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Education Report Released in Florida about the Impact of Latino University Students

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According to a report authored by the Washington-based policy group, Excelencia in Education, the ability of the state of Florida to remain economically competitive will depend directly on actions it undertakes to increase the educational attainment level of the state's Latino student population.

In a conference earlier this week, Miami Dade College President Eduardo Padrón and other experts discussed the report's findings and cited concerns over statistics such as the fact that in Florida in 2008, just 23 percent of Latinos over the age of 25 had a bachelor's degree or higher. Only 78 percent of Hispanics have a high school diploma or its equivalent, compared with 84 percent of blacks and 90 percent of non-Hispanic whites.

By 2018, whites will account for 40 percent of the students in Florida's K-12 schools. Currently whites are at 56 percent now, while Hispanic students will grow from 21 percent to 36 percent.

Across the country, college costs continue to rise making higher education less affordable for many families. Unfortunately, facts show that there is a general lack of awareness amongst Latino families on how to go about securing financial aid further impeding students' chances of completing college.

Recommendations of the report are intended to promote discussion amongst policy makers and educators in order to improve the overall attainment rate of Florida students.

The report states, "Without concerted statewide efforts it will continue to be difficult to substantially expand opportunities to accelerate higher education attainment and workforce preparation."

This is the third in a series of reports examining states' higher educational achievement levels for Latino students. Previous reports examine California and Texas.