

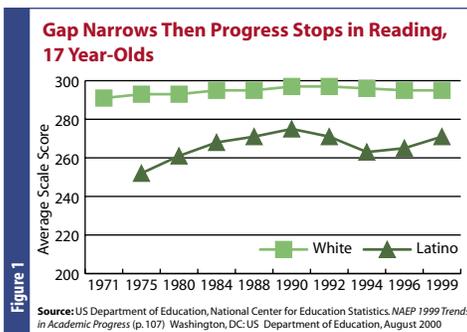


Latino Achievement in America

Achievement gaps between groups of students can tell us a lot about which students are given the preparation they need to succeed in college and work, and which ones continue to be left out.

How far have we come?

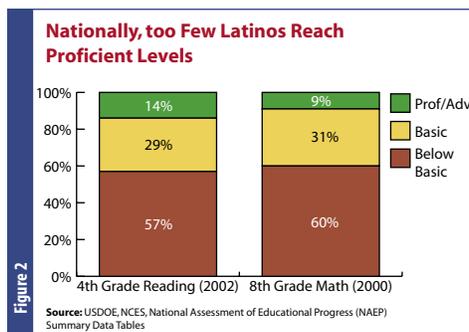
Reading achievement among Latinos climbed substantially throughout the '70s and '80s, but progress stopped during the next decade. The pattern for mathematics achievement is similar.



Where are we now?

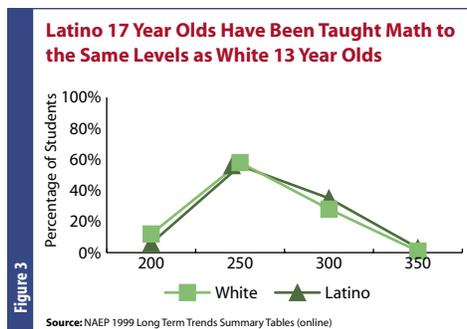
Nationally, too few Latinos read or do math at proficient levels. In reading, for instance, a mere 14% of Latino 4th graders reach proficient or advanced levels, while a heartbreaking 57% have not been taught to even the basic level. And, the story is worse in math. Only 9% of Latino 8th

graders reach the proficient level or above on NAEP, but 60% perform below basic.



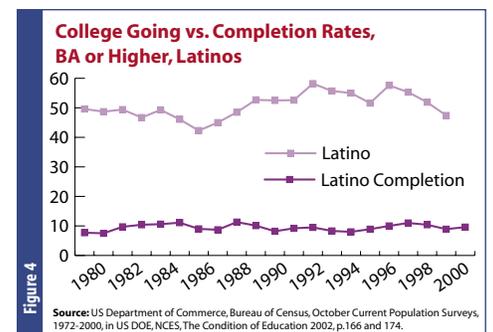
Results by the end of high school

What does this all mean? By the end of high school, Latino students have math and reading skills that are virtually the same as those of White middle-schoolers.



The gap's consequences reach beyond high school

Neither the college enrollment nor completion rates of Latinos have increased over the last 20 years. About half of Latino young people enroll in college, but few finish. If these rates don't change, out of every 100 Latino kindergartners, only 11 will obtain at least a bachelor's degree.



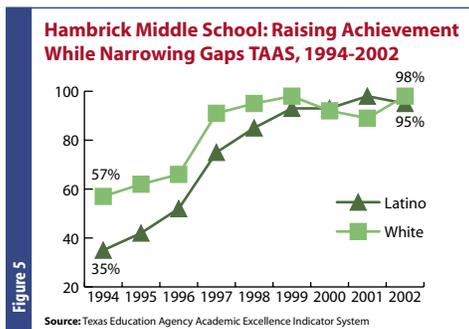
But it doesn't have to be this way...

There are some schools, districts, and even whole states where Latino students excel.

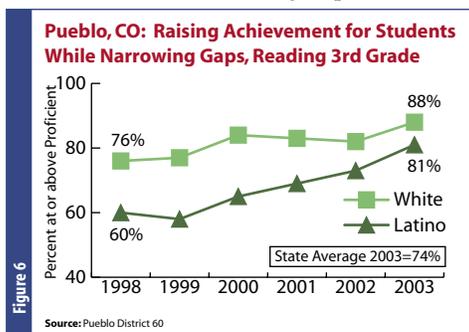
Hambrick Middle School in Aldine is 71% Latino and 85% poor. Hambrick's students score in the top fifth of all Texas middle schools in both reading and math, in both



