Al Éxito accelerates Latinx collective impact by providing comprehensive, culturally rooted services and programs that create an equitable future for success

Common Ground

Al Éxito Iowa Overview

Program Growth

Thoughts to Consider

Additional Study

Dawn Martinez Oropeza
Executive Director

Jennifer Cardenas-Hernandez
|drēm|sēd|CEO
Movimiento Youth Leader
Iowa Latino population has grown 13-fold since 1969.

Latinos represent more than half of Iowa’s overall population growth to 2020 and will continue going forward.

Home of vocal anti-immigrant political leaders
Al Éxito IA Overview
Mission: Al Éxito accelerates Latinx youth’s academic achievement and leadership capacity through transformative opportunities for youth, and their families, to fully participate and thrive in Iowa’s communities.

Vision: Al Éxito advances Iowa’s prosperity through Latinx excellence.
Al Éxito History

• American Association of University Women, Iowa State Board, Diversity and Equity Committee

• Jan Mitchell, Marshalltown Teacher of the Year and Gabriela Vargas-Avalos

• NFP 2010

• Executive Director 2013
## Al Éxito participants
- 95%+ are bi-lingual
- 75% are born in U.S.
- 80% of parents born outside of U.S.
- 75% students think about immigration often
- Willfully Hidden

## Representation & Understanding in Classrooms and Schools
- Increase requirements for pre/in-service teachers' culturally responsive methods

## Attendance Policies
- Adopt a statewide attendance policy that is inclusive of Latinx students’ obligations for excused absences

## Mental Health Counselors
- Create policies and trainings that ensure all Iowa schools are trauma informed

## Access and Economic Equity in Schools
- Ensure that schools make provisions for economically disadvantaged students

## Recommendations

### 1) Increase culturally responsive training for pre and in-service teachers
- Prioritize hiring staff, administration, and faculty to reflect the student demographics
- Re-establish Iowa Department of Education Bureau Chief of Equity

### 1) Consider the special needs of Latinx students in regards to race, national origin, religion, and socioeconomic status during attendance policy review
- Ensure Latinx students are not subject to sanctions for failure to attend school beyond their control, unavoidable occurrences (legal, bereavement, family emergency, religious ceremony)
- Create policies and practices that assist student learning during absences.
- Ensure family will not be subject to prosecution under Iowa State Code Chapter 299.

### 1) Increase the number of in-school counselors available daily for students to ensure all students have the skills they need for academic, career, and social-emotional competency.
- Decrease the ratio between high school counselors and student. American School Counselor Association recommends 1:250

### 1) Decrease the reliance on technology for low-income students OR increase access to efficient and reliable technology and WIFI in school and afterschool hours.
Student-led Program Growth

Inspires, prepares, supports, and positions Latinx leaders
Al Éxito After School Success

Middle School Programs
• Weekly Afterschool
• Culturally Relevant, Asset-based Researched Curriculum
• Preserve and Respect Cultural Values and Traditions
• Promote Leadership and Academic Achievement

Movimiento High School Programs
• Intensive Weekly Afterschool leadership, academic achievement, college attainment, and civic engagement
• YPAR Inspired
  • Research/ Data Analysis
  • Leadership through Civic Engagement
  • Youth-led Action

Dream Big

Exploring identity and community while being empowered to make a change
Youth-led business that partners with Spanish speaking business to promote Latino philanthropy and inclusion.
Transformative Opportunities

Summer Camps

- **Al Éxito University**, College Intensive Preparatory Camp on Rotating Campus
- Power and Perception of Youth Action (**PAPAYA**) with/ @ISU Science Bound
- 8th Grade Transition and Leadership Camps

Special Programs and Initiatives

- Mary E Campos Scholarship
- Resilient Identity Community Alliance (LBGTQ+)
- Al Éxito Youth Mental Health Taskforce
- Al Éxito Taskforce on Teen Sexual Assault Prevention Curriculum
- MUJERES Marshalltown
Program Structure

• Start and End in Circle- Honoring our indigenous roots

• 2 Interactive Culturally Designed College Campus Trips with tour/ panel discussion with Latino staff, faculty, organizations

• 2 Family Engagement Events

• Al Éxito Curriculum

• Meet the Leaders and College Nights
Demonstrated Success

2021 evaluation results demonstrated that youth found Al Éxito programs gave them tools for success, help them become better students, and helped them speak out against injustice.

