



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS**  
*COMISIÓN DE ASUNTOS HISPANOS*

Everett Meeting Minutes  
August 22, 2008

**Roll Call:**

Commissioners present: Ty Cordova, Henry Cruz, Felix Negrón, Lillian Ortiz-Self, Rosalba Pitkin, and Lourdes Portillo Salazar

Commissioners absent: Jorge Chacón and Bob Cepeda

Staff Present: Alicia Luna

Chair Portillo Salazar called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

Commissioner Cordova informed the audience that the meeting would be conducted in English; Commissioner Pitkin translated the message to the Spanish speaking attendees.

Roll Call was taken: Commissioners Jorge Chacón and Bob Cepeda were not present. Commissioner Cepeda's absence is excused; Commissioner J. Chacón's is not excused.

Host Commissioner Ortiz-Self welcomed the community of Everett, key guests, attendees, and panel participants.

David Byer, President of Everett Community College welcomed the Commission; he stated that he was honored to have them at the college. He also acknowledged Commissioner Ortiz-Self for her participation in the Everett Community College Diversity Committee.

Director Iñiguez and Commissioner Ortiz-Self went over CHA's priorities and shared the following:

- CHA's Mandate and accomplishments
- WA State distribution of Latino population by county
- Snohomish County, City of Edmonds, Everett, Lynwood, & Monroe Latino Population
- ELL, Bilingual Education, and other education funds
- Projected growth of minority school-age population
- WASL scores & program funding for Edmonds, Everett, Monroe, & Marysville schools
- Snohomish County Felony Convictions and State Juvenile Recidivism rates

210 11<sup>th</sup> Ave Suite 301A PO Box 40924 Olympia, WA 98504-0924  
Toll-Free: (800) 443-0294 Olympia: (360) 725-5661 Fax: (360) 360-586-  
9501

[www.cha.wa.gov](http://www.cha.wa.gov) [hispanic@cha.wa.gov](mailto:hispanic@cha.wa.gov)

**Special Guest**, First Gentleman Mike Gregoire read a greetings letter on behalf of the Governor.

### **Panel Presentations**

Jim Scharf, Everett Chief of Police shared the following:

- 13 years as Chief of Police; prior to that worked with Snohomish Sheriff's office
- Believes in fair treatment for all; however, community involvement is fundamental in the quest for a safe community
- McManus House; prime example of citizen involvement
- Gang Issue – outlets that assist youth regardless of who they are or where they came from are crucial in keeping them out of gangs
- Stressed the need for involvement with local organizations as well as the police
- Invited the attendees to call him on 425-257-8400

Deborah Wright, Administrative Director Neighborhoods & Community, City of Everett shared the following:

- Works with the Mayor and is part of the Mayor's Advisory on Diversity Ad Hoc Committee; mission is to reach out to it's diverse community
- The plan is to get people involved through outreach efforts
- Two year plan is to have an all inclusive community
- City wants to be an employer that is representative of the community it serves; will influence other organizations to do the same

Karst Brandsma, Interim Superintendent of the Everett School District shared the following:

- Acknowledged newly appointed Deputy Superintendent, Matt McCauley; Everett School Board members Ed Peterson and Carole Andrews; and Arturo Ledesma who will be helping with their diversity plan
- Acknowledged that Latino students are underserved and in need of help
- Stated that WASL scores have increased; however, much room for improvement
- Acknowledged the numerous resources available to them and the long years of working in isolation; made a commitment to change

Donnetta Walser, Mayor of Monroe shared the following:

- 27 years teaching; last four years with Diversity Office
- Believes that the Latino population is between 16-20%
- Teachers need to step up and be activists
- Doubly difficult to pass the WASL if students are transients, ELL, etc.
- Math in particular hard to pass even for brilliant kids due to the writing section
- Need to be "realists" with kids; some kids are truly gifted
- Kids drop out of school (60%) due to substance abuse issues, failed classes, etc.
- Monroe has a Diversity Council that is currently working with employers, school districts, prison system, and businesses to improve the hiring of minority

Carl Bruner, Superintendent Mt. Vernon School District shared the following:

- District has 6000 students; 63% of families are in poverty
- 45% are of Latino origin; largest Latino student base between Blaine and Vancouver
- Board of Directors, Diversity Board, students, Staff, parents, and community members developed an action plan that was adopted

