

Draft Second Annual Hispanic Education Conference Executive Summary

The Education Committee for the Commission for Spanish Speaking Affairs held the second Hispanic Education Conference at Saginaw Valley State University. Nearly 100 stakeholders from education, government, community activists, business and the faith – based community attended this second conference. The event was co-sponsored and primarily funded by Saginaw Valley State University.

Postsecondary Education for All - Transition to Success!" was the theme of the conference sponsored by COSSA, in partnership with Saginaw Valley State University. The conference was hosted by COSSA's Education Committee which consists of Committee Chairperson and Commissioner Arminda Garcia, of Flint, Commissioner Leonard Savala of Michigan State University, and Commissioner Debra Ehrmann of Pontiac in addition to numerous committee members from school districts throughout the state. The purpose of the conference was to review the challenges and recommendations from the first conference and have a day of learning and sharing of best practices from several stakeholders.

The keynote presenter was Bolivian born Professor Jaime Escalante from California, whose extraordinary efforts in motivating Hispanic students at Garfield High School in East Los Angeles to excel in advanced mathematics and science received national acclaim and was highlighted in the movie, *Stand and Deliver*. Mr. Escalante's many teaching awards include the Presidential Medal for Excellence in Education, the Andres Bello Prize from the Organization of American States and the Free Spirit Award from the Freedom Forum, a foundation affiliated with USA Today and dedicated to the preservation of the First Amendment. He was also inducted into the National Teachers Hall of Fame in 1999.

Other speakers included Dr. Donald Bachand, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Saginaw Valley State University; and Mr. David Gamez, Chairman, Board of Trustees, Saginaw Valley State University.

The following top 10 educational challenges, recommendations and best practices for Hispanic students identified by the Commission on Spanish- Speaking Affairs (COSSA), Statewide Ad Hoc Committee were addressed at the Summit by Mr. Terry Fobbs, Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth; Ms. Emily Martinez, Lenawee County Intermediate School District; Ms. Phyllis Valdez, President of Madera Enterprises International; Dr. Barbara Raby, Oakland County Intermediate School District; Ms. Yolanda Vega from Ottawa County Intermediate School District and Mr. Franco Gamero, President, US Futsal Federation of Michigan., including:

1. Align rigorous and articulated curriculum, completely supported by stakeholders, with state educational requirements. Establish Educational Leader accountability for the K-16 subgroup.
2. Improve equal access to educational alternatives.
3. Develop diversity awareness for leaders and staff.

4. Recruit and retain highly qualified bilingual educational professionals.
5. Emphasize the importance of an educational pipeline for students from pre-school through higher education.
6. Provide strategies that alleviate the economic challenges affecting the education of K-16 students.
7. Partner with Spanish-speaking parents to improve educational awareness.
8. Address social/peer pressures for students.
9. Recruit and retain Spanish-speaking students in postsecondary education.
10. Develop partnerships with the private sector to provide opportunities for mentoring and internships.

Each presenter was afforded the opportunity to address questions from the audience.

Commissioners Garcia and Ehrmann summarized the days activities and outlined next steps that included obtaining detailed and accurate data from the Michigan Department of education and state-wide implementation of the challenge recommendations.