate meaningful input in the content area to students.

of EL teachers on staff serves as an obstacle because of the student to teacher ratio which hinders small group instruction. “High caseloads can sometimes be obstacles in meeting the language development needs of our EL students. In our current program model, our six EL teachers split time between buildings.” Sixty percent of the school corporations responded that the language and cultural differences serve as barriers, as they impede school and family communication and comprehension of academic policies. One school corporation noted, “Our primary issues are related to Hispanic/Latino students for whom English is a second language. We struggle to meet the needs of students with limited English, especially at the secondary level.” Three of the school corporations surveyed said that the lack of parental involvement and support serves as a barrier. One school corporation noted that the lack of extra-curricular activities and self-segregation by the Hispanic/Latino student population hinders their ability to develop socially and academically.

### **3. What are your primary methods of communications with the parents of Hispanic/Latino students?**

School corporation administrators were asked to explain their primary methods of communication with the parents of Hispanic/Latino students. As a means of communicating, 87 percent of school corporations utilize interpreters, ELL tutors, or bilingual assistants, to translate English documents into Spanish or converse with families in their native language. One school administrator wrote:

*All parent communication delivered by mail is translated into Spanish by the ENL office. Schools needing to send a letter home simply send a copy of the letter to the ENL office and we translate it to Spanish. Every student has an indicator to let us know if the parents marked a language other than English spoken at home and if it is the primary language. If the primary language at home is Spanish, then all written communication is sent to that home in Spanish. If a message is sent by phone, we have a Connect Ed system with which we can send telephone messages in Spanish or English, depending on the language spoken at home. Each school has parent night meetings on a regular basis. Bilingual assistants are used to translate during these meetings. Our Superintendent also has meetings with Hispanic/Latino families throughout the year. We provide interpreters for these meetings.*

Three school corporations stated that they do not provide any communication in Spanish because they have not found the need to do so and see print materials/newsletters in English

as sufficient. One administrator acknowledged the lack of communication resources in his school corporation stating, “Unfortunately we are not privy to a parent liaison whose goal is to solely communicate with parents. Because I am not fluent in Spanish, most of my communication is done face to face. I can only translate simple text and make simple, rehearsed phone calls home.”

#### **4. Are student reports, materials, and information conveyed to parents in Spanish?**

When asked whether student reports, materials, and information were conveyed to parents in Spanish, seven of the school corporations surveyed responded “Yes.” One school administrator stated:

*When parents of a student are identified as speaking a language other than English, interpreters are provided for parent-teacher conferences and other meetings, school newsletters are translated into Spanish as often as possible, district registration forms and other regular communication are translated in Spanish, and district-level phone communication is bilingual (English and Spanish). K-6 standards based report cards are available in Spanish.*

Four of the school corporations provide materials and information in Spanish “when necessary” or “as needed.” Two school corporations do not provide materials in Spanish, one of which acknowledged that “Even when Spanish documents are provided to the school, they are seldom handed to the students, even when requested.”

#### **5. How are parent-teacher conferences conducted with these parents? Are teachers bilingual or is an interpreter provided?**

Of the services identified by this question and offered by the school corporations, nine of the respondents (56%) of school corporations indicated they offer interpreters or translators as needed at conferences and meetings with non-English speaking parents. Thirty-two percent of school systems provide bilingual teachers or paraprofessionals to communicate with these parents. For example, one administrator wrote:

*With \*\* schools and over \*\*\*\* Hispanic/Latino students, our meetings take many shapes. Sometimes the presenter is bilingual and can present the information. Each school has bilingual assistants and teachers who can translate, or they are*

*the ones leading the meetings. We also have a bilingual social worker and bilingual community liaison who conducts meetings at various sites. When a school's personnel cannot secure a translator, the school contacts the ENL office and we make sure a translator is provided.*

On the other hand, one administrator wrote, "We make do with the resources we have. The parents that need help with conferences often receive translation assistance with the help of a non-fluent staff member. There are simply not enough bilingual resources to offer a translator at all schools for appointment times." Two schools have the Hispanic/Latino student translate the information to their Spanish-speaking parents, and one school corporation was unsure of its schools' services.

**6. Are the Hispanic/Latino parents encouraged to volunteer in your schools?**

When asked whether Hispanic/Latino parents are encouraged to volunteer in the schools, 14 school corporations responded, "Yes." However, one respondent (who was likely not a superintendent) said that, "Latino/Hispanic parents are not encouraged to volunteer their time. There is a lack of communication to let them know of the things that they can do... (and) a lack of bilingual support at PTA meetings. Their thoughts and opinions and concerns go unheard."

