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Ideas to brainstorm:

1. Explaining challenges facing EL's in New York City that is disconnected between poverty, immigration, and language ability.
2. What can the RBERN recommend for educational opportunities for (a) schools with students with fewer resources; (b) frequent moves to different schools, (c) community support; and ((d) issues on absences and poor academic performance.
3. Partnership with a High School Program and develop a model: Fordham University is partnering with South Bronx Early College Preparatory (Charter School).

Disciplinary issues, poor academic performance, and frequent absences increase Latina and Latino dropout rates.

Students who are disciplined for misbehaving at school, students who have poor grades, students who are retained a grade ("held back"), and students who believe their peers see them as troublemakers all have higher odds of dropping out.⁵⁵ Latino students are more likely to be suspended or expelled than White students,⁵⁶ and to be retained a grade.⁵⁷ Although Latinas are not suspended as often as Latinos, they are suspended at a higher rate than White or Asian girls.⁵⁸

A recent study of North Carolina students highlighted the impact of disciplinary issues on dropout risk. The study found that although more boys than girls overall dropped out in that state for disciplinary reasons, more twelfth grade Hispanic females left for disciplinary reasons than any other group of students.⁵⁹ And while disciplinary rates for both White and Black girls decreased over time, they increased for Hispanic females. Even though Hispanic females had the lowest rates of leaving school due to discipline among all groups of ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade dropouts, the number of Hispanic females leaving because of disciplinary issues in twelfth grade rose to over 14%, higher than the 11% of Hispanic males who left for the same reason that year.⁶⁰

Responses to our survey also indicated a link between disciplinary and academic problems and drop-out. Of the students responding to our written survey who reported they had ever failed a class, been suspended from school, or held back a grade, around one-third had thought of dropping out of school. By contrast, only about one-tenth of the students who reported that they had never experienced such problems in school had considered dropping out.

Our survey also bolstered the finding that high rates of absenteeism are correlated with dropout rates.⁶¹ Of the 51 students who said that they typically had nine or more absences per semester, 30 had considered dropping out (58.8%). In comparison, of the 139 students who reported

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that they had only one or two absences per semester, nine of those—a much smaller proportion (6.5%)—had considered dropping out of school.

Federal, state, and local policymakers should:

- ▶ Expand access to affordable, high-quality child care and early education through increased investments in child care, Head Start, prekindergarten, and other early learning initiatives, as well as family literacy programs.
 - ▶ Conduct outreach to all families, including Latino families, to ensure they are aware of and have access to child care assistance and other early childhood programs. Many Latino families are not aware that such programs exist and that they are eligible for them.
 - ▶ Provide access to education and training for child care providers, including targeted efforts to reach providers who are Latino or who are serving Latino families.
 - ▶ Expand access to family supports including housing, health care, nutrition assistance, and tax benefits. To enable Latino students from poor families to focus on school and teen parents to support their children, programs that provide supports to low-income families should be adequately funded. Outreach should be targeted to Latino families, to ensure they can take advantage of benefits for which they are eligible. Officials distributing funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 should carefully consider the needs of Latino children and families and direct funds to programs that will meet those needs. Unfortunately, state budget shortfalls pose threats to many of these programs.¹¹³ It is critical to the long-term economic well-being of states and our nation as a whole that these important programs be fully funded.
2. Connect Latinas with role models and engage them in goal setting. Girls with long-term plans or educational aspirations have more hope for the future, are less likely to get pregnant,¹¹⁴ and become more engaged in school and related activities—all factors making it more likely that they will graduate from high school and make it to college. Seeing someone in front of them who looks like them, came from where they come from, and has done well and achieved her career and educational goals can empower students and enhance their possibilities for success. And research has shown that a relationship with a caring adult helps students to stay in school and graduate.

Schools must play a part in connecting students to mentors or role models and facilitating goal setting. Among other things, Schools should:

- ▶ Talk early and often with students about their short and long-term aspirations. For example, school personnel should discuss with all students things like the clubs they want to join, sports they want to play, classes

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they want to take, how to manage school with family responsibilities and jobs, and college and career goals.

► Provide guidance on prerequisites for post-secondary education. Schools must hire an adequate number of counselors, and they should monitor students' course loads to ensure that post-secondary requirements are met. Teachers should share with students information about their own college experiences.

► Expose students to the outside world. Schools should bring in outside speakers, take the students on field trips and site visits to expose them to post-secondary educational options and possible careers, invite college representatives to school to speak with students and parents, and arrange mentoring partnerships (with local universities, government leaders, and the business community) and student support groups.

Federal, state, and local governments should:

► Direct funding to mentoring and other pro-grams that provide Latina girls with access to good educational and career role models as well as support to meet their goals for higher education. Where these programs exist, they should not be cut to resolve state budget deficit concerns, as some states are now pro-posing. Fostering the positive growth of young Latinas is vital to the economic health of local communities and to our nation as a whole.

► Identify successful programs and provide funding and technical assistance to enable other schools to replicate those programs. Ensure that all students can pursue and are prepared for post-secondary educational opportunities.

In order to compete in the global economy and improve our national prosperity, all students— regardless of their sex, race, ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, disability, immigration or migrant status—must have access to a post-secondary education. To that end:

Schools should:

► Undertake initiatives to get all students “college ready.” Evidence from our interviews confirms the need for such programs and the impact they can have. Without better information, support and guidance, many students will not be in a position to pursue post-secondary education, even if they do graduate and find the resources to pay for school.

Congress should:

► Fund initiatives designed to get Latina (and, indeed, all) students “college ready” and give them guidance about pursuing post-secondary educational opportunities.

Schools should:

► Rigorously enforce anti-discrimination policies and refuse to tolerate discriminatory or offensive conduct by teachers or students. Every student

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should feel welcome in her school, as well as encouraged and supported by the staff.

- ▶ Support dual language education for Latino students and for English Language Learners (ELLs) in particular. Dual-language programs, rather than English as a Second Language (ESL) programs that demand English acquisition as fast as possible, build on the existing linguistic strengths of students and allow them to continue to build on their content knowledge rather than fall behind due to time spent on English acquisition.
- ▶ Create inclusive, multicultural environments where programming, activities, and curricula incorporate and value Latino history, culture, and identities. For example, Latino students should be provided with opportunities in school, such as in clubs and activities, to speak Spanish and learn about their heritage.
- ▶ Offer quality after-school programs and summer enrichment programs. The extra time that these programs provide can offer the support that ELLs need to catch up to their peers both academically and linguistically. Participation in these programs can help to provide Latinas (and) Latinos in general) with the support and tools they need to be college- or work-ready, and can help them to develop into healthy, self-sufficient adults.

Resources

National Center for Education Statistic: English Language Learners in Public School Updated March 2017
https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cgf.asp

Maldef. Listening to Latinas: Barriers to High School Graduation
<http://www.maldef.org/assets/pdf/listeningtolatinas.pdf>

https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A-www.nationalacademies.org-hmd-Activities-Children-DualLanguageLearners.aspx&d=DwMGaQ&c=aqMfXOEVEJQh2iQMcb7WY8l0sPnURkcaADc2guUW8IM&r=rq3pOp6TWolnyP_arYR-ifR3wydy5SuVJz_TB0dMs4&m=R4EaEksTrcTFo0dbRgvYzq_ZoJ6N5lphyMbrkN8A8AU&s=X5u8TDNe5KWzMgiM4QvfYrCgeKI7ZMySQR3H81fHv3s&e=