Al Éxito measures indicate students’ preparedness through success-nurturing behaviors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2020 Youth School Performance</th>
<th>AL ÉXITO YOUTH</th>
<th>LATINX YOUTH IN DISTRICT</th>
<th>YOUTH OVERALL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Des Moines students with GPA over 3.0</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>12.55%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Des Moines average daily attendance</td>
<td>90.8%</td>
<td>89.0%</td>
<td>90.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Des Moines students with no office referral</td>
<td>80% (MS)</td>
<td>73.9%</td>
<td>68.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019 Youth School Performance</td>
<td>AL ÉXITO YOUTH</td>
<td>LATINX YOUTH IN DISTRICT</td>
<td>YOUTH OVERALL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Des Moines students with GPA over 3.0 (high school only)</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>34.05%</td>
<td>41.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Des Moines average daily attendance</td>
<td>90.40%</td>
<td>89.83%</td>
<td>90.47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Long Range Impact: Marshalltown

• Community is 23.5% Latino
• School 54%
• Latinos Median Income Slightly Above Non-Latinos $63,676
• 89.3% Mexican
**COVID 19 Expansion**

Al Éxito was prepared to respond quickly due to the 2018 Latinx Mental Health Report and the Latinx Youth Mental Health Task Force Recommendations and Technology Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access and Economic Equity in Schools</th>
<th>1) Decrease the reliance on technology for low-income students OR increase access to efficient and reliable technology and WIFI in school and after school hours.</th>
<th>Students from low-income families are more likely to have <strong>no access to reliable technology</strong> that is essential to complete schoolwork and resources.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that schools make provisions for economically disadvantaged students</td>
<td>60% of Latinx youth live in low-income families, twice as many as white students.</td>
<td>100% of Al Éxito students live in low-income families with caretakers in service or labor jobs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong> of Al Éxito students live in low-income families with caretakers in service or labor jobs.</td>
<td>Latinos in Iowa make $25,000 less than the average Iowa family income.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Compa en Camino
Connecting & Supporting Families for Success
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Compa Partners are here to help navigate paperwork and systems.
Assistance with translations, job and housing search.
Providing support and advocacy for family & students.

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Partnering with Ethnic Led Nonprofits

Uplifting and Investing in Latinx Collective Strength
Community /School Partnerships

Community Organizations
• Under-resourced/ Under-funded
• Addressing systemic vulnerabilities from a *lived experienced perspective*
  • Data on the population
  • Trusting community relationships
  • Bridging the gap for parents to schools
  • Act quickly

• Ensuring *Latinx* youth are successful- safe and considered-in schools

Urban School Districts
• Under-resourced/ Under-funded (especially in Iowa)
• Multiple roles, student populations and languages, priorities and issues
  • Lack of leadership reflective of the demographics

• Ensuring all students are successful in schools
Quality Community/School Partnerships

- Reciprocal
- Noncompetitive
- Uplift and Promote Each Other
- Listen and Collaborate
Additional Information Available

www.iowalatinxproject.org

Nuestro Iowa Report
Nuestro Iowa Interactive Dashboard

ADVANCING LATINX INCLUSION

• Create a baseline of data regarding the Latinx community
• Develop civically engaged Latinx leaders and advocates for the greater community
• Create Latinx collective strength for positive, innovative and integrated change for equitable communities
• Advance understanding of the issues regarding Iowa’s largest ethnic minority through data and stories to improve conditions of the Latinx community
• Build support for Latinx organizations
Questions?
Thank you!
For more information contact:
Executive Director | Dawn Martinez Oropeza | dawn@alexitoiowa.org