**7. Are there any issues that you face in providing bus services to Hispanic/Latino students in your school district? Please describe how you are addressing these challenges.**

When asked if there are any issues the schools face in providing bus services to Hispanic/Latino students in their school district, all school corporations responded "No." One school corporation acknowledged that in the past there had been some busing difficulties but the transportation department has since employed bilingual personnel who are equipped to answer transportation questions. Another administrator commented on the language difficulties as well, stating, "If the students are not English speakers, and the driver does not speak Spanish, we may have to deal with how well we are communicating with each other; however, Hispanic/Latino students who do speak English will usually provide language support and interpret for both the student and the driver. If for some reason, the issue is not resolved with the student and driver, we depend on our building level staff." Another administrator stated that his concern was not the bus service itself, but rather the lack of parental involvement in getting them on the bus and to school. They stated:

*More fathers are working away from Indianapolis, which leaves only the mother at home to take care of the children. The mothers are very hesitant to get involved with anything educationally and make no decisions regarding their child's progress. Thus, we have many students who are not 'on track' in their learning and continue to fall further behind.*

**8. How can community leaders and organizations contribute to support the educational programming you provide to these children?**

School administrators suggested a number of ways that community leaders and organizations could provide support. Seven (43%) administrators requested local support and partnerships to be implemented between the schools and community leaders and organizations. One administrator said:

*We have a monthly Latino Resources roundtable meeting where community leaders and organizations can come and share what they do and how they help the community. University partners could help organize parent groups at each site to increase the number of parent organizations that advocate for their children. At these meetings, community leaders and organizations could present to empower parents and create parent leaders within each school.*

Another administrator reported that, "Community leaders and organizations could provide resources such as mentoring, financial support, and career exploration opportunities." Mentoring and volunteering were highly encouraged by many of the administrators (36%), who said, "We would love to have more mentors/volunteers in our schools during the day and after school to work with our boys and girls!" One administrator requested that policymakers "provide adequate state funding for ENL. The current reduced rate (under recent budgets) is inadequate." One administrator reported they were not sure what community leaders and organizations could contribute to support the educational programming their schools provide.

**9. Are there things that the state government and the legislature in Indiana can provide or do differently or better to assist you in supporting this student population? Please elaborate.**

Of the responses from school corporation administrators, all but one individual acknowledged that there are things that the state government and legislature in Indiana could do to better assist the schools in supporting their population of students. Sixty-four percent of school corporation

administrators stated that schools need additional funding to support bilingual education, additional bilingual staff, and additional teachers that are certified and qualified to work with the population. One administrator said:

*Our EL program certified staff salaries total more than \$621,000. While federal Title III money and state NESP money assist in paying EL program members, [the schools] receive less than \$177,000 from these grants. The other 72% of salaries are paid from General Fund money. Additional state funding in the NESP grant could help.*

Another administrator wrote:

*The funding for providing language support is very limited. Due to limited financial resources we rely on General Fund dollars to put in a program for language support but because there is a focus on that support, we do not have the resources to provide cultural support or cultural competency training for the staff. One thing that would not cost the state any new money is to return the six half days that schools were allowed to have (for professional development). That would give me a chance to provide diversity training for all.”*

One school corporation administrator suggested “support of the DREAM Act and comprehensive immigration reform so that these families can live without fear of deportation.” Twenty-one percent of school corporation respondents suggested that the state government and legislature provide some form of support for teachers and schools working with EL students. One administrator noted:

*[the] Government and legislature could mandate that all pre-service teachers are educated and prepared to work with these students through ENL licensure programs. Government and the legislature could change the stance on standardized tests so that it matches the science and research behind how long it takes to acquire academic language. Currently, students are tested after one year on the ELA (ISTEP+) exam and are tested the first year in math, science, and Algebra. Research tells us it can take 7-10 years to acquire academic language.*

Another administrator commented as well, stating:

*The bilingual resources that we once offered have all disappeared from the state site. Indiana no longer provides Twenty-First Century scholarship applications in Spanish, nor do they provide state standards, On Track, or any other valuable resources in Spanish. If any documents are available, they certainly are not easy to find by school personnel or parents.*

Furthermore, another administrator stated:

*State government and the legislature could help by insisting that education decision-makers analyze current English proficiency standards for better alignment to CCSS (perhaps adopting the already created WIDA standards<sup>4</sup> would eliminate the need to create Common Core aligned ELP standards in Indiana). In addition, government and education decision-makers should consider reviewing how we are testing students with state standardized tests that are often unfair to LEP students. There needs to be an analysis and review of the required LAS Links Assessment.<sup>5</sup>*

Only one administrator reported that nothing needed to be done by state government and legislature at this time.

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<sup>4</sup> The mission of WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) is to advance academic language development and academic achievement for linguistically diverse students through high quality standards. These standards include English Language Development (ELD) Standards, ELP Standards, Spanish Language Arts (SLA) Standards, and WIDA Standards in International Contexts.

