

VIA EMAIL

September 11, 2023

TO: The White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Hispanics

Dear Colleagues,

The attached report by our San Diego Chicano/Latino Concilio on Higher Education details the institutional racism in our local colleges and universities that hinders the achievement of Chicano/Latino students. Despite our continued efforts to dialogue with the leadership teams of these public institutions, most have failed to prioritize "servingness" to Chicano/Latino students that is strongly recommended by scholars such as Gina A. Garcia.

In our follow-up advocacy after completing our report in early 2023, we find that most of San Diego's higher education institutions are not hiring and maintaining a representative level of Chicano/Latino faculty, nor are they adequately supporting critical, diverse curriculum such as Chicana & Chicano Studies. In addition, there is reluctance among these institutions to provide adequate academic and sociocultural support for Chicano/Latino students, including the expansion of successful programs such as the Puente Program.

Clearly, local advocates such as our SD Concilio need the direct support of the federal government to hold these public institutions accountable to the Chicano/Latino community. Among other strategies, requiring an action plan to increase access and success among Chicanos/Latinos to receive any federal funding should be an essential element of such necessary federal intervention.

Sinceramente,

Patrick Velasquez, Ph.D.

Co-Chair, SD Concilio