For the U.S. to regain the top ranking in the world for college degree attainment, Latinos will need to earn 5.5 million degrees by 2020.

To reach the degree attainment goal by 2020, Arkansas can: 1) close the equity gap in college completion; 2) increase the number of degrees conferred; and, 3) scale up programs and initiatives that work for Latino and other students. The following is a framework for tracking Latino degree attainment in Arkansas.

**Equity Gap in Degree Completion**

Closing the equity gap in college completion can be tracked by the 3 measures provided below. Alone, none of these measures capture the entire “story” of equity in degree completion. However, in combination, they provide a useful picture of the equity gap in degree attainment between Latino and white cohorts in Arkansas in a single year (2007-08) and the persistence of the gap over time (2006-08).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Arkansas</th>
<th>2007-08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Latinos</td>
<td>Whites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation Rates</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>39.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completions per 100 FTE Students</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completions Relative to the Population in Need</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>33.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Graduation rates** - Total graduation within 150% percent of program time for first-time, full-time freshman

**Completions per 100 FTE students** – Total undergraduate degrees and certificates awarded per 100 full-time equivalent students (incorporates part-time students)

**Completions Relative to the Population in Need** – Total undergraduate degrees and certificates awarded per 1,000 adults aged 18 to 44 relative to the adult population with no college degree

---

Degrees Conferred
Another metric to benchmark college completion is to track the progress of total degrees awarded over time. This measure may be the result of an increase in overall enrollment numbers rather than an increase in rates of completion. From 2005-06 to 2007-08,

- the number of Hispanics who earned an undergraduate degree in Arkansas increased about 32% from 2006-08, while all other race/ethnic groups increased 6%.
- among the 50 states, Arkansas ranked 35th for the increase in degrees conferred to Latinos over 3 years.

For more information on these metrics, download Benchmarking Latino College Completion to Meet National Goals: 2010 to 2020 and Degrees Conferred to Latinos: 2006-2008 at www.EdExcelencia.org/research/EAF/Benchmarking

Examples of What Works for Latino Students
There are institutions that are showing success in enrolling, retaining, and graduating Latino students. The following are examples of institutional programs across the country with evidence of effectiveness in serving Latino students nominated for Examples of Excelencia.

The Victoria K.E.Y. Center (Trio Support Services) – Victoria College
The K.E.Y. (Knowledge, Exploration, and You) Center is dedicated to providing an academically enriching and supportive environment for student participants. The K.E.Y. Center focuses on expanding the students' knowledge base by providing individualized and group tutoring, educational enrichment workshops, and mentoring services. Annually, the K.E.Y. Center serves 160 students who are first-generation, low-income, and/or have a documented disability. The goal of the Center is to retain these students until they receive a certificate, graduate with an associate degree, transfer to a four-year university, or leave school to enter the workforce. The retention rate for first-time-in-college Hispanic K.E.Y. students at Victoria College is higher than for all first-time-in-college Hispanic students (76% vs. 73%). (http://www.victoriacollege.edu/keycenter)

Rising Star Program Transfer Scholarship – Dallas County Community College District
The Rising Star Program Transfer Scholarship facilitates the next step in a student’s educational journey. The Rising Star Program at DCCCD has worked with local participating universities to offer transfer scholarships. Students in the program, who decide to transfer to a participating four-year college or university, after first meeting the "core complete" requirements and/or receiving an associate degree from DCCCD, are allowed to apply for these transfer scholarships. These scholarships allow students to apply for and potentially receive funding without competing against an entire incoming college class, as they are limited to applicants who initially come through the DCCCD Rising Star Program. In fall 2007, the Rising Star Program Transfer Scholarship received 70 applications, with 54% of the applicants being accepted into four-year institutions. (http://www.dcccd.edu/Future%20Students/Paying%20for%20College/Scholarships/RisingStar/Pages/TransferScholarships.aspx)

For more information on institutional programs improving Latino student success in higher education, access Excelencia in Education’s Growing What Works database at http://www.edexcelencia.org/examples

Ensuring America’s Future partners in Arkansas:
Southern Regional Education Board: www.sreb.org