<sup>5</sup> LAS Links (Language Assessment System Links) is the state-mandated test of English language proficiency administered to grade K – 12 ELL students annually. The results are used to demonstrate the progress ELL students are making towards proficiency in English.

## 10. Findings

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### Key themes and critical issues

The Project Team at CEEP spoke with 53 participants in six cities across Indiana to gather insights into their perspectives concerning their quality of life experiences in the communities in which they work and reside. While the participants were invited by local conveners and every effort was made to have a diversity of participants that were reflected of the Hispanic/Latino population for each city, most were female and the median age of 38 was considerable higher than the median age for the Hispanic/Latino population in Indiana (of 23.7). Respondents indicated that they have resided in their respective communities in Indiana for an average of 8 years, with a range from 2 months to 25 years. Concerning employment, 47.5 percent indicated that they were employed and 52.5 percent indicated that they were unemployed (reflective of the high number of participants who were mothers of young children and stay-at-home parents). While the Project Team urges caution in making sweeping generalizations or drawing definitive conclusions regarding the critical needs of all Hispanic/Latino Hoosiers from information gathered through this research, key themes pertaining to the participants can be summarized and are informative as we consider services to Hispanic/Latino Hoosiers, and their children in particular.

### Questionnaire Responses

The questionnaire posed three general open-ended questions concerning the respondents' quality of life in their community. Approximately 80 percent of respondents characterized their quality of life as good to very good; whereas, 20 percent of respondents indicated their quality of life was average to low. When asked about what they liked best about their community, participants indicated they felt safe, enjoyed a community atmosphere, and valued the services available to them. When asked about what they liked least about their community, some respondents also cited public safety, as well as poverty issues, insufficient public services (e.g., mass transportation and public healthcare), lack of recreational activities for children, disrespectful neighbors, feelings of isolation, and a presence of language barriers that deter their more active participation in the community. These issues were discussed in greater depth during the focus group sessions and are summarized here.

## **Focus Group Session Summary**

A common set of questions was used to facilitate the discussion with each focus group in the six cities. However, depending on the responses shared by participants, some questions were more (or less) relevant for certain communities. The summary information provided here reflects aggregate responses across all cities visited in the categories of: *Governmental Service Issues, Government Service Needs, Prekindergarten through Postsecondary Education (General Issues), Early Childhood Education Programs, College Attainment Goals, and K-12 Education Suggestions/Needs.*

### *Governmental Service Issues*

Participants indicated that the following governmental services were most important to them (in no particular order):

- Libraries
- Parks
- Public healthcare or Medicaid
- Public safety (police and fire)
- Mass transportation/public transit systems
- Welfare or food stamps
- K-12 public schools

Participants generally look online or call for needed information about these programs, and those who are legal residents will go to public agencies in person. Some participants stated a reluctance to seek or enroll in public services or programs due to fears of deportation, reflected in the comments one participant stated: “It is scary for those of us who are undocumented and it prevents us from accessing [services].” Participants who do receive services stated a fairly high level of satisfaction with the services, especially libraries, public safety, and K-12 public education.

### *Government Service Needs*

This brings us back to the primary question of the study, “What are the critical needs of the Hispanic/Latino community in Indiana?” Suggestions for programs and services that would enhance the quality of life and contribute to a deeper integration into their communities by the participants included:

- Educational programs for parents in schools or offered by community organizations, such as ESL, GED, parent mentoring, and technology classes;
- Temporary driver’s licenses;
- More extensive mass transit services (e.g., hours, frequency of bus routes, Sunday service, etc.);
- Information on financial aid for college expenses and college affordability;
- Enhancements to parks and better street lighting; and
- Health clinics/fairs at schools to make health services more accessible.

Some participants stated that while they had been previously enrolled in ESL classes, due to lack of funding they could no longer be a part of the program. Other respondents indicated that a lot of Hispanic/Latino residents do not attend these classes because of the hours, location, insufficient childcare, or that a Social Security number and/or a driver’s license is required to participate, which many of them do not have. The persistence of language barriers is an ongoing obstacles for Hispanic/Latino residents to fully acclimate themselves into their communities, which contributes to feelings of isolation and incidences of discrimination and even racism.

Focus group conversations often included discussion concerning the desire for temporary driver’s licenses for undocumented residents. Participants contend that access to temporary documentation and a driver’s license in particular are needed to take children to school and ensure that they can get to work to maintain their jobs. In turn, they stated a desire or expectation to pay taxes that will support their participation in, and funding of, public services. One person stated that “we are working and paying taxes, but without the ability to apply for a driver’s license it feels like we have lost rights.”

Overall, participants agreed that it was important to have language acquisition programs such as those offered by the Lafayette Adult Resource Academy (LARA) (see page 34 for more information on this program). Participants also expressed enthusiasm and interest in the possibility of parent mentoring programs (that are not typically being offered by the school districts). They indicated that they would make every effort to attend if this would help them to better support the children’s learning and performance.

