



Talking Points-Texas

Texas LULAC believes that our State can significantly curb its high school dropout rate by improving instructional services for children who live in poverty. Hispanic English Language learners constitute a disproportionate and large percentage of students who drop out of high schools. The state of Texas can no longer afford to ignore this critical need and should do so with a renewed sense of urgency.

To do this, Texas LULAC Recommends—EL PLAN—A Comprehensive Plan To Improve the Education of Hispanic Youth in Texas, with a Focus on Secondary Education

WHAT DOES LULAC PROPOSE?

First and foremost, we demand immediate compliance with the Bilingual Education Law and its provisions.

- ▶ Re-write the Bilingual Education and ESL Act during the next legislative session.
- ▶ With input of statistics experts like IDRA (Intercultural Development Research Association) and others, provide for a cost analysis to support new **or** redirected funding to benefit bilingual and ESL education
- ▶ To prepare for this new piece of legislation, the TEA should prepare FOR LEGISLATORS AND THE GENERAL COMMUNITY, a *State of Education Report on Texas Schools*, including updated *clean* dropout data
- ▶ Eliminate, once and for all, the loopholes in reporting and auditing of dropout rates in Texas
- ▶ Re-direct state funds so that school districts can provide bilingual staff to train parents of ELLs and other children of poverty, as partners in our schools
- ▶ Increase the bilingual education and ESL certification requirements for all **currently practicing and incoming** educators and administrators in Texas. LULAC has specific recommendations on this issue in the document entitled El Plan.

WHAT DOES LULAC PROPOSE?—Cont.

▶ Require Education Service Centers throughout Texas, funded by *our* tax payers dollars, to more effectively assist districts on the implementation of successful programs for Hispanic students in our schools in Texas, with a focus on early elementary bilingual education and ESL programs. Recommendations as noted by the Campaign for High School Equity should be presented and reviewed by educational leaders and administrators in Texas via the Education Service Centers, as well as the recommendations and work of the Education Trust, www.edtrust.org

▶ Education Service Centers must assist districts, in a more effective manner, on the implementation of proven-as-successful dual language models for bilingual education. **Research already shows, without question, that dual language models are most effective for academic success and connections to the world of work. LULAC questions the lack of emphasis on this bilingual program model at sessions sponsored at most Regional Education Service Centers. An audit of such offerings would confirm this concern.**

▶ Require Regional Education Service Centers to report to the media, every six or nine weeks, the number of students in their respective districts who have dropped out **AND the potential negative economic impact, or dollar loses, for the Region and families. The above recommendation is also supported in concept by the Campaign for High School Equity and other student advocacy groups in Texas and the Nation.**

▶ Request that the National LULAC leadership prioritize the identification of 1 million dollars to support MALDEF, NAACP, and other groups who represent children of poverty and ELLs in the Courts.

▶ Require the TEA to restructure parent advocacy training by involving more highly qualified Hispanic bilingual trainers (IDRA, Becca Garcia of Victoria, Cynthia Valadez-Mata and Jill Ramirez of Austin, others) on successful parent advocacy training models, as well as those proposed by the the Campaign for High School Equity, National LULAC, and the Education Trust.

▶ Bring LULAC and other noted organizations TO THE TABLE with TEA, to propose high school restructuring efforts. LULAC, in collaboration with the Campaign for High School Equity is ready to deliver specific recommendations

➤ Review and distribute findings and recommendations by Dr. Rosalinda Barrera, Dean of Education at Texas State University and the educational leaders at Region XIII on exemplary ELL learning processes, as well as those of Dr. Angela Valenzuela and the NLERAP research group at the University of Texas at Austin

▶ Heed to the recommendations of experts with the National LULAC Education Commission, and of the NAACP's Washington Bureau who have addressed strategies for strengthening the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to better

serve students of color in our schools. Also the CHSE has identified specific federal policy reforms, including: 1) make all students proficient and prepared for college and work; 2) hold high schools accountable for student success; and 3) redesign the American high school.

In these redesign efforts, LULAC demands to be at the table to include those components that are relevant to our Hispanic youth and children of color.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Meet with your State and National representatives and demand educational reform for Hispanic youth and children of color.

Let your state and national representatives know that LULAC has a fully developed Plan, with recommendations on how to reform high school education in Texas and in the Country. (EL PLAN—The Plan—is posted on the Texas LULAC website).

For more information go to www.edtrust.org or www.highschoolequity.org

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