



## LULAC EDUCATION PRIORITIES

The potential ramifications of the Budget Control Act's automatic cuts (sequestration) and the looming reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) are just some of the many issues before the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress. Both present significant challenges and opportunities for improving education for Latino students, particularly as it relates to English Language Learners (ELL), students in under-served communities, and schools with rapidly growing Latino populations.

### SEQUESTRATION IS HARMFUL TO LATINO AND OTHER UNDER-SERVED STUDENTS

- ❖ Find a legislative compromise to stave off the negative impact of the automatic budget cuts (sequestration).
  - Some 209,785 fewer English language learners (ELLs) would be served by Title III of ESEA and 450 educators working with ELLs would be out of work. Given that almost 80 percent of ELLs speak Spanish as their primary home language, any cut to Title III would mostly be felt by the Hispanic community.
  - 1,181,600 fewer students nationwide would be served by Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended, and 9,910 educators and school personnel would lose their jobs. Given that Hispanic students make up 36 percent of the students served by Title I today, any cut to Title I would disproportionately harm Latino students.

### ESEA REAUTHORIZATION MUST INCLUDE STRONG MEASURES OF ACCOUNTABILITY

- ❖ H.R. 5, "The Student Success Act," passed by the House in August and opposed by LULAC, lacks strong federal oversight provisions that help ensure that English language learners, low-income students, children of migrant workers, and students with disabilities are not left behind.
  - The bill shifts the focus away from college and career preparedness, and severely undercuts resources for critical programs that have already been weakened by the effects of sequestration.
- ❖ Instead, Congress must pass ESEA legislation that requires states to establish accountability systems that set performance, growth, and graduation targets for all students to ensure that they are college and career ready.
  - Without this type of language, many students could fall further behind their peers, diminishing their chances of attending college.

### MONITOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S ISSUANCE OF ESEA WAIVERS

- ❖ The U.S. Department of Education has granted waivers to states which exempt states from specific accountability requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. These waivers allow states to develop and implement their own plans to monitor student progress and achievement.
  - However, a recent report has shown that waivers provide less accountability for the educational success of underserved students, including Latino students. Unfortunately, 41 states including the District of Columbia have already been granted these waivers.
  - ESEA waivers are good for two years, after which states can submit a renewal application. ESEA waivers can be renewed if, among other things, states ensure that they engage with civil rights organizations in the development of the waivers. States seeking to renew their ESEA waiver must do so by February 21, 2014.
- ❖ Congress must express concern to the U.S. Department of Education regarding this policy.
  - Congress must monitor the implementation of waivers and finds ways to incentivize states to use data models to keep track of how Latino students are performing. Moreover, effective action plans that help improve the academic performance of struggling students should be developed.

### EXPAND STEM EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR LATINO STUDENTS

- ❖ Expanding STEM opportunities for underserved students is of vital importance to LULAC and our country as we look to provide our youth with skills that can translate into the comprehensive program for science, technology, education and math (STEM) into the workplace.
- ❖ Providing resources to help students gain the technological skills needed in this high- tech economy will ensure that Latino students are successful in the 21st century.