

# SOLUCIONES EDUCATION RELAUNCH MEETING NOTES

OHIO COMMISSION ON HISPANIC/LATINO AFFAIRS



*December 1, 2007  
Roundtable*



***¡soluciones!***  
education campaign



---

TED STRICKLAND, GOVERNOR  
EZRA C. ESCUDERO, DIRECTOR

## Introduction

In 2001-2002, the Ohio Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs developed a seminal report on the state of education for young Hispanic Ohioans. This report was well received by the community and by policy makers, for identifying key areas of concerns and proposing solutions to address those issues.

Two years later, the Commission partnered with the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators and the National Black Caucus of State Legislators to focus on closing the academic achievement gap in ten states including Ohio.

Then in 2006, the Commission launched the Soluciones Education Campaign with a statewide roundtable summit to talk about the identified solutions and to forge local partnerships between parents, community leaders, legislators, administrators, teacher and students to begin implementing those solutions.

Now in 2007, the resources necessary for a successful, statewide, comprehensive education campaign are finally in place, so the Commission invited a number of key community leaders in the area of education from the original Soluciones Community Advisory Committee” to help answer the question “How do we re-launch the Soluciones Education Campaign?”

## Strategic Dialogue Participants

- Blanche Aviles-Casey      Ohio Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs
- Melissa Cardenas          Ohio Board of Regents
- Ruben Castilla Herrera      Herrera and Associates
- Lilleana Cavanaugh        Ohio Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs
- Ezra Escudero                Ohio Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs
- Victor Mora                  The Ohio State University
- Rose Payne                  Dublin City Schools
- Raul Soto                      Ohio Department of Education
- Guadalupe Velasquez        City of Columbus – New Americans Initiative
- Jennifer Vargo                Ohio Department of Education