- Added bilingual staff and a bilingual multicultural Liaison
- Have dual language programs in the elementary schools
- Have a “Fortaleciendo Familias” program and literacy classes for parents
- Have a six week summer school program for those that score in level 1 or 2
- They match Latinos students with math mentors and they have qualified bilingual bicultural teachers
- Have an accountability system with time line for acquiring academic English

Nick Brossoit, Superintendent Edmond School District shared the following:

- 21, 000 students; 10% are Latino with 1000 in ELL
- Have a natural leaders programs, parents program, & a bilingual teachers program
- Joined LEAP and partnering with FASC (Families Advocating for Students of Color)
- Working with Edmonds Community College for recruitment of more teachers
- Having a problem with funding for ELL students after they exit the program
- State needs to support the “Dream Act”
- Need more vocational opportunities for students

Steve Jensen, Lynwood Chief of Police shared the following:

- They arrest violators who prey on the community
- Volunteer program has 140 kids and seniors who do community patrols
- They provide Officers in the high schools
- Rise in gang activity is mostly Asians in their late teens and early 20’s
- They work with the community, parents, schools, etc.
- Recently implemented a Diversity Coalition
- Arrest less Latinos than the representation in the community

Don Gough, Mayor of Lynwood shared the following:

- Acknowledged the presence of Gloria Sepulveda, Shirley Sutton, and Deputy Chief Karen Manser; Task Force members
- Between 1990 and 2007 much has transpired; cultural minority went from 11% to 130%, Racial Justice Trust Force established, Commission launched, and in 2007 allegations of ICE enforcement by local police
- ICE Incidents that transpired had incorrect facts; thus Commission investigated
- Three goals were created
  1. Turn fear and distress into opportunity
  2. Increase education and partnerships
  3. Diversity of all city personnel

### **Public Comments**

Denise Mack, WA Commission for National and Community Service shared that their mission was to insure that citizens of the state of Washington are prepared for an emergency.

Elizabeth Ramirez, Program Coordinator for Familias Unidas shared the following:

- Past couple of years parents have made a great effort at working with schools
- Lake Stevens High School; Counselors are referring students to them regarding how to pursue higher education

Maru Mora Villalpando, WA Community Action Network shared the following:

- Very happy with the results of the Lynwood Immigration Task Force report
- Happy to support the implementation of their recommendations
- The need for local solutions is vital since federal government is not working

Jesus Rodriguez made the following recommendations for the panel members:

- Commit more money to hire additional Latino teachers
- Establish mentoring programs and thus increase graduating rates
- Schools need to open their doors and offer adult education
- Include Latino contributions to America in US History classes
- Provide recreation activities for all youth
- Have open houses or hearings for Latinos at least once a year

Fatima Morales shared the following:

- Latino community of Lynwood; need to have an honest conversation, collaboration, and safe environment
- Federal laws are being enforced by local law officials

Lynne Nguyen, Washington Community Action Network

- Reiterated to Mayor Gough the importance of the recommendations
- Also the importance regarding translation of materials

Marty Sharf, Labor and Industries local representative

- Encouraged injured Latino workers to report all injuries
- Stated that services are provided regardless of legal status

Ed Glazer, Teacher in the Everett School District

- Cultural Competency and understanding; key point that is glossed over
- Current employees need this training
- Can only happen with long-term continuous training

Gloria Sepulveda

- LEAP; needed to motivate Latinos so that they have a successful school journey
- How can we encourage Everett School District to start being involved with LEAP
- How can we hold the school district accountable in helping Latinos

Rosie Ramirez, Parent and Interpreter

- For seven years her son has been labeled “slow”, however, he speaks English and Spanish and knows his math, good speller, and writes quite well
- Very dissatisfied with the Arlington School District

Stephanie Ruiz, Mt. Vernon High School alumni

- Devoted great efforts in conjunction with Commissioner Ortiz-Self to work with the Everett School District; however, the Superintendent wouldn't meet with them
- Mentorship programs, Latino teachers and leadership is needed
- All need to contribute towards the education of all students

Anna Arroyo

- Son was a student at the Everett school district; accused of being a gang banger

- Son has never been in a gang; punished for speaking up for equality and eventually dropped out of school
- Repeatedly asked to be involved in the resolution to her son's issue
- Superintendent Whitehead did not embrace collaboration; had them wait 45 minutes before seeing them
- No respect towards parents and they are not invited to the meetings
- She has continually offered her assistance and is eager to continue offering it