*Prekindergarten through Postsecondary Education (General Issues)*

Generally speaking, participants were satisfied with the quality of education that their children were receiving and the level of information shared by the schools (although less so in Hammond and Evansville). However, not every participant was fully satisfied with their involvement in schools and their ability to assist with their children’s academic development. A parent reflected these concerns by stating that they do not believe the schools take advantage of how much parents could actually offer if they were encouraged to volunteer more. “Parents have good intentions to help, but do not know how to help.” Another participant stated:

*I think that it is the role of the community (organizations) to facilitate the communication. But also, it is the role of the immigrants coming into a new culture to educate themselves on the new culture and language. It is the role of the school to help educate the children.*

*Early Childhood Education Programs*

Participants expressed a high level of support for a broader availability of prekindergarten programs because the area Head Start programs have waiting lists and the few preschool program(s) offered by school corporations were “always full.” One participant alluded to a benefit of prekindergarten—that it would help her child with the transition to elementary school, and in particular it would help with English language acquisition. Most parent participants did indicate that their children were enrolled in full-day kindergarten and they thought this was helpful, though in one city the full-day kindergarten program remained a limited-access program.

### *College Attainment Goals*

There was a general consensus by participants that they have the goal and expectation that their children will attend college, and this had become a reality for some participants who had older children. However, one participant's comments reflected the concern held by most participants about the financial viability of college for their family, "If they aren't documented or do not have a Social Security [number], they cannot receive scholarships or work studies, even if they are the most gifted, or talented, or intelligent. This means higher education is just a dream."

This prompted a brief conversation about legislation passed by the Indiana General Assembly in 2011 that requires out-of-state tuition fees to be charged to illegal immigrants, regardless of whether the student graduated from an Indiana high school. A participant stated in this regard, "There are children that want to better themselves, who are brilliant, intelligent, and capable, but this financial barrier is stopping them."

### *K-12 Education Suggestions/Needs*

Participants offered several suggestions that reflected what they felt were legitimate educational needs of their children, including:

- Summer school
- Summer camps
- Afterschool programs
- Tutoring
- Expanded school bus services
- Arts and Music programs/enrichment
- School safety enhancement and bullying prevention

## **General Themes from Survey of Superintendents**

Most school corporations are providing supplemental education services to support Hispanic/Latino students, as well as other English Language Learner populations, via ESL classes, pull-out instruction, immersion classes, and direct instruction in language acquisition skills (writing, reading comprehension, speaking and listening). They are funding these programs through a variety of federal and state grants/funds such as the federal Title I, Title III, Immigrant

Influx, and Refugee grant programs, as well as the state's Non-English Speaking Program. These funding sources are providing support for ELL tutors, ESL teachers, bilingual assistants, bilingual social workers, and, in fewer instances, community liaisons. School corporations report making a concerted effort to translate important documents, newsletters, and report cards into Spanish. However, school corporation administrators acknowledge that gaps and shortcomings in communication to Hispanic/Latino families persist.

Administrators identified a number of obstacles that impede their efforts to effectively serve students of Hispanic/Latino origin. Barriers or obstacles include:

- Insufficient number of trained educators equipped to serve ELL populations;
- Inadequate resources to hire additional staff to support ELL students;
- Lack of resources (time and money) to provide professional development in general, and, in particular, professional development focused on cultural competency;
- Inadequate expertise to identify “best practice” programs and instructional strategies;
- Persistence of language barriers in the Hispanic/Latino community that lead to self-segregation, isolation, and low levels of parental involvement. These issues are challenges many school districts face across the United States. Arias and Morillo-Campbell contend that interactions between schools and parents are often unidirectional and fail to value and take advantage of the families' resources and culture (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008).

## **Recommendations**

*For the ICHLA:*

- 1) The Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs should convene a summit or roundtable of key stakeholder groups and organizations to address the critical needs of Hispanic/Latino Hoosiers that are identified in this study. Strategies or solutions to address the critical need issues should be developed and then championed by the ICHLA.
- 2) The ICHLA should continue its research efforts to:
  - A) Identify school corporations with high populations of Hispanic/Latino students, low socioeconomic status, and high achievement results (as measured by ISTEP+ scores)

- to then examine their K-12 programs and instructional strategies considered to be effective strategies or “best practices” to share with educators and administrators in other school corporations across the state;
- B) The CEEP Project Team should extend its research to more extensively examine research-based or evidence-based policies and practices that are proven to ameliorate the obstacles and barriers facing Hispanic/Latino Hoosiers and support public agencies in providing highly effective services. This information should be shared with the participants in the summit or roundtable specified in recommendation #1.
- 3) The ICHLA should partner with the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) to review resource materials and guidance the IDOE is providing to school corporations concerning cultural competence and culturally responsive teaching. Website and print materials should be updated and this issue should be reemphasized as a priority issue at future meetings and conferences hosted by the IDOE. The regional education service centers should be included in the conversation to serve a role in promoting evidence-based practices and strategies.
- 4) The ICHLA should work with the IDOE and the Indiana Commission on Higher Education (ICHE) to explore why important resource guides like the Indiana Academic Standards, the Twenty-First Century Scholars application, and the On Track magazine are no longer distributed broadly in Spanish. Strategies should be developed on how to disseminate these resources (in Spanish) to local communities throughout Indiana.

