



**CANAL
ALLIANCE**

2018 PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA

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2018 Public Policy Agenda

Whether cultural, institutional, or political, many external factors contribute to economic instability among the Latino immigrant community in Marin County. For 36 years, Canal Alliance has provided direct services in response to the changing needs of Marin's immigrant community. While these services address some of the factors that cause economic instability among immigrants, we aren't able to adequately engage in all of these issues on our own. This is the point at which our advocacy work begins.

Canal Alliance is committed to engaging in tough conversations and highlighting the injustices that we identify as a result of our work in order to ensure that institutions and policies do not serve to further oppress or marginalize the Latino immigrant community. With the weight of our experience, expertise and insight, we will use our trusted voice in the community to advocate for, empower and speak for those who do not have the opportunity to make the changes on their own.

Our public policy agenda reflects our organization's commitment to improving opportunities for the immigrant families we serve. Our agenda is part of a comprehensive effort to end the generational cycle of poverty in Marin County through direct services, advocacy, volunteerism and community impact. We will focus on advocacy and policies in the areas of immigration and education that support our client outcome goals of legal status and education leading to economic stability.

Education

Canal Alliance's organizational values of empowerment through education and setting high expectations drives our advocacy efforts in educational equity for youth and adults.

Our adult education and college readiness programs enable our families to empower themselves with the skills needed to move from a position of vulnerability to one that allows them to more fully provide for themselves and their families. Canal Alliance is grounded in the belief that every immigrant arrives with experiences, skills, and strengths that have the potential to enrich our culture and strengthen our society.

For 2018, Canal Alliance is working on the following Educational Policy:

Problem Statement

- In 2017, only 34% of Latino students in San Rafael City Schools completed the requirements for California public universities as compared to 65% of white students.
- In 2017, only 26% of Latino students who graduated from San Rafael City Schools completed college in six years or less, as compared to 58% of white students.
- Graduation requirements from San Rafael City Schools currently do not meet the California State University and University of California A-G requirements, meaning that a student can graduate high school and not be eligible to attend a California public university.

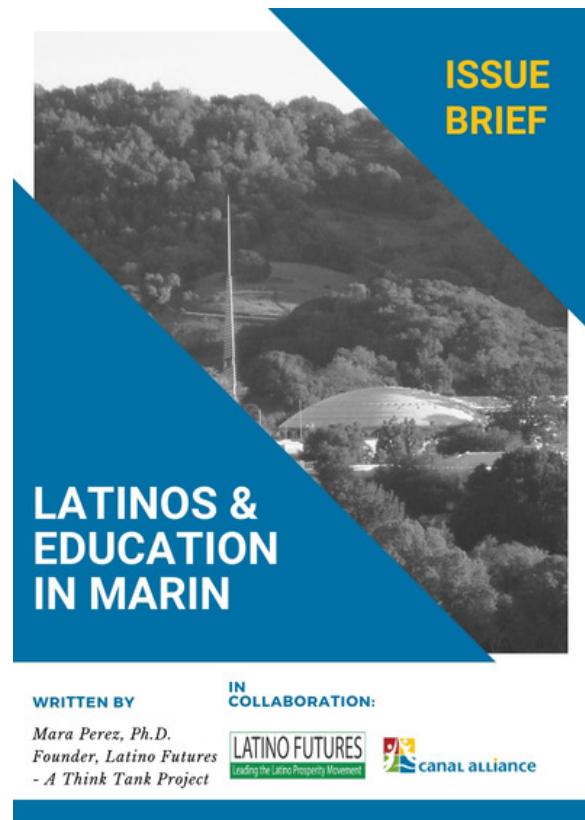
Policy Recommendation

Canal Alliance advocates for the San Rafael City Schools to align the high school graduation requirements with University of California and California State University A-G requirements, and to provide the necessary resources and supports to enable students to be successful on this path. This establishes a mandate for schools to prepare all students for college and career. If more Latino students graduate A-G eligible, they are more likely to enroll in a four-year university and graduate with a degree. Obtaining a degree will set students on the path out of poverty.

Canal Alliance recently released an Issue Brief highlighting the disparities in Marin County's academic achievement for low income Latinos as compared to their peers. The paper, *Latinos & Education in Marin*[1], was prepared in partnership with Latino Futures, and sheds light on several staggering benchmarks of educational inequity among the most vulnerable and at-risk youth in our community.