Raymundo Olivas

- We are one; not us and them
- Everett county jail; many are being deported because of traffic violations
- Disparity in the amount of arrests between Caucasians and Hispanics
- Thanked the Lynwood Police department for their efforts

Tiffany Simms, Families Advocating for Students of Color

- Thanked CHA and panel members
- Organization provides resources and programs for students of color
- Freedom School program - 38 youth were involved in this program including many kids of color; would like to offer this program every year

Cecilia Algara, Medical Social Worker

- Never paid by agency in Everett; bad system and corruption within state agencies
- Discrimination of people; evicted from her house

Elena Perez, AGO

- Message regarding scams, fraud, etc. needs to get out to the Latino community
- Info and service provided by AGO is available to all regardless of legal status

John McCoy, Representative for the 38<sup>th</sup> District

- He and Representative Shells will engage the Latino community and address issues
- Need more Latinos elected so that the message gets heard
- Latinos need to help those Legislators that are advocating for them
- It is very difficult to engage the Latino community in the Mt. Vernon area
- The National Caucus of Native Americans needs your help

Commissioner Ortiz-Self stressed the need for collaboration and parent involvement.

Karst Brandsma's comments after hearing the public remarks:

- Will work with staff and Commissioner Ortiz-Self to insure parents are treated with respect
- Will concentrate on parent involvement and will look into the LEAP program
- Mentorship; a positive alternative to having kids stay in school, therefore, will work on a strong Latino mentorship program
- Access to college education is important; can't just look at passing the WASL; equally important is being prepared to excel and be actively involved in honor programs
- Institutional racism that places minority students at a disadvantage will be addressed
- Needs assistance from the Commission

Commissioner Cordova asked if the Everett School District had bilingual staff.

Mr. Brandsma stated that there was access to translation services but no bilingual employees. He added that they have a translation access line and that he will work at getting a more diverse employee base.

Mr. Brossoit's final comments were as follows:

- Issue is not a lack of working together; to often they just want to resolve problems without really looking at the issues
- Stated that Wally was very instrumental in working through some issues
- Still working at defining and understanding the issues
- Praised Mr. Brandsma and hoped that he would get the opportunity to become Superintendent

Mr. Brunner's final comments were as follows:

- Cultural Competency; many do not have a clue that we need to be culturally competent to be effective
- Will help in interpreting student behavior and parent resistance
- Need to identify resources to have a deeper understanding of the Latino culture in order to work with Latino students

Commissioner Ortiz-Self stated that the Commission stands behind to assist them as long as they request the help. She added that in order to prevent students from joining gangs we need to provide alternatives.

Mr. Jensen shared that perhaps summer school during the off months. He added that we needed to endorse an all parent involvement in the summer program. Poor participation by students, even after invites were hand delivered, suggests that some parents are in denial.

Mr. Sharp stated that he will incorporate some of the suggestions presented by the community. He added that gang involvement (ethnic wars) began in New York during the Civil War and still remains at large. He welcomes all suggestions and all are welcome to help.

Commissioner Cruz asked what institution program they had to specifically reach out to the Latino parents.

Mr. Gough, Mayor of Lynwood responded as follows:

- They have 23 different recommendations
- Within the next couple of weeks they will be preparing budget recommendations; Staff and times will be allocated
- Have been working with the Commission since June

Emily Yen, Lynwood City office shared the following:

- Currently assessing budget and needs
- Also connecting with resources in the community; coordinating internally & externally
- Lynwood has a robust ethnic business community
- Many activities are happening; encouraged community to attend their meetings

Commissioner Cordova commended the Edmonds School District for their support of LEAP. He added that having teachers attend the LEAP conferences sends a message to the Latino students.

Mr. Brossoit's stated that everything is interconnected; those students that don't feel connected disengage and drop out. He added that we need to intervene; go the next step to find out why they are not connected especially those that need the most help.

Chair Portillo Salazar thanked the panel, the community, and Mr. Byer for providing the meeting venue for our Everett public meeting.

### **CHA Official Business**

Approval of Shelton Public Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Ortiz-Self made a motion to approve the Shelton public meeting minutes; Commissioner Negrón seconded the motion.

A vote was called to approve the minutes. Ayes were unanimous. **The motion carried.**

Commissioner Negrón made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Ortiz-Self seconded the motion. No discussion!

A vote was called to adjourn the meeting. Ayes were unanimous. **The motion carried**

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