*For School Corporations and Schools:*

- 1) A growing concern by participants is that there is an increasing “knowledge gap” between the parents and their children (who are becoming fluent not only in English, but also with the use of technology). While beneficial for their children, the concern is that this “knowledge gap” is creating an additional divide between the parents and their children. To address this issue, school corporations should provide **parent mentoring programs** that are at a convenient time and provide a meal and childcare to promote participation. These programs should focus on sharing important information about

school programs, policies, and norms; support parents with ESL instruction; offer educationally supportive strategies for child development in the home; encourage parental involvement in schools; and give guidance to parents on how to stay connected with teachers on their children's academic progress and how to support literacy instruction in the home.

- 2) Offer **Hispanic/Latino Resource Roundtables** on a monthly basis in the school community. Community leaders and public agency representatives should be invited to share news and information regarding programs and initiatives that support Hispanic/Latino families. These forums could be expanded to include public health organizations to provide health clinic services.
- 3) School leaders should recognize, support, and attend important cultural events in the community and celebrate significant dates and events relevant to Hispanic/Latino students' culture (The Education Alliance, 2013).

## References

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# Appendices

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## Appendix A. Focus Group Invitation

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### *You are Invited!*

*Your perspectives and input are needed concerning a study for the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs that is examining governmental service delivery and access issues, especially services provided by k-12 schools in our community. Would you please participate in a focus group session on November 29, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at La Plaza, 8902 E. 38<sup>th</sup> Street, Indianapolis, IN 46226? Your participation is voluntary and greatly valued! Dinner will be provided. Here are additional details about this session:*

#### **Study Objectives:**

Assist the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs examine governmental service delivery and access issues, with emphasis on P-20 education, for the Hispanic/Latino populations in the state. The Center for Evaluation & Education Policy (CEEP) at Indiana University will assist the ICHLA in increasing its understanding of its targeted constituency in Indiana and what barriers and obstacles these residents face in accessing services and fully participating in community affairs. Focus groups will occur in Evansville, Frankfort, Hammond, Indianapolis, New Albany and South Bend. Evansville, Frankfort and Hammond will be designated as case study cities that CEEP will use to explore service delivery issues more deeply by speaking with agency staff.

#### **Format:**

A 60-90 minute focus group will be conducted in each city with 8-10 participants who are reflective of the Hispanic/Latino populations in that community. Terry Spradlin, Project Manager, will facilitate the sessions and will be accompanied by a CEEP student-intern who is fluent in Spanish for any translation/interpretation needs. Mr. Spradlin will encourage full participation by each attendee in the discussion. These sessions are fully voluntary and any participant can choose to discontinue participation at any time. The names of the participants will be anonymous in the report that CEEP issues to ICHLA. The sessions will be recorded and transcribed in English. The CEEP team will use the information gathered from the focus groups to identify key themes and critical issues that will be summarized in a section of the study report.

***Usted está invitado!***

*Sus perspectivas y entrada se necesitan para un estudio para La Comisión de Indiana para Asuntos Hispanos/Latinos que está examinando la prestación de servicios gubernamentales y las cuestiones de acceso, con énfasis en los servicios proporcionados por las escuelas k-12 en nuestra comunidad. ¿Podría participar, por favor, en un sesión de un grupo de foco en el 11-29-2012, de 5:00- 7:00 de la tarde, al La Plaza, 8902 East 38th Street, Indianapolis, IN 46226? ¡Su participación es voluntaria y valorada! El almuerzo será proporcionado. Debajo son detalles adicionales sobre la sesión:*

**Objetos del Estudio:**

Ayuda La Comisión de Indiana para Asuntos Hispanos/Latinos examina la prestación de servicios gubernamentales y las cuestiones de acceso, con énfasis en la educación P-20, para las poblaciones hispana / latinas en el estado. El Center for Evaluation & Education Policy a la Universidad de Indiana asistirá con ICHLA en aumentar su comprensión de su circunscripción específica en Indiana y que barreras y obstáculos a estos residentes enfrentan para acceder a los servicios y participar plenamente en los asuntos de la comunidad. Los grupos de focos ocurrirán en Evansville, Frankfort, Hammond, Indianapolis, New Albany, y South Bend. Frankfort y Hammond será designado como ciudades pilotos que CEEP utilizará para explorar cuestiones de prestación de servicios con más profundidad al hablar con el personal de la agencia.