“The American Diploma Project (ADP)—an initiative sponsored by Achieve and The Education Trust, two Washington DC-based educational policy and advocacy organizations—has clearly demonstrated the need for higher standards in secondary education. ADP found that in terms of English language arts and math proficiency, employers and colleges want the same thing.” [2]

“While education serves many purposes, an academically-prepared workforce is more important than ever before to a state's ... economy. The level of education demanded by today's jobs, especially in the growing fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), exceeds the supply of available workers. Attaining postsecondary credentials requires a rigorous K-12 academic foundation.” [3]



[1] Mara Perez, PhD, “Latinos & Education in Marin” (Issue brief, Canal Alliance, October 2018), bit.ly/edadadvocacy

[2] Linda Murray, *Diploma Matters: A Field Guide for College and Career Readiness* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 3-4.

[3] “New State Profiles Show Far Too Many States Need Better Data on College and Career Readiness”, Achieve, retrieved February, 2017, https://www.achieve.org/files/California_2017.pdf

Immigration

Canal Alliance's organizational values of championing immigrants, striving for justice and respecting everyone provides the foundation for our advocacy efforts in immigration reform.

Our Immigration Legal Services program offers the only affordable, comprehensive immigration legal services to low income immigrants and their families in Marin County. Canal Alliance's legal team provides free or low-cost representation and assistance with immigration-related services, including consultations and referrals for family members of individuals detained locally by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

For 2018, Canal Alliance is working on the following Immigration Policy:

Problem Statement

After the California Values Act – also known as Senate Bill (SB) 54 – took effect, the Sheriff continued to cooperate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The Marin County Sheriff's Office:

- Shares release dates and times of all inmates requested by ICE regardless of crime,
- Allows ICE to interview detainees at the county jail (unless they decline),
- Allows access to non-public areas in the county jail to facilitate transfers to ICE,
- All of these activities take place regardless of the nature of the alleged crime committed or whether charges are filed.
- In 2018, from January 1 to mid-October, the Sheriff's office received 135 ICE Notification Requests, and as a result, 54 inmates were transferred to ICE custody.

Policy Recommendation

Our approach is to advocate with local law enforcement to limit the level of cooperation between local law enforcement agencies and ICE. The advocacy goal is to increase protection for immigrants under SB 54, the California Values Act.

Additionally, we will participate in a coalition advocating to reduce the level of cooperation between Marin County law enforcement agencies and ICE. Participation in this coalition will further Canal Alliance's efforts to reverse the deportation pipeline from the Marin law enforcement agencies to ICE detention centers, where immigrants must navigate an environment that is inherently biased against them.

Does My Jail Cooperate with ICE?



A Know Your Rights Guide for Marin County



Based on our values, Canal Alliance advocates for decreasing cooperation between ICE with the Marin County Jail, which is managed by the Marin County Sheriff's Office. This is crucial because in Marin, as in many other counties, this cooperation is the primary way that community members are turned over to ICE.

In anticipation of the implementation of the California Values Act, also known as Senate Bill (SB) 54, Canal Alliance submitted a Public Records Act request to the Marin County Sheriff's office, which revealed active and voluntary cooperation with ICE (Does My Jail Cooperate with ICE?) [1]. SB 54 creates a new state standard and aims to ensure that state and local resources are not used to fuel mass deportations, separate families, or terrorize our communities. It is important to note that nearly all ICE cooperation is voluntary and stronger policies may be adopted at the discretion of local government.

After SB 54 took effect, the Sheriff continued to cooperate with ICE regardless of the criminal exceptions included in the law. At his discretion, he shares release dates and times of all inmates requested by ICE regardless of crime. Additionally, the Sheriff allows ICE interviews at the jail unless a detainee declines to be interviewed. The Sheriff also provides access to non-public areas to facilitate transfers to ICE. All of these activities take place regardless of the nature of the alleged crime committed or whether or not charges are filed.

From January 1, 2018 to mid-October 2018, the Sheriff's office has received 135 ICE Notification Requests and 54 inmates have been transferred to ICE custody.

When an individual is detained by ICE as a result of this close cooperation between the Sheriff's Office and ICE, their families often come to Canal Alliance seeking help. We have first-hand knowledge of the trauma that these policies have created for the families and children we serve. The trauma caused by ICE detention and family separation fuels the cycle of poverty by breaking families apart. Often the immigrant detained is the main provider for the family. With the detained family member unable to earn an income and added worries about potential legal fees, life becomes extremely difficult.

Our goal is to empower our clients with knowledge of the risks and actions they can take to protect themselves and build more trust between our community and institutions including the police, the courts, and the District Attorney's office. This approach will not only encourage our community to report crimes, be witnesses, and come forward as victims, but will also prevent the trauma and negative financial impact to motivated immigrants and their families.

[1] "Does My Jail Cooperate with ICE", Canal Alliance, last modified, February 2018, <https://www.canalalliance.org/blog/does-your-jail-cooperate-with-ice>

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