MAY 2025

LATINIDAD *in Schools*

THE NEED TO ADVANCE THE STUDY OF

LATINIDAD IN NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Edmund W. Gordon Institute
for Advanced Study
Teachers College, Columbia University

CONTRIBUTORS & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Editor

Dr. Amanda Earl
Research Associate, Teachers College, Columbia University

Contributors

Dr. Limarys Caraballo
Associate Professor,
Teachers College, Columbia University

Dr. Regina Cortina
Professor, Teachers College,
Columbia University

Dr. Ezekiel Dixon-Román
Professor and Director,
Edmund W. Gordon Institute for Advanced Study,
Teachers College, Columbia University

Paola Heincke
Head of Operations and Strategic Initiatives,
Edmund W. Gordon Institute for Advanced Study,
Teachers College, Columbia University

Jonathan Beltrán Alvarado
Katie Caster
Vivett Dukes
Carolina Gomez
Sara Pan Algarra
Fabiola Quiñones
Sophia Vazquez
Shari Wejsa-Stewart
Doctoral Research Assistants,
Teachers College, Columbia University

To cite this report:
Latinidad Curriculum Initiative. (2025).
The Need to Advance the Study of Latinidad in New York City Public Schools.
Edmund W. Gordon Institute for Advanced Study, Teachers College, Columbia University.

Executive Summary

The Latinidad Curriculum Initiative for New York City Public Schools (NYCPS), which you will learn more about in this report, is based at the Edmund W. Gordon Institute for Advanced Studies at Teachers College, Columbia University and has been made possible by a generous grant from the New York City Council and in partnership with the United Way of New York City and the Hispanic Federation. Together, our overarching goal is to provide the opportunity for teachers, students, and communities served by NYCPS to explore, celebrate, and expand their study of Latinidad across academic content areas and throughout grades K-12.

Our project aims to address inequalities in access to quality education by offering resources to help teachers recognize who their students are and the strengths of the communities they belong to. We aim to enhance school experiences for children and youth of all backgrounds by providing a dynamic, interdisciplinary curricular framework that empowers learners of all ages to study, understand, and appreciate the histories, cultures, and intellectual contributions of Latinas and Latinos, thus gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of the city we live in.

This strategic report, compiling research by a group of researchers, professors, graduate students, and teacher-researchers at the Edmund W. Gordon Institute for Advanced Studies at Teachers College, Columbia University, analyzes systematically what is needed in a quality K-12 Latinidad curriculum. As such, it represents a first step in supporting and enhancing teaching in NYCPS and promoting learning among all students by celebrating where they all come from, what they have achieved, and what they desire for their families, communities, city, country, and world in the future.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Five Boro Story Project. (2021). *34 Ave Oral History Launch Celebration.*

INTRODUCTION

THE NEED FOR A LATINIDAD STUDIES CURRICULUM IN NEW YORK CITY

According to the United States Census Bureau, 65 million people self-identified as Hispanic in our nation as of 2023. This constitutes 20% of the total population. Twenty million, or 1 out of every 4 children in the United States (US) (Peña et al., 2023), are Latina, Latino, and Latine students sent to school every day to gain the knowledge and skills that will be crucial for their futures. Importantly, 94% of these children younger than the eighth grade were born in the US (Arana, 2024). Still other Latinx people, around 9%, are teachers in our public school systems (Schaeffer, 2024). The vast majority of the 65 million American Latinos are parents, grandparents, and other loving guardians who rely on public education to help their families and communities attain social mobility and contribute to making a healthy, happy, and just society.

Latinidad and its contributions to the social fabric of the US are even more significant in places like New York City (NYC), where nearly 30% of the population identifies as Hispanic or Latino and over 20% report speaking Spanish at home (American Community Survey, 2023). NYC operates the largest and most diverse school system in the US, serving over 900,000 students in the 2023-24 school year. Forty-two percent of these students were classified as Hispanic or Latino, making them the greatest demographic group by more than double (19.5% were Black, the next largest demographic; NYCPS, 2025). Yet their school achievement outcomes, such as test scores in math and English, on average, are consistently lower than those of other groups (see Section 1 of this report).

While the educational system widely reports these statistics, what is less recognized, and inspires the central argument of this report, is that Hispanic and Latinx communities are not simply beneficiaries of NY's public schools: they are key leaders and shapers of education and social progress, from the expansion of mass public schooling in the late 19th century to the present day. For example, Eugenio María de Hostos was a Puerto Rican educator, philosopher, and abolitionist of the 19th century who advocated for high-quality, progressive education that would benefit everyone, including Puerto Ricans, broader Latin American communities, and women. Betty A. Rosa, also of Puerto Rican descent, is currently the Commissioner of the New York State Department of Education and has successfully advocated for bilingual education and culturally responsive teaching. Amanda Farías, born in the Bronx of Puerto Rican and Dominican descent, presently serves as the Majority Leader of the New York City Council, the first Latina to hold this role.

Five Boro Story Project. (