**Facilitation:**  
Documentation and Photos -

**Guadalupe Velasquez and Ruben Castilla Herrera**  
Ruben Castilla Herrera

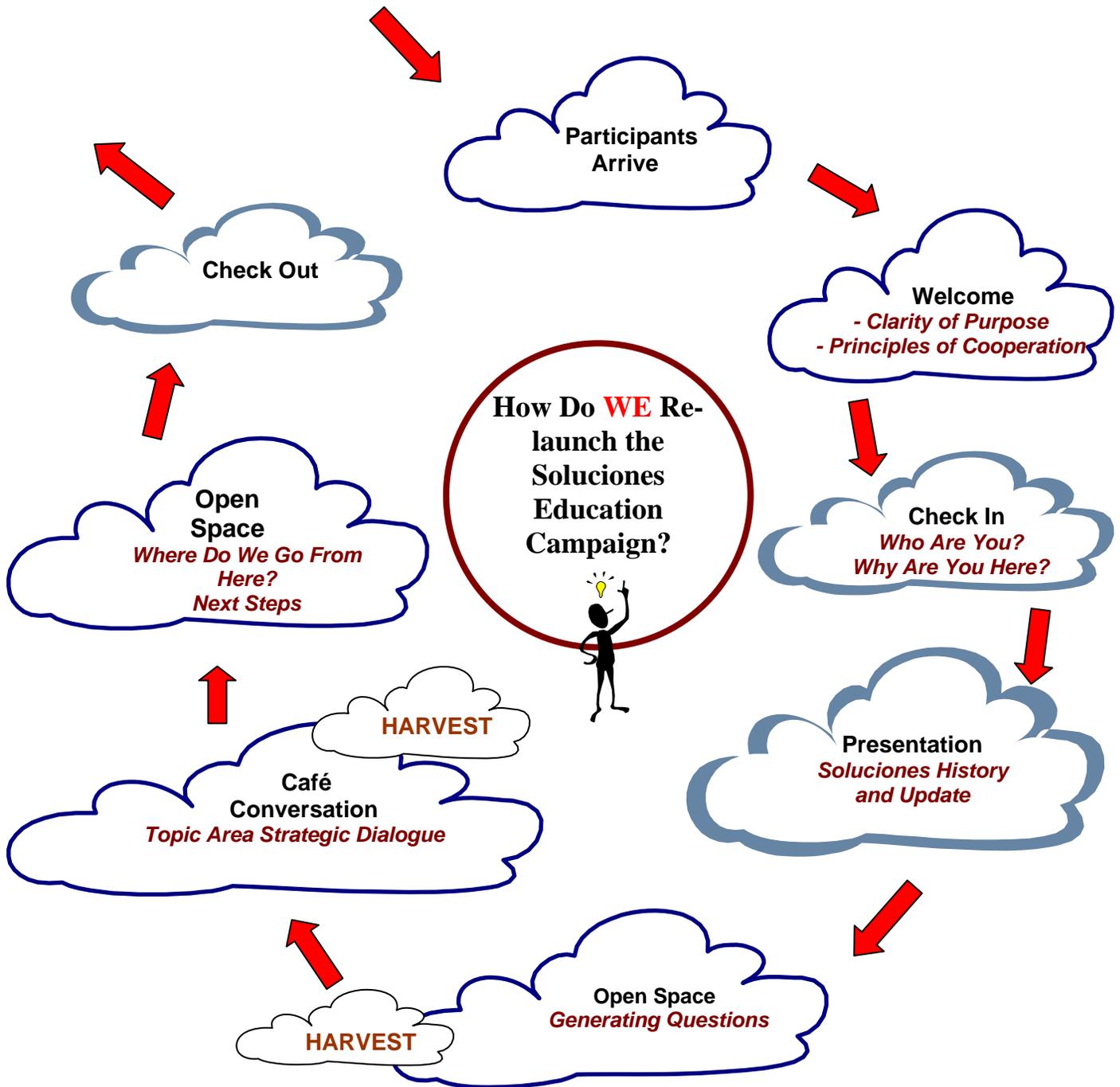
## Check In

### Who are you and why are you here today?

- I am a new OCHLA Commissioner and have been involved in the Latino community in the Dayton area for the past 20 years or so. I am interested in education and want to be a part of the solution.
- I am with the Ohio Department of Education and am interested in helping schools connect with families, to engage all parents. I am here to learn and to develop strategies.
- I am with the Ohio State University and have been involved for many years on Latino issues. I am interested in promoting achievement and education. I want to turn ideas into action.
- I am with the Ohio Board of Regents. I am somewhat new to the Columbus area but have been involved in Latino issues for a while. I want to leverage the resources of the Board of Regents and work toward solutions.
- I am a teacher at Dublin City Schools. There are few Latinos in my school and in my district. Education is important to me and would like to reach out others in and out of my district.
- I am here to listen and be a part of the collective wisdom of this gathering. I would like to see some concrete plans come from this and would like to somehow see the execution of collective resources.
- I am an advocate and a facilitator. I am an outreach person in the community. I have many young people call me about their concern regarding education and related issues in the Latino community.
- I am an immigrant. I was taught to want to be in American and not necessarily how to be an American. I think we need to make people accountable and not see community members as the needy ones. I see the core of the Latino community is the family and want to challenge people to think and act from this core. Somehow we need to help the family succeed and improve.
- I am from the Ohio Department of Education. I want to see strategies that include a reflective analysis and start with the outcomes in our mind – What do we want to get out of this? We need to look at the reality framework of the situation. I want to see how we can re-launch this effort.
- I am here to provide a process or a container which we can have a conversation with the expectation of looking at ways to re-launch the Soluciones campaign.



