Championing Latino Success
When Latino Students Succeed, We All Succeed

Today, more than one in four students in U.S. public elementary and secondary schools and more than one in five college students are Latino, making them one of the largest groups on school and college campuses nationwide. Already, the Latino student population in elementary and secondary schools tops 50 percent in California (54.9 percent) and Texas (52.9 percent). In Florida, Latino students constitute 34.9 percent of the school-age population. The Latino student population is projected to rise in this decade and beyond.

Latino Students Constitute Significant Shares of K–12 And Postsecondary Education Populations

27% 20.3%

More than one in four students in public elementary and secondary schools are Latino.

More than one-in-five students in degree-granting postsecondary institutions are Latino.


ACT has supported Excelencia in Education since its earliest years as a two-person startup by its co-founders, President Sarita Brown and CEO Deborah Santiago. Today, Excelencia is a trusted advisor on Latino students in higher education—a reputation well-earned through its research, advocacy for institutional and policy change, and its role as a national leader and convener of higher education institutions that serve Latino students well.

Excelencia has an ambitious goal: For the U.S. to regain the top ranking in the world for college degree attainment, Latino students will need to earn 6.2 million degrees by 2030.

As part of this commitment, Excelencia created the Seal of Excelencia, a national certification for higher education institutions that go beyond enrollment to intentionally serve Latino students.

As of 2020, 14 institutions from across the country have earned the Seal of Excelencia.
Excelencia’s Network of Higher Education Institutions Deliver for Latino Students

Of All of the US Colleges and Universities

- 4% are P4LSS* Institutions
  - *Presidents for Latino Student Success

They Enroll 24% of All Latino Students

They Graduate 35% of All Latino Graduates Nationwide

Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), 2019-20

- 569 Number of HSIs
- 18% of all higher education institutions meet HSI definition
- 67% of all Latino college students attend an HSI

ALAS’s signature program, the Superintendents Leadership Academy (SLA), identifies, recruits, develops, and advances talented administrators in districts where at least 20 percent of students are Latino. Now in its tenth year, this intensive, year long program is highly competitive, with fewer than twenty candidates selected each year.

ALAS also supports aspiring and novice principals with a National Principal Leadership Academy, a collaboration with the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE). A new Women Superintendents Policy Leadership Academy supports novice leaders in policymaking and advocacy on behalf of Latino students.

The collaboration between ACT and Univision is mutually beneficial. Univision works closely with ACT on both its in-person and virtual engagement with Latino students, parents, and communities. Univision also encouraged ACT to make more resources for students and parents available in Spanish—a wise recommendation upon which ACT has acted.

In 2019, ACT and Univision also collaborated on a research report that explored Hispanic students’ perceptions on the transition to college. The findings and recommendations in this report inform both ACT’s and Univision’s messages and support for Latino students, families, and communities.