

PRESS RELEASE



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Illinois Latino College Landscape Study Bringing the dream of a higher education within reach for Latino students

A new report highlights the challenges and opportunities that Latino students encounter as they pursue higher education.

CHICAGO – [Illinois Latino College Landscape Study: Bringing the dream of a higher education within reach for Latino students](#) is a new report that outlines six key factors that influence Latino college preparation, access, and degree completion, as well as postgraduate achievement. After a comprehensive review of existing research, an in-depth analysis of secondary data, and extensive consultation with the distinguished members of our Illinois Latino Landscape Study Advisory Committee, we have identified these issues as essential for supporting Latino college success.

Latinos continue to see the United States as a “land of opportunity,” with more avenues for upward mobility—including access to higher education—than their ancestors enjoyed in their countries. Still, only 20% of Illinois Latinos between the ages of 25 and 64 have earned bachelor’s degrees—the lowest rate among all racial/ethnic groups in the state.

“We must do more to bring the dream of higher education within reach for these Illinois residents,” said Sylvia Puente, President and CEO of the [Latino Policy Forum](#). “By working together to address the factors that lead to educational inequities, we can break down the barriers to college access and completion—so that more Latinos can succeed in our knowledge-based economy and lead happier, healthier, and more fulfilling lives.”

Our research partner, the [Illinois Workforce Education Research Collaborative \(IWERC\)](#) at the University of Illinois identified the following key factors:

- Academic preparation for college
- High school counseling and other support for college
- Navigating the pathway to and through college
- Understanding college financing
- The importance of family during the college journey
- The post-college landscape



The road to, through, and beyond college in the U.S. and Illinois is still a difficult one for many Latinos (especially first-generation college students and their families) to navigate.

These key factors require our attention to deliver on the promise of a higher education for Latino students in Illinois.

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On Sep. 29, IWERC presented the key factors that influence Latino college enrollment and persistence, and a panel of esteemed policy advocates and educational leaders discussed how they are addressing these factors to ensure that more Latinos access and complete college. [Watch Here.](#)

About the Latino Policy Forum

Through advocacy and analysis, the Forum builds a foundation for equity, justice, and economic prosperity for the Latino community. By catalyzing policy change, the Forum works to improve education outcomes, advocate for affordable housing, promote just immigration policies, and strengthen community leadership.

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