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**Parent Institute for Quality Education  
Organization Special Report on PIQE's  
Performance Evaluation  
December 2004**

**Executive Summary**

**Performance Finding**

Parent Institute Quality Education (PIQE) impacts school persistence, reduction of dropout rate, and college participation. The findings of a performance evaluation of PIQE services in San Diego County suggests that PIQE is making a difference in school persistence, reducing the dropout rate, and in increasing college participation. A survey of 241 Latino PIQE, who graduated from PIQE in 1997-98-99, and representing 351 students who have reached the age of 18 years reported the following findings:

- The children of parents attending and graduating from the PIQE program achieved a high school graduation rate of 93%
- The student dropout rate was only **7% versus 41%** in San Diego County
- The college bound was **79.2% versus 52%** in San Diego County
- Of the **79.2%** (351), 51.4% enrolled in a Community College and 27.8% were admitted to a 4 year University;
- Of the students who were admitted to a 4 year college out of high school, 52.7% went to SDSU, 16.5% UCSD, 3.3% USD and 27.5% other including other private universities
- Study participants admitted to four year college was **19% versus 7%** San Diego County

**Background of PIQE**

PIQE's Mission: To promote family involvement in a child's educational process thereby strengthening the working partnership between the home, school and community. Our mission is built on a four point philosophy: All parents love their children and want a better future for them. Every child can learn and deserves the opportunity to attend and complete a college education. Parents and teachers need to work together to ensure the educational success of every child. For children, learning is a natural process that parents and teachers facilitate.

The Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE) is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to innovative educational reform by informing and motivating low-income parents to become knowledgeable about how to navigate the school system and seek the educational opportunities available for their children.

Since its inception in 1987, PIQE's programs have evolved into a comprehensive nine-week training course taught in fourteen languages by professional facilitators at no cost to the parents. PIQE's classes provide parents with the tools to become advocates for their own children. PIQE instills confidence in parents to communicate with the school and

promote academic progress and social development in each of their children by helping them identify and avoid detriments to learning. The goal is to enable children to succeed in school so they can contribute to the quality of their community. Our classes stress the positive impact of family interaction, respect, and positive communication. Parents learn to have more confidence and to understand the role that they must play in the education of their children. An essential belief and goal of the PIQE program is high versus low expectations for their children.

Since the program started in Sherman Elementary School, October 1987, over 330,000 parents have graduated from PIQE's (9 week) parent involvement training classes from 1,200 elementary, middle and high schools in districts within San Diego, Los Angeles, Fresno, San Jose, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Monterey, Sacramento, Stanislaus, Alameda, San Francisco, and Shasta counties. PIQE modifies its curriculum to ensure that it is culturally competent, relevant and sensitive to the cultural background of all parents. In addition, approximately 50,000 parents have participated in PIQE's follow-up "coaches" program that provides one-on-one information to parents during a six-month period on how to access school services and promote the aims of PIQE for parent involvement. PIQE seeks to:

Encourage parents in taking a participatory role in assisting their children to:

- Improve parent/child relationships.
- Have child remain in school --retention and reduce dropout rate.
- Improve student performance in school classes.
- Graduate from high school.
- Attend a college or a university.
- Earn a college diploma.

### **Background of the Problem**

Many of the low income students in the San Diego area are the first in their families to consider attending College. Most of these students come from a different cultural background (Latino) that operates under different schooling systems. In the American system the lengthy applications, interviewing processes, financial aid paperwork is intimidating to many families. The PIQE aids these families gain the knowledge necessary to help their kids make their way to College and in helping parents stay in track with the necessary information needed to be the best counselor to their children when that time comes. PIQE also encourages parents to be proactive in analyzing different Colleges that could be potentially a perfect fit for their children.

Statistical information about national/local high school education levels<sup>1</sup> indicate that Latino/Hispanic students have:

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<sup>1</sup> The Urban Institute a nonpartisan economic and social policy research organization.

Statistics based on the Urban Institute's CPI Index, 2001:

According to the Urban Institute, the value of the Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI) indicator "approximates the probability that a student entering the 9th grade will complete high school on time with a regular diploma. It does this by representing high school graduation as a stepwise process composed of three grade-to-grade promotion transitions (9 to 10, 10 to 11, and 11 to 12) in addition to the ultimate high school graduation event (grade 12 to diploma)

- A national High School graduation rate of 68%.
- About a fifty-fifty chance of graduating High School (American Indian, Latino//Hispanic and African American) .
- Graduation rates for students that attend schools in high poverty and racially segregated areas lag from 15 to 18 percent behind their peers.
- California High School graduation rate is 68.9%
- In San Diego City High School graduation rates is 61.3%
- Latino//Hispanic High School graduation rate nationally is 53.2%
- Latino//Hispanic High School graduation rate in California is 57%
- Latino//Hispanic High School graduation rate in San Diego City is 47%
- The national average for College enrollment among High School graduates is 61.7%
- The national average for College enrollment among Latino High School graduates is 51.7%

It is projected by the Center for Community Change (2001) that 80% of all federal prisoners and 75% of youth involved in juvenile court system are high school dropouts. Furthermore, it costs an estimated \$51,000 per prisoner, per year to address their incarceration, yet the reasons why young students dropout of school are multiple and complex. The more trauma and instability an adolescent lives, the more obstacles to their education and development. It is also understood that under-skilled and undereducated youth will have difficulty maintaining a job. If a student dropouts and stays out of the workforce for very long, the consequence can last a lifetime (Center for Community Change, 2001).

