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, Montana 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 Montana.

**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 Montana in a single year (2007-08) and the persistence of the gap over time (2006-08).

### STATE RANKING

Montana had the 45th largest Latino population in the U.S.¹

### K-12 POPULATION

In Montana, 3% of the K-12 population was Latino.²

### STATE POPULATION

In Montana, 3% of the state population was Latino.³ Projections show a continued increase.

### MEDIAN AGE

The median age of Latinos in Montana was 23, compared to 42 for White non-Hispanics.⁴

### DEGREE ATTAINMENT

In Montana, 24% of Latino adults (25 to 64 years old) had earned an associate degree or higher, compared to 40% of all adults.⁵

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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.

Middle College High School Program – San Bernardino Valley College
The goal of the program is to increase the college-going rate of students who are generally not college bound. The program targets populations of first generation college-going youth, English language learners, ethnic minorities, and students underperforming in the traditional high school compared to their test score abilities. The average high school GPA of students entering the program is 2.38, but by the end of the program it had risen to 3.28. The average GPA, for students in the program, for all college course work attempted was 2.5. For three consecutive years the seniors have achieved a 100% passing rate on the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE). From 2004 through 2006, the program has graduated 116 seniors who earned their high school diploma at MCHS. Of these seniors, 34 simultaneously earned an AA degree at SBVC. (http://www.valleycollege.edu/academic-career-programs/specialized-programs/middle-college-high-school.aspx)

Connections Program – Woodbury University
Los Angeles Valley College (LAVC) and Woodbury University have developed strategies to improve student transfer from LAVC to Woodbury University. These institutions have created a three-pronged approach to improving transfer that consists of three components: intercampus processes to streamline transfer with online, student-accessible systems; intercampus programs to improve the academic success, retention, transfer, and graduation of students at both schools; and connections centers where information and services for transfer-oriented students and transferees will be centralized on each campus. Students in the Connections Program at LAVC have spring to fall retention rates 16% higher than control groups. The transfer rate from LAVC to Woodbury has increased 60% in two years, at a time when Woodbury’s overall transfer rate only went up 12%. Finally, the retention rate at Woodbury for these students is 88%, compared to 72% for matched controls. (http://www.woodbury.edu/)

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