



Raising High School Graduation Rates for Latino Youth for Increased Postsecondary Persistence



Latino students are the fastest growing group in the nation's public schools, making up 25 percent of the K-12 population. Yet Latino students continue to graduate from high school at lower rates than their peers. For the Class of 2014, 76.3 percent of all Latino students graduated from high school, up from 75.2 percent in 2013. Nationally, the high school graduation rate has reached an all-time high of 82.3 percent. But nearly one-quarter of Latino youth still leave high school without a diploma, reducing their likelihood of attending college and limiting their employment options, earning potential, and overall positive life outcomes.

Attaining a high school diploma is necessary for achieving postsecondary success for Latino students. Young people who earn *at least* a high school diploma are more likely to be employed and have better health, and are less likely to live in poverty.¹ As high school graduates, these students likely will earn at least half a million dollars more during their lifetimes than they would if they dropped out of school.² But students are not the only ones who benefit from earning a high school diploma. Improving the high school graduation rate benefits the national economy as well by creating new jobs, increasing consumer spending, and boosting tax revenues.

However, getting more Latino students to graduation day and preparing them to succeed in college and a career requires the collective effort of educators, parents, business executives, policymakers, and nonprofit leaders. To support these groups in their efforts, the [Alliance for Excellent Education](#) (the Alliance), a national education policy and advocacy organization, has developed the "Graduation Effect," an online tool that explores the economic impact of high school graduation rates on society. This resource includes data on the economic benefits of increasing the high school graduation rate for Latino students nationwide, in all fifty states, and in more than 220 metro areas. The findings are available to business leaders, policymakers, parents, community and civil rights activists, educators, and others to use as they advocate for better educational experiences for Latino youth.

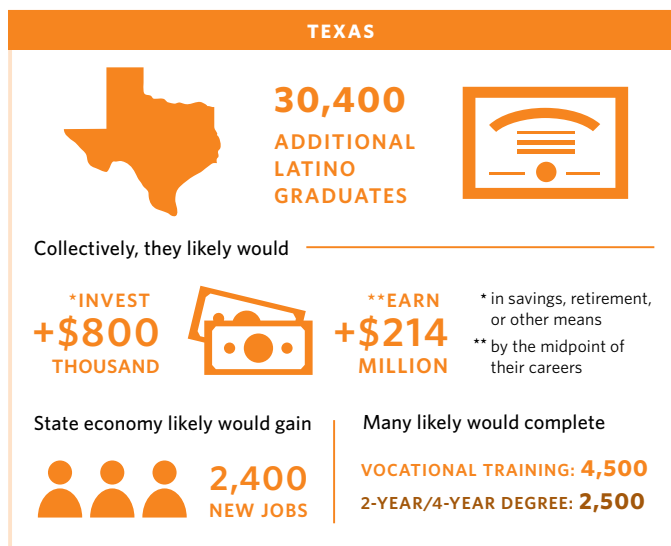
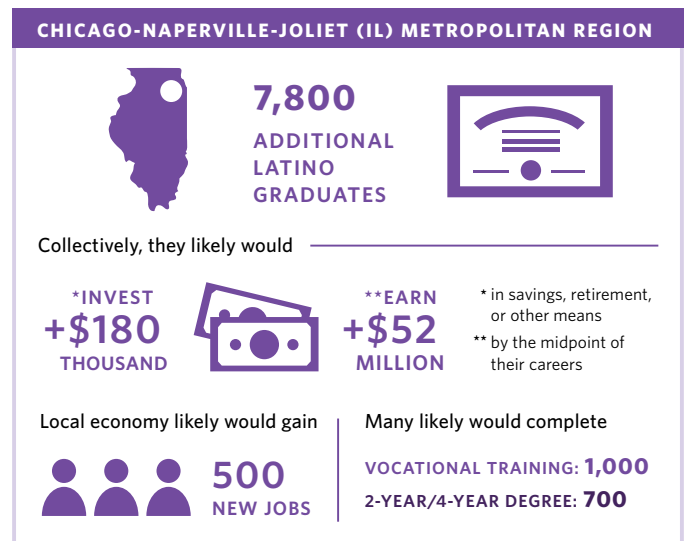
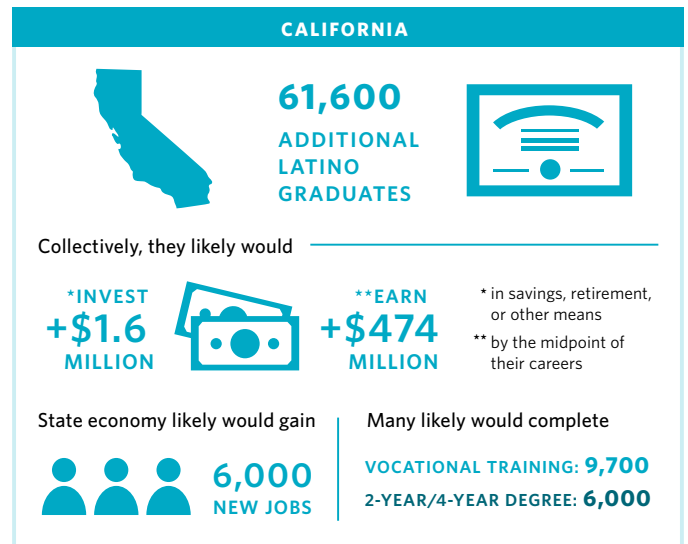
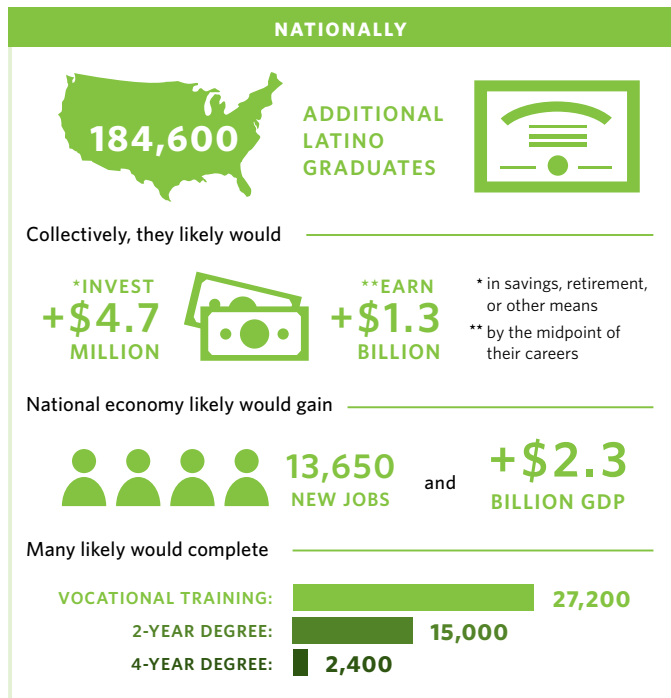
As states implement new requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, these groups can ensure that state school improvement plans advance opportunities for Latino students.