The social benefits of connecting and empowering ethnically diverse and low income parents with the education of their child are many. Among the most salient is the ability of our communities to:

- reduce the 80% underachievement of K-6 grade low income students;
- increase the potential of youth to become productive members of our society;
- decrease family social dependency on community support;
- increase the self-reliance of families;
- increase the tax base of our communities;
- decrease social conflict and human disempowerment;
- increase tax revenues for community services, and
- improve the quality of life of families and communities.

### **Study design**

This study was intended to serve as a performance evaluation for PIQE's programs and examine its impact on student persistence and college enrollment. The main idea was to contact those parents that had graduated PIQE's program (by taking 4 classes or more) and interview them about their children's education, too see if they had graduated High school and enrolled in College. A random sample was pulled from PIQE's database for

the years 1997, 1998 and 1999. The sample was taken from these school years given that by this year (2004) their children would have the necessary age to have graduated from High School and hopefully having further developed their education. A random sample was pulled to focus the study on the Latino/Hispanic population that took the program in the San Diego area. PIQE plans to extend this study to other region in the future based on the success of this study as it is detailed in the section that follows.

### **Study procedures**

- Contacts attempted: 700 PIQE graduate parents were called by focusing on calling those parents of which their children would have the necessary age to have graduated High School (database from 1997, 1998 and 1999).
- All contacted parents were Latino/Hispanic .
- Response Rate: 241 parents responded and were interviewed (34% response rate).
- The 241 parents interviewed had a total of 493 children of which 351 were applicable to this study (due to age) and the remaining 142 were still in elementary, middle or high schools and therefore could not be considered for the purposed of this study.

### **Results** (Please refer to the attached tables for a graphic overview of the findings):

- 93% High School graduation rate (327 out of 351) and 7% dropout rate. These results are very encouraging as compared to the 57% High School graduation rate for Latino/Hispanic s in California and 47% for San Diego City.
- From the 327 High School graduates:
  - 9.5% did not enroll in College and opted for working full time.
  - 79.2% enrolled in a Community College or 4 year University.
    - 51.4% enrolled in a Community College (168 out of 327).
    - 27.8% enrolled in a 4 year University (91 out of 327).
  - 7.6% of those pursuing a college degree were both working and attending college or university.
  - 4% enlisted in the military.
  - 7.6% did not disclose information.
- From the 168 High School graduates that enrolled in a community college:
  - 9.5% enrolled in Mesa College.
  - 11.9% enrolled in City College.
  - 43.5% enrolled in Southwestern College.
  - About 1% in ECC.
  - 33.3% did not disclose what community College their children enrolled in.
  - There was a noticeable trend: About 40% of those that were enrolled in a Community College were planning to transfer to a 4 year university, mostly to SDSU and UCSD.
- From the 91 High School graduates that enrolled in a 4 year university:
  - 52.7% enrolled in San Diego State University
  - 16.5% enrolled in UCSD.

- 3.3% enrolled in University of San Diego.
- 27.5% went to other universities among them Stanford University and University of Chicago.
- Parent Education Summary:
  - 5.2% had some Elementary school education.
  - 19.6% had Elementary school education.
  - 32.3% had Middle School education.
  - 19.6% had High School education.
  - 5.8% had Community college or University education.
  - 17.6% of participants did not disclose their education level.

## Conclusions

The results of this study are very encouraging and suggest that the effectiveness of PIQE's program in increasing school retention, reducing the dropout rate, and connecting students to college. These findings are noteworthy because they outperformed the current trends as reported above. The San Diego County sample of High School graduation figures outperform those rates for the general Latino/Hispanic population at all levels:

Nationally, high school graduation rates for Latino/Hispanics is 53.2%; in California it is 68.9% and in San Diego it is 61.3%.<sup>2</sup> The children of those parents that attended and graduated PIQE's program achieved a High School graduation rate of 93% as the study results demonstrate.

The same is true for College enrollment figures. The national College enrollment rate for Latino/Hispanics is 51.7%. Based on the study findings about 79.2% of PIQE's graduate parents children enrolled in a Community College or 4 year University. This even surpasses the national average for College enrollment in the general population at 61.7% making it a great achievement.

Many policy makers and researchers concerned with Latino/Hispanic educational achievement should be encouraged by the work of PIQE in impacting the reduction of high school dropout rates and increasing graduation rates. PIQE's works to inform parent and motivate parents to work together with their children so that they ensure they complete high school and continue developing their education. Thousands of talented and well prepared Latino/Hispanics are not realizing their potential and in many cases they are not encouraged to go to College for reasons such as not having familiarity with the schooling system or fears of discrimination among others. PIQE's program is designed to tackle all of these concerns parents and students have and inform them, so

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<http://www.urban.org>

that they become knowledgeable and encouraged to assist their children in their way to College. Most of the parents PIQE's never graduated High School so for them it is very important that their children graduate. PIQE gives them the understanding and extra push needed for them to realize that their children can make it.

According to the US Census Bureau the number of working Latinos is projected to increase by 18 million by the year 2025 and will comprise about 18.9% of the United States population<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, it is very important that for the Latino/Hispanic population to have better chances for succeeding in this highly competitive economy, they will need to have higher achievements in their school education. PIQE's efforts for the past 17 years were ultimately aimed to increase the number of High School and College graduates, to raise the economic prospects and social well being of the US Latino/Hispanic population among other demographic groups.

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The Urban Institute a nonpartisan economic and social policy research organization  
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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/03statab/pop.pdf>