**Formato:**

Un 60-90 minuto grupo de foco se llevará a cabo en cada ciudad con 8-10 participantes quienes reflejan el población Hispano/Latino en ese comunidad. Terry Spradlin, Jefe de Proyecto, facilitará las sesiones y será acompañado por un estudiante-interno quien puede hablar español y ayudar con la traducción a español y las necesidades de interpretación. Sr. Spradlin se anima a los asistentes a participar plenamente en la discusión. Las sesiones están voluntarias y cada asistente puede escoger a parar su participación a cualquier tiempo. Los nombres de los participantes serán anónimos en el reporte que CEEP da a ICHLA. Las sesiones serán grabadas y transcritas en ingles. El equipo de CEEP utilizará la información de los grupos de foco para identificar los temas importantes y los problemas críticos en su resumen en una sección del reporte final.

## **Appendix B. Focus Group Pre-Session Questionnaire**

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### **Indiana Commission of Hispanic/Latino Affairs Project: Governmental Services Delivery and Access Critical Needs Study**

**South Bend, December 13, 2012**

This questionnaire and the subsequent focus group forum are being conducted to assist the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs (ICHLA) examine governmental service delivery and access issues, with emphasis on P-20 education, for the Hispanic/Latino populations in the state. The Center for Evaluation & Education Policy (CEEP) at Indiana University is assisting the ICHLA in increasing its understanding of its targeted constituency in Indiana and what barriers and obstacles these residents face in accessing services and fully participating in community affairs.

After you complete this brief questionnaire a 60-90 minute focus group will be conducted today with you and the other participants in attendance. The questionnaire and focus group are fully voluntary and you can choose to discontinue participation at any time. Your name will be anonymous in the report that CEEP issues to ICHLA. The focus group session will be recorded and transcribed in English. The CEEP team will use the information gathered today to identify key themes and critical issues that will be summarized in a section of the study report it issues to the ICHLA. Again, your name will be removed from the final report.

Please take a moment to complete the following questions:

- 1) Please provide name (optional):
- 2) Please indicate your age:
- 3) Are you single, widowed or married?
- 4) How many children reside in your home?
- 5) Do you have school-aged children? How many? If yes, are they enrolled in public or private school?
- 6) Are you employed, and if yes, full-time or part-time? What type of employment?
- 7) If you are not employed, are you receiving job training or public financial assistance (welfare or food stamps)? Describe:
- 8) How long have you resided in this community?

9) Generally speaking, how would you describe your quality of life in this community?

10) What do you enjoy most about living in this community?

11) What do you enjoy least about living in this community?

Thank you for completing the questionnaire! Once everyone has completed it, Mr. Terry Spradlin, Project Manager at CEEP, will facilitate the focus group conversation. Maegan will assist with Spanish translation and interpretation needs. You are encouraged to participate freely and openly in this discussion.

Please let us know if you have any questions concerning the questionnaire, the focus group or the study itself.

**Proyecto de La Comisión de Indiana para Asuntos Hispanos/Latinos:  
Estudio de la Entrega de Servicios Gubernamentales y del Acceso de Necesidades Críticas**

**South Bend, December 13, 2012**

Este cuestionario y grupo de foco después se llevan a cabo para ayudar a La Comisión de Indiana para Asuntos Hispanos/Latinos examina la prestación de servicios gubernamentales y las cuestiones de acceso, con énfasis en la educación P-20, para las poblaciones hispanas / latinas en el estado. El Center for Evaluation & Education Policy (CEEP) en la Universidad de Indiana está ayudando al ICHLA en aumentar su comprensión de su circunscripción específica en Indiana y qué barreras y obstáculos a estos residentes enfrentan para acceder a los servicios y participar plenamente en los asuntos de la comunidad.

Después de completar este breve cuestionario, un grupo de enfoque de 60-90 minutos se ocurrirá hoy con ustedes y los demás participantes en la asistencia. El cuestionario y grupo de enfoque son totalmente voluntarios y usted puede optar por dejar de participar en cualquier momento. Su nombre será anónimo en los reportes de CEEP a ICHLA. La sesión de grupo de discusión será grabada y transcrita en inglés. El equipo CEEP utilizará la información que recogida hoy para identificar los temas importantes y los problemas críticos ue se resumen en una sección del reporte que CEEP dará a ICHLA. Una vez más, su nombre será eliminado del informe final. Otra vez, su nombre no aparecerá en el reporte final.