# Process Flow



# Framing the Process

## Transformation from the Hero to the Host Leaders as Hosts - Guidelines/Principles - Margaret Wheatley

*Leaders should be hosts. This does not mean they are the ones that do all the work. Leaders gather people together and rely on the creativity and wisdom of others. "I don't know what to do but together we'll figure it out".*

- People only support what they create
  - o Everyone needs to "touch" the product or the decision.
- People will only act responsibly when they care about the situation
  - o In general, people are not given work that they care about.
- Depend on diversity
  - o This is actually a life saving social skill and a workplace saving skill.
- Widen the circle of influence
  - o Be prepared for the conversation to change, view this as a step forward.
  - o Change who is in the conversation.
  - o Ask → Invite → change
- Everyone is an expert on something!
  - o Create a space/time to find out who and what this is.
- The solutions we need are already here
  - o Begin all internal action/decisions with this expectation.
  - o Start from the inside first.
- Expect leadership to emerge from any where
  - o You never know who will suddenly wake up because the issue is important to her/him.
- Learning must be the primary value
  - o Learning from experience.
  - o People value their work not with punishments and rewards but by being given the opportunity to learn and by acknowledgment, listening to them.
- Reclaim time to think
  - o You need regular places for reflection and do it frequently.
  - o This must be free from agendas.
  - o Create an environment that is supportive of learning.
- Recall people to purpose
  - o Purpose of the self, group, workplace, community.

\* Adapted from presentation from Margaret Wheatley – Columbus, Ohio – November 28, 2007.

## Group Thoughts on the Realities Regarding Soluciones Campaign

### What are the realities that exist out there at this moment?

- There is an anti-immigrant sentiment out there right now.
- Many Latino students are children of illegal immigrants.
- All Latino/a students cannot be looked at with the same lens.
- Latino/as are stuck in bad school districts.
- OCHLA has a 6 month time frame to re-launch this.
- There are untapped resources out there.
- Many teachers still do not understand cultural issues.
- There needs to be more communication within state agencies and schools.
- There is the role of the Latino family today. Its priority is survival and this is connected to the legal status and residency. School may not be a priority.
- There is a need to define the players here. Who are the stakeholders?
- We have to create a space for the story to be told. People speak in stories and with emotion. How can we provide this space and turn it into action?
- Schools must educate all children.
- It is important to have these discussions on weekends when parents can be involved.
  - o People have no time for training and can only take time on the weekends.
- Latino community leaders and organizations need to be locally accountable to build a framework. Our role is to support them to achieve it.
- In schools, there are so many different issues to deal with that principals, superintendents, teachers, districts, etc. are reactive vs. proactive.
- Families have no time to dedicate to education.
- This is a huge topic area – we cannot do everything.

## Group Thoughts on the Possibilities Regarding Soluciones Campaign

### What are the possibilities that exist out there at this moment?

- Soluciones has already started something, we need to build upon this
- The Ohio Department of Education has a conference
  - o Can we have speakers/presentations on Soluciones related issues and topics?
- Connect with state agencies that serve the Latino/a community.
  - o Have all state agencies include Latino/a education issues.
  - o Identify other agencies that are trying to reach out to the Latino community in the area of education.
  - o Formalize these relationships and build accountability.
- Formalize a relationship with the Ohio Dept. of Education and the Ohio Board of Regents.
- Have more coordination between OCHLA and the Ohio Dept. of Education.
- Identify or provide forums/trainings for dialogue, cultural awareness, etc.

- Offer CEU's
- Develop a strategic plan and monitor the goals.
- Possibility of getting a consultant and get tangible results.
  - Do a study on the status of Latino/a in the state of Ohio.
- Career Tech possibilities and options for Latino/a students.
- Work and review with Latino/a grassroots organizations to see what they are already doing.

## Café Group One

Melissa Cardenas, Raul Soto, Victor Mora, Blanche Aviles- Casey

### Questions Developed by Large Group:

- 1) How and when can we update the Soluciones Report with current information and statistics?
- 2) How can we clearly define and re-define the problem, focusing on school district performance?
- 3) How can we create forward movement?
- 4) How can we move toward change in policy?
- 5) How can we involve all levels of the community (students, parents, educators and policy makers)?
- 6) How can this process help us make decisions?

