
**White House Initiative for Education Excellence for Hispanics
U.S. Department of Education, Hispanic Outreach & Resources
April 23, 2010**

Here are the recent news and developments coming out of the U.S. Department of Education:

- **Latinos and Hispanic Serving Institutions to Benefit from the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010**
- **Listening and Learning About Early Learning Tour for Denver, Orlando and Chicago**
- **\$350 Million Now Available to Help Consortia of States Create Next Generation of Assessments, Including English Learners**
- **\$3.5 Billion in School Improvement Grants State Awards in Process**
- **Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education Thelma Meléndez de Santa Ana named Woman of the Year by *Hispanic Business Magazine!***

Latinos and Hispanic Serving Institutions to Benefit from the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010

With the passage of The Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act, President Obama's administration takes a huge step toward making America the best educated nation in the world by 2020. The [attached file](#) offers more details about the Act's impact on higher education and Latinos.

Specifically, the Act increases college access and graduation rates by making it more affordable for Hispanic students through the following means:

- By academic year 2020-2021, the Department of Education estimates more than 150,000 additional Pell Grant awards would be made to Hispanic students due to the changes in the law.
- It also supports Minority Serving Institutions. America's Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), which do more with less and enroll higher proportions of low- and middle-income students, will receive \$1 billion in mandatory funding over ten years.
- To ensure that Hispanic Americans can afford their student loan payments, the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act makes the existing income-based student loan repayment program more generous for new borrowers after July 1, 2014. They will be allowed to cap their student loan repayments at 10 percent of their discretionary income and, if they keep up with their payments over time, forgive their balance after 20 years. Approximately 143,000 of the Income Based Repayment borrowers are expected to be Hispanic by 2020.
- Also, starting July 1, all new federal student loans will be direct loans delivered and collected by private companies under performance-based contracts with the Department of Education.

Listening and Learning About Early Learning Tour Announced for Denver, Orlando, and Chicago

Over the next two months, the U.S. Departments of Education (ED) and Health and Human Services (HHS) will hold a series of Listening and Learning About Early Learning meetings that will focus on topics related

to early learning (birth through 3rd Grade), and will be led by Secretary Duncan's senior advisor on early learning, Jacqueline Jones, and HHS's Deputy Assistant Secretary and Inter-Departmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development at the Administration for Children and Families, Joan Lombardi.

The meetings will occur from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m on the dates and at the locations that follow.

- **Workforce and Professional Development:** Monday, April 26, 2010, in the auditorium at the Center for Early Education, 3245 E. Exposition Avenue, Denver, CO
- **Family Engagement:** Tuesday, May 4, 2010, at the Orange County Public Schools Educational Leadership Center, 445 W. Amelia Street, Orlando, FL
- **Standards and Assessments:** Tuesday, May 11, 2010, at the Polk Bros. Lecture Hall at the Erikson Institute, 451 N. LaSalle Street, Chicago, IL

The following is a link with more information about the Listening and Learning Tour.

Link: <http://www.ed.gov/blog/2010/04/listening-and-learning-about-early-learning-tour-announced-for-dc-denver-orlando-and-chicago/>

\$350 Million Now Available to Help Consortia of States Create Next Generation of Assessments, Including English Learners

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan set aside up to \$350 million of the Race to the Top funds to support a consortium of states in developing and implementing a new generation of assessments. Among the many goals of this competition is a new generation of assessments that will boost the success of Latino students, English language learners and other diverse learners.

Notice of Intent to apply due: **April 29, 2010**

Applications due: **June 23, 2010**

Below are links with more information on the Race to the Top Assessment Program:

Link to Press Release: <http://www2.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2010/04/04062010c.html>

Link to Race to the Top Assessment Program Homepage: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-assessment/index.html>

\$3.5 Billion in School Improvement Grants State Awards in Process

States have begun to receive School Improvement Grants (SIG) funds to turn around their persistently lowest achieving schools. The grant also targets schools with low graduation rates - also known as "dropout factories" - which disproportionately affects the Latino community.

The \$3.5 billion available to states this spring are funds that come from the 2009 budget and The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). To view the present recipients and their application please visit the link below. At this site you will be able to view future awardees as well.

In order for states to qualify for funding under the Title I School Improvement Grant program, they are required to identify their lowest-performing schools and transform them with one of the four following intervention models:

- **Turnaround model:** Replace the principal and rehire no more than 50 percent of the staff, and grant the principal sufficient operational flexibility (including in staffing, calendars/time and budgeting) to fully implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improving student outcomes.
- **Transformation model:** Implement each of the following strategies: (1) replace the principal and take steps to increase teacher and school leader effectiveness; (2) institute comprehensive instructional reforms; (3) increase learning time and create community-oriented schools; and (4) provide operational flexibility and sustained support.
- **Restart model:** Convert a school or close and reopen it under a charter school operator, a charter management organization, or an education management organization that has been selected through a rigorous review process.
- **School closure:** Close a school and enroll the students who attended that school in other schools in the LEA that are higher achieving.

Link: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/summary/index.html>

Thelma Melendez de Santa Ana Named Woman of the Year by *Hispanic Business Magazine*

Congratulations to our Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education Thelma Meléndez de Santa Ana for being chosen Woman of the Year by *Hispanic Business Magazine*. Dr. Meléndez has been a lifelong advocate of student success in the classroom and in life. As you may know, Dr. Meléndez plays a pivotal role in policy and management issues affecting elementary and secondary education. She directs, coordinates and recommends policy for programs designed to assist state and local education agencies with improving the achievement of elementary and secondary school students. A link to *Hispanic Business Magazine's* article is provided below.

Link: http://www.hispanicbusiness.com/news/2010/4/7/woman_of_the_year_thelma_melendez.htm

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