Por favor tome un momento para completar las siguientes preguntas:

- 1) Por favor, proporcione su nombre.
- 2) Por favor, proporcione su edad.
- 3) ¿Es usted soltero, casado, o viudo?
- 4) ¿Cuántos niños viven en su casa?
- 5) ¿Tiene usted niños de edad escolar? Si es así, ¿están matriculados en una escuela pública o escuela privada?
- 6) ¿Está usted empleado, si es así, a media jornada o jornada completa? Que tipo de trabajo hace?
- 7) Si no estas empleado, ¿está recibiendo capacitación para un trabajo o asistencia financiera pública o estampillas de comida?
- 8) ¿Cuántos años tiene viviendo en su comunidad?

9) ¿En general, cómo describiría usted su calidad de vida en esta comunidad?

10) ¿Qué es lo que más usted disfruta de vivir en su comunidad?

11) ¿Qué es lo menos que usted disfruta de vivir en su comunidad?

Gracias para completar el cuestionario. Cuando todos han terminados, Sr. Terry Spradlin, Jefe de Proyecto a CEEP, va a empezar la conversación del grupo de enfoque. Maegan ayudará con la traducción a español y las necesidades de interpretación. Se le anima a participar abierta y libremente.

Por favor nos informa si tiene preguntas del cuestionario, el grupo de enfoque o el estudio.

## Appendix C. Focus Group Guide

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### Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs Project: Governmental Services Access and Delivery Critical Needs Study

#### Focus Group Discussion Guide Outline

Draft 12-03-2012

#### Overview and Objectives:

Good (afternoon/evening)! Thank you for your participation in this focus group session. I am Terry Spradlin from Indiana University and I am the facilitator for our conversation. I am joined by (insert name), who will translate my questions and your comments. Also in attendance we are joined by Danny Lopez, Education Director/Legislative Liaison for ICRC/ICHLA, as well as our local conveners (insert names).

The objective of the focus group is to assist the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs examine governmental service delivery and access issues, with emphasis on pre-school through secondary education, for the Hispanic/Latino populations in the state. The Center for Evaluation & Education Policy will assist the ICHLA in increasing its understanding of the barriers and obstacles you face in accessing services and fully participating in community affairs. Generally speaking we want to determine what are the critical needs of the Hispanic/Latino community? In addition, we want your opinion as to whether the government is helping to improve your quality of life? Focus groups have or will occur in Evansville, Lafayette, Hammond, Indianapolis, New Albany and South Bend. Evansville, Lafayette and Hammond will be designated as case study cities that CEEP will use to explore service delivery issues more deeply by speaking with agency staff.

#### Format:

[A 60-90 minute focus group will be conducted in each city with 6-10 participants who are reflective of the Hispanic/Latino populations in that community. Terry Spradlin, Project Manager, will facilitate the sessions and will be accompanied by a CEEP student-intern who is fluent in Spanish for any translation/interpretation needs.] We encourage full participation in the discussion by everyone. This session is voluntary and any participant can choose to discontinue participation at any time. The names of the participants will be anonymous in the report that CEEP issues to ICHLA. The sessions will be recorded, so please speak loudly (and transcribed in English). The CEEP team will use the information gathered from the focus groups to identify key themes and critical issues that will be summarized in a section of the study report. Are there any questions before we begin?

**Preliminary Questions:**

Transfer Questions (these will bridge conversation to key/specific questions to follow)

- 1) What public/government services are most important to you? Which of these do you access most frequently (e.g., public education, parks, library, job training services, financial assistance, Medicaid...)?
- 2) Are there programs or services that are need that you find difficult to access? Please describe why?
- 3) Do you use technology (phone, computer, Internet service) to access government services? What type of technology do you use? Do you prefer to use technology to access services rather than visit an agency office in person?

Key Questions:

- 4) How important are ESL/English language acquisition classes or programs to you and/or your family members? Are they readily available to access? If yes, do you or your family members participate? If no, why not?
- 5) Are you participating personally in any job training program or educational program? If yes, please describe.
- 6) If you have school-aged children, do you feel welcome in their school and are you provided with helpful or useful information on how to support your children's education?
- 7) Are you able or unable to access materials provided electronically by the school(s) and teachers?
- 8) Would a parent mentoring program be helpful to you to enhance your interaction with your child's school and to support your child's academic progress?
- 9) If pre-kindergarten services for three- and four-year old children were provided by the state of Indiana, would you enroll your children in such a program? Why or why not?
- 10) If you have young children starting school or already in school, do you or did you have them enrolled in kindergarten? Half-day or full-day? Why or why not?
- 11) What level of education would you like your children to achieve? H.S. diploma, Associates Degree, 4-year college degree, masters, professional license
- 12) What are the most important educational services needed for this community?
- 13) How do you believe an education affects and directs your future?

Closing Question(s):

- 14) Do you think there is something we should have discussed that we did not? OR,
- 15) Is there anything else you would like to add about the issues we have discussed today?