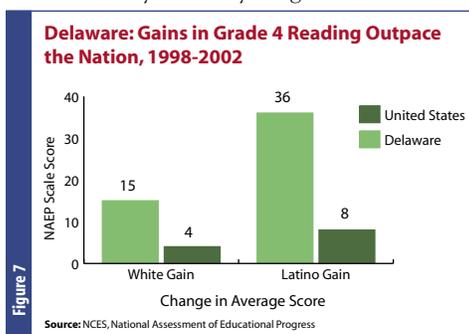
7th and 8th grades, and have done so over a 3-year period. (For high performing schools in your state, please visit Dispelling the Myth Online at www.edtrust.org)



Additionally, Pueblo, Colorado, has had tremendous success in reducing the Latino-White gap while simultaneously raising achievement levels for all groups of children.



There are whole states where Latinos excel. For example, Delaware outpaces the nation in reading gains for both Latino and White 4th graders, and the greatest strides have been made by Latino youngsters.



What do we know about places that get results?

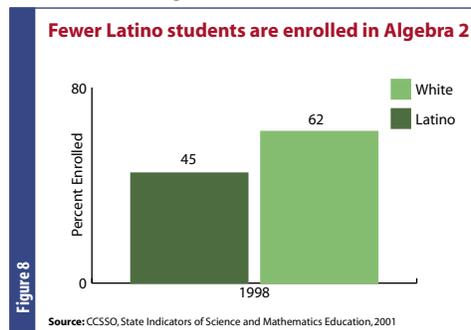
They have clear goals: the role of standards

Clear and public standards for what students should learn at benchmark grade levels are an invaluable tool for raising achievement

and closing gaps. They are a guide—for teachers, administrators, parents and students themselves—to the knowledge and skills students need to master. Standards represent a contract between schools and their communities that these skills are the expectation for all their students.

They provide all students challenging curriculums aligned with standards

New standards and assessments won't make much of a difference if they are not accompanied by a rigorous curriculum lined up with those standards. Yet in too many places, some students are taught rich and challenging subject matter, while others are relegated to a low-level curriculum—one that is better aligned with the assembly-line jobs that are disappearing than with today's job market or college entry requirements. For example, fewer than half of Latino high-schoolers take Algebra 2 compared to nearly two-thirds of their White peers. Similar patterns occur in Chemistry. (For more information on the importance of a challenging curriculum, please see "A New Core Curriculum for All" available at www.edtrust.org)



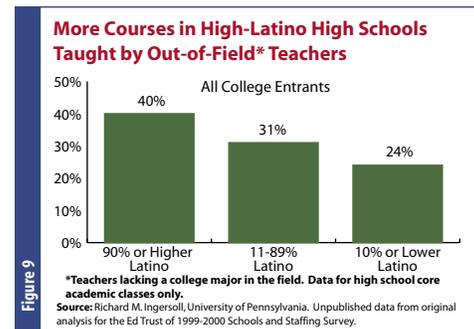
They provide extra instruction to students when they need it

There is now ample evidence that all children can achieve at high levels if they are taught at high levels. Indeed, the simple act of putting students in more rigorous, college preparatory courses *will* improve achievement; the data are clear on that. But it is equally clear that for some students, passing the course or examination will require extra time and support.

They provide teachers who are well-prepared to teach the subject

Students need teachers who know their subjects and how to teach them. Yet large

numbers of students, especially those who are Latino, are taught by teachers who lack sufficient background in the subjects they are teaching. Across the country, we are giving the least qualified teachers to the kids with the greatest need for good teachers. (For more information on teacher quality, please see "Good Teaching Matters" and "Interpret with Caution" both available on www.edtrust.org)



How can we pay for all this?

In most states, school districts that educate the greatest number of minority students receive substantially less state and local money per student than districts with the fewest low-income and minority students.

At a time when schools, districts and states are rightly focusing on closing the achievement gap, states can and must do more to close these funding gaps. (For state data on Funding Gaps, visit EdWatch online or the Funding Gap report both available at www.edtrust.org)

What would happen if we had the courage to change these patterns?

It only takes one school to teach Latino kids at high levels to prove that it can be done. Well, all around the nation, there are hundreds of schools that are doing just that. Underachievement among Latinos is a crisis, but as these communities show, raising Latino achievement is not an insurmountable task. We have listed steps that states, districts, schools and communities can follow to replicate their success. What are we waiting for to make sure that all Latino children receive the education they need and deserve, and close the achievement gap once and for all?