### Brainstorm Ideas:

- Assess our resources (data, programs, statistics, etc.).
- Evaluate our successes and challenges
  - o LEON in Central Ohio had a Soluciones forum
- Define the vision and mission – enhancing opportunities
- Identify partners, coalitions and stakeholders.
- Answer – What is the core mission of this group?
- Formalize a steering committee
- Develop a strategic plan (s) with buy in from the community and stakeholders.
- Engage community members and stakeholders.
- Articulate the goals and align priorities to the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Board of Regents.
- Define the problem in measurable areas.
- Utilize OLANet for sharing/communication.
- Prepare for tangible wins (benchmarks).
- Create a democratic atmosphere.
- Gather representatives from key areas (committee).



## **Café Group Two**

**Rose Payne, Lilleana Cavanaugh**

### **Questions Developed by Large Group:**

- 1) How can we develop more coordination with community members, schools, agencies, etc.?
- 2) How can we have dialogue on education and culture through the existing forums at the Ohio Dept. of Education?
- 3) I can we identify other dialogue forums?

### **Brainstorm Ideas:**

#### **First Step:**

- Find out what is already out there.
  - o Community groups – Latino based groups and non-Latino based groups such as United Way, Kids organizations, etc.
  - o Government agencies at all levels
- Schools (Head Start through Higher Education including vocational education)
  - o Teachers (No Teacher Left Behind)
  - o Students and Families
  - o Administrators
- See who OCHLA has already worked with and has connected with
- Decide on a vision to call people together.

#### **Second Step:**

- Have community forums/dialogue – Dialogue and conversation is action
  - o Offer CEU's
  - o Be creative in scheduling these (various time, dates, weekends, weekdays, evenings).
- Have conferences with experts to educate all stakeholders
  - o Make use of OLANet to disperse and receiving information
  - o Have a virtual forum
  - o Blog

#### **Third Step:**

- Redefine and re-state the vision.
- Create a mission statement.
- Decide on specific goals
- Decide on specific actions to achieve goals
- Create a network of agencies and community organizations that will implement Soluciones.

## What Are OCHLA's Next Steps?

- **Step 1:** Review Soluciones Action Plan from 2006. Find out what's out there, who is out there and who has worked with OCHLA
- **Step 2:** Open community dialogue for input, ideas and implementation.
- **Step 3:** Define vision and mission. Develop a strategic plan. Implement



- Prepare a summary report of initial ideas and recommendations.
- Identify big ideas and priorities
  - o Pilot project?
  - o Connections
- Convene Soluciones Steering Committee
  - o Agree on immediate actions/activities
  - o Have meetings with stakeholders, etc.



- Formalize partnerships
  - o Engage Communities
- Identify a project to spend resources on (FY08 monies)
- Develop a Steering Group to develop a Strategic Plan
  - o Identify and launch the goals, milestones and actions



- Prepare plans to launch Third grad reading project in targeted schools and districts.
- Bring partners from the Ohio State University for Central Ohio Schools.
- Put plan together and have meetings with the Ohio Dept. of Education.
  - o Agency dealing with family outreach.



- Define an Executive Committee (people who do the work) and synthesize.
- Expand the Advisory group to include representatives from all stakeholder groups
  - o This allows for more/greater representation and ideas.
- Assess our resources – these will help define the problem. This could be a short study on us.
  - o Money, data, people
- Define the problem and make decisions about doing something.



- Decide on a vision.
- Find out what is already out there.
- Start using OLANet ASAP
  - o Use this as a tool to start collecting emails fro contact people for forums
- Develop a comprehensive “environmental” report that answers questions like:
  - o What is already out there?
  - o What are the Ohio Dept. of Education and Ohio Board of Regents priorities?

## Check Out What Can I Personally Do Next?

- Report back to the key people in the Ohio Dept. of Education on what we are pursuing and see who can support us.
- Spent more time on this in particular looking at tangible results. Keep working on the plan and the vision.
- Work with Ezra Escudero on categorizing the information, statistics. Work as an agent to keep people together and moving on this issues.
- Work toward action, something tangible.
- Go back to my agency and see what data is available on this issue.
- Get additional support from my agency.
- Figure out a way to get our agency interest in the strategic plan of Soluciones.
- Contact the Dublin Schools (my district) and get other people interested and on board from other grade levels and departments.
- Put this information together and get it out ASAP.
- Be a resource.

