

Avanza: NC Community Colleges Advancing Latino Student Success

With support from the [John M. Belk Endowment](#), [The Hunt Institute](#), [LatinxEd](#), and the [Belk Center for Community College Leadership and Research](#) are excited to launch **Avanza: NC Community Colleges Advancing Latino Student Success**. Designed to provide institutional leaders with a space to discuss best practices and barriers to student success, this community of practice will convene annually to provide greater alignment and collaboration to support Latino students across the state. This work will be done in alignment with our partners to provide technical assistance and policy support as these institutions work to advance access and attainment for Latino North Carolinians.

Statement of Need

In order to meet North Carolina's [ambitious postsecondary attainment goal of two million residents holding a high-quality degree or credential by 2030](#), it is critical that all North Carolinians have access to high-quality education. This is especially true for populations that have been historically underserved and underrepresented in higher education.

[North Carolina's Hispanic population](#) exceeds one million people, and between 2010 and 2020, the state's Hispanic population grew by over 300,000 residents, representing the greatest increase of any racial/ethnic group in the state. Hispanic learners account for [49 percent](#) of North Carolina community college goers, but only [22.2 percent](#) of Hispanic North Carolinians have attained a postsecondary degree or credential, trailing the statewide average of 44.6 percent. This gap indicates a need to better recruit, support, and retain these students as they work to complete a postsecondary degree or credential.

There is a critical need to better recruit, serve and support, and retain Latino students to completion in order to close the gap in postsecondary attainment. The Hunt Institute, LatinxEd, and the Belk Center for Community College Leadership and Research are committed to developing a community of practice with Hispanic-Serving Community Colleges to provide technical assistance and opportunity for collaboration across these institutions.

Objectives

Over the course of a year, participating institutions will build capacity to lead and innovate in order to best serve Latinx students and their communities. Throughout their time in the program, institutions will develop a framework for success unique to current practices and needs at their institution. To support institutions in building capacity, The Hunt Institute, The Belk Center for Community College Leadership and Research, and LatinxEd will:

1. Establish a learning community to share best practices related to recruiting, serving, and graduating Latinx students at North Carolina community colleges.
2. Introduce culturally relevant frameworks to best support and advocate for Latinx students.
3. Provide technical support to institutional leaders at participating institutions.
4. Inform institutional leaders on federal and state policies related to Hispanic-serving and Emerging Hispanic-Serving Institutions to leverage existing funding streams, resources, and networks.
5. Inform institutional leaders on Latinx landscape in their communities, including but not limited to data on student and community populations, individuals and organizations providing social capital within the community.
 - a. Examples include community profiles, demographic information, and community resources and spotlights.