## Appendix D. Cover Letter to Area Superintendents and Questionnaire

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January 7, 2013  
Name  
Title  
School Corporation Name  
Address  
City, State and Zip

Dear (Name):

The Center for Evaluation & Education Policy (CEEP) at Indiana University is working with the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs (ICHLA) to examine governmental service delivery and access issues, including pre-school through secondary education, for the Hispanic/Latino populations in the state. The objectives of our research is to assist the ICHLA in increasing its understanding of the barriers and obstacles these residents (including children) face in accessing services and fully participating in community affairs. Generally speaking we want to provide answers to the question, "What are the critical needs of the Hispanic/Latino community?"

I have conducted focus groups across the state in Evansville, Lafayette, Hammond, Indianapolis, New Albany and South Bend during the months of November and December. I spoke with "grass roots" residents in your community about questions pertaining to this research agenda. Now we would like to gain greater insights by receiving information and perspectives from the superintendents of the school districts in these cities as well as to hear from the Mayor's Office and city councilors in your community. Would you mind taking a moment to respond the enclosed 9-item questionnaire?

The information you share will not be used as a critique or an evaluation of your organization's efforts to serve the Hispanic/Latino community. Rather it will be compiled with responses from school and public officials in the other cities to determine the primary issues you face in your efforts to support this community of residents. Overall, information gathered by the study will be used to guide the ICHLA with its legislative, policy, and administrative priorities. The ICHLA would like to become more effective at addressing the needs of, and advocating for, Hispanic/Latino Hoosiers.

If you prefer to respond to the questionnaire via an online submission go to:  
[https://iuceep.us2.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_b7XKzuZVCEpe0ol](https://iuceep.us2.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_b7XKzuZVCEpe0ol). Please email [tspradli@indiana.edu](mailto:tspradli@indiana.edu) if you would like the survey link sent to you electronically.

Please call me directly at 812-856-4781 if you have any questions regarding the study or the questionnaire. Thank you for your assistance. Please return your questionnaire by January 18, at 5:00 p.m. A scanned copy can be sent to me at: [tspradli@indiana.edu](mailto:tspradli@indiana.edu) or via fax at 812-856-5890.

Sincerely,

Terry Spradlin  
Director for Education Policy/Project Manager



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

1900 East Tenth Street Bloomington, Indiana 47406-7512 (812) 855-4438 <http://ceep.indiana.edu>







## Appendix E. Cover Letter to Locally Elected Officials and Questionnaire

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January 8, 2013  
The Honorable (Name)  
Councilor for the City of (City)  
Address  
City, State, Zip

Dear Councilor (Name):

The Center for Evaluation & Education Policy (CEEP) at Indiana University is working with the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs (ICHLA) to examine governmental service delivery and access issues, including pre-school through secondary education, for the Hispanic/Latino populations in the state. The objectives of our research is to assist the ICHLA in increasing its understanding of the barriers and obstacles these residents (including children) face in accessing services and fully participating in community affairs. Generally speaking we want to provide answers to the question, "What are the critical needs of the Hispanic/Latino community?"

I have conducted focus groups across the state in Evansville, Lafayette, Hammond, Indianapolis, New Albany and South Bend during the months of November and December. I spoke with "grass roots" residents in your community about questions pertaining to this research agenda. Now we would like to gain greater insights by receiving information and perspectives from the Mayor's Office and city councilors in your community as well as the superintendents of the school districts in your city. Would you mind taking a moment to respond the enclosed questionnaire?

The information you share will not be used as a critique or an evaluation of your organization's efforts to serve the Hispanic/Latino community. Rather it will be compiled with responses from school and public officials in the other cities to determine the primary issues you face in your efforts to support this community of residents. Overall, information gathered by the study will be used to guide the ICHLA with its legislative, policy, and administrative priorities. The ICHLA would like to become more effective at addressing the needs of, and advocating for, Hispanic/Latino Hoosiers.

If you prefer to respond to the questionnaire via an online submission go to:  
[https://iuceep.us2.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_e9B5viar1aG7cZD](https://iuceep.us2.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_e9B5viar1aG7cZD). Please email [tspradli@indiana.edu](mailto:tspradli@indiana.edu) if you would like the survey link sent to you electronically.

Please call me directly at 812-856-4781 if you have any questions regarding the study or the questionnaire. Thank you for your assistance. Please return your questionnaire by January 18, at 5:00 p.m. A scanned copy can be sent to me at: [tspradli@indiana.edu](mailto:tspradli@indiana.edu) or via fax at 812-856-5890.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry Spradlin". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Terry Spradlin  
Director for Education Policy/Project Manager



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

1900 East Tenth Street Bloomington, Indiana 47406-7512 (812) 855-4438 <http://ceep.indiana.edu>





