

April 3, 2024

Dr. Daniel P Corr, President of the Board
Katherine Haley, Vice President of the Board
Superintendent Tom Horne, Board Member
Jason S. Catanese, Board Member
Dr. Jacqui Clay, Board Member
Jennifer Clark, Board Member
Dr. Scott Hagerman, Board Member
Julia Meyerson, Board Member
Karla Philips-Krivickas, Board Member
Dr. Robert D Robbins, Board Member
Anna Tovar, Board Member

To the Esteemed Members of the Arizona State Board of Education,

As representatives and partners of UnidosUS, a leading organization dedicated to uplifting the Latino community and fostering equitable educational opportunities, we (affiliates, allied organizations, and UnidosUS) find it imperative to address the adverse implications of the current attacks on English Language Learners (ELLs) in Arizona, specifically Superintendent Tom Horne's efforts to restrict dual-language instruction.

Our concerns stem from a pattern of policy application that appears to disregard the nuanced needs of ELLs, compromising their educational journey and future opportunities. Mr. Horne's approach to bilingual education and ELL support does not reflect the inclusivity, research, respect for diversity, or commitment to educational equity that should drive our state's educational system. ***It is important to note that Arizona is the only state in the country with this type of law in the books.***

Educational policies should be grounded in evidence-based practices and a comprehensive understanding of our student population's diverse needs. They should promote practices that enable all students to achieve their fullest potential. The essence of effective education policy lies in the academic success it fosters and the equitable opportunities it provides for every student, regardless of linguistic background.

With this understanding, Aliento, All In Education, Arizona Community Foundation, Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, CPLC AF, Children's Action Alliance, Stand for Children, Living United for Change in Arizona (LUCHA), ONE Community, Save Our Schools Arizona, and UnidosUS urge the State Board to reconsider the trajectory of Mr. Horne's misguided educational priorities affecting ELLs. We advocate for a policy framework that truly reflects the values of our community, is based on evidence, and ensures that all students have access to the resources and support necessary to thrive in their academic and personal lives.

Our organizations are committed to working alongside the Board and other stakeholders to advocate for and implement policy changes that better serve the needs of ELLs and all students in Arizona and prepare them to be part of a global society and not an isolated one. We believe in the power of collaborative efforts to create an educational environment where we celebrate diversity, and afford every student the chance to succeed.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to contributing to a dialogue that leads to meaningful and positive changes in our educational system.

Sincerely (in alphabetical order),

January Contreras
President & CEO
Children's Action Alliance

Enrique Davis-Mazlum, PhD
Arizona State Director, Advocacy and Policy
UnidosUS

Joseph "Joe" Garcia
Executive Director
CPLC Action Fund

Rebecca Gau
Executive Director
Stand for Children, Arizona

Alejandra "Alex" Gomez
Executive Director
Living United for Change in Arizona (LUCHA)

Angela Hughey
President & Co-Founder
ONE Community

Shelley Jackson
Executive Director
Instituto

Beth Lewis
Executive Director
Save Our Schools (SOS AZ)

Reyna Montoya
Founder & CEO
Aliento

Stephanie Parra
Executive Director
All In Education

Mike Renaud
President & CEO
Valle del Sol

Nate Rhoton
CEO
one-n-ten

Michael S.C. Soto
President
Equality Arizona

Monica Villalobos
President and CEO
Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