What can you do to help?

- ▶ Visit impact.all4ed.org to see how raising the high school graduation rate benefits your community and watch videos about graduation success stories.
- ▶ Promote this data to your state and district education leaders and encourage them to develop assessments for English learners in students' native language, action supported by National Council of La Raza (NCLR).
- ▶ Share this data with your local school board to advocate for high-quality extended-learning time in partnership with community-based organizations, action supported by NCLR.
- ▶ Use this data to support collaborations with local institutions of higher education to offer [dual- and/or concurrent-enrollment courses](#) and [early college high school](#) programs that allow students to earn high school and college credits simultaneously, action supported by NCLR.
- ▶ Advocate for strengthening federal programs like [GEAR UP](#) (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) and [TRIO](#) (programs to increase access to higher education for economically disadvantaged students) that prepare high school students to succeed in postsecondary education, action supported by NCLR.
- ▶ Work with your school district leaders to ensure that schools serving large populations of Latino students have equitable access to highly-effective teachers, action supported by NCLR.
- ▶ Partner with your local districts and schools to create and implement programs like [Linked Learning](#)³ that offer internship opportunities, real-world learning, and work-based experiences for Latino youth during high school.

What likely would have happened if the national high school graduation rate for Latino students had reached 90 percent for the Class of 2013?

impact.all4ed.org



Additional Resources

Alliance for Excellent Education, "Everything You Need to Know About the Every Student Succeeds Act," www.all4ed.org/essa/

Alliance for Excellent Education, "Every Student Succeeds Act Primer: Linked Learning," www.all4ed.org/reports-factsheets/essa-fact-sheet-linked-learning-primer/

National Council of La Raza, "Comments on the Retention and Completion of Latino Students in Higher Education," www.nclr.org

National Council of La Raza, "Expanded Learning Opportunities: Helping Latino Students Achieve Success," www.nclr.org

Endnotes

- America's Promise Alliance, Civic Enterprises, and Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University, "GradNation Community Guidebook Updated Edition," <http://guidebook.americaspromise.org/> (accessed April 14, 2016).
- Ibid.
- Linked Learning is an educational approach that integrates rigorous academics with career-based learning and real-world workplace experiences. It creates meaningful learning experiences through career-oriented pathways in fields such as engineering, health care, performing arts, law, and more (see www.all4ed.org/issues/linked-learning/).

The above projections were generated by the Alliance using an economic model developed by Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc., through the generous support of State Farm®. Graduation rates were provided by Editorial Projects in Education. This document builds on the Alliance's previous work connecting improved education outcomes to economic benefits. Visit impact.all4ed.org to explore findings for other regions and view additional information, including technical notes and frequently asked questions.

The Alliance for Excellent Education is a Washington, DC-based national policy and advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring that all students, particularly those traditionally underserved, graduate from high school ready for success in college, work, and citizenship. www.all4ed.org