



EDUCATION POLICY PROGRAM

Paving the Way for Latinx Teachers

Recruitment and Preparation to Promote Educator Diversity

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In response to the racial and linguistic mismatch between students and teachers; districts, states, and teacher preparation programs must address the challenges that Latinx individuals face on the pathway into teaching. A promising strategy is collaborative partnerships across PreK–12 and postsecondary systems.

This New America report highlights the underrepresentation of Latinx teachers in our nation’s public schools, with a specific focus on the pathway into teaching for Latinx individuals. The report explores the barriers that they face at each point of the pathway into teaching, from completing PreK–12 education, enrolling in post-secondary education, enrolling in a teacher preparation program, and eventually earning a bachelor’s degree.

The report profiles three Latinx-focused pathways—in Chicago, IL, San Antonio, TX, and Skagit Valley, WA—that are attempting to reduce those barriers by implementing a multi-faceted, collaborative approach that spans the PreK–12 and higher education systems.

These examples demonstrate how faculty at two-year and four-year colleges, leaders within PreK–12 schools and districts, and non-profit organizations can collaborate to design programs that meet the needs of Latinx individuals interested in the teaching profession.

Key Findings

Four key areas of focus across PreK-12 and postsecondary systems are critical:

- Transition points into postsecondary education and beyond.
- Intensive mentorship and academic support.
- Early and creative recruitment efforts.
- A focus on the role of finances and family.

Policy Recommendations

- Invest and incentivize P–20 partnerships through new and current funding streams.
- Expand high-quality, community-based teacher pathways.
- Provide financial support to students.
- Collect and align data that will facilitate program improvement.
- Assess testing barriers that impact Latinx teacher candidates.

Why Strengthen the Recruitment and Preparation of Latinx Teachers?

The Latinx population is the largest ethnic group in American public schools, making up about a quarter of the student population and expected to grow to one-third by 2027. While demographic gaps exist between other non-White student populations and teachers, the largest gap exists between Latinx students and teachers. With Latinx teachers making up only 9 percent of the teacher workforce, we'd need three times as many to match the proportion of Latinx students.

Why does this mismatch between Latinx students and teachers matter? While the Latinx student population has experienced some positive academic gains over time, its academic attainment still lags behind their White peers. The high school dropout rate is higher for Latinx students than other racial/ethnic groups, and four-year degree attainment is lower. Some research has found that Latinx students who are assigned to a teacher who reflects their cultural, racial, and/or linguistic backgrounds experience an array of benefits, including higher achievement scores and an increase in the likelihood of attending college. Latinx teachers can often bring linguistic diversity into the classroom as well, which is particularly helpful given that most English Learners (77 percent) are Latinx, and most states report teacher shortages in bilingual, dual language, and English as a Second Language (ESL) in their public schools.

Paving the Way for Latinx Teachers: Recruitment and Preparation to Promote Educator Diversity aims to provide state and local leaders with a foundational set of practices and policies to consider when addressing the challenges to getting and keeping Latinx students on the pathway into teaching.

To read the full report, please visit:

<https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/reports/strengthening-latinx-teacher-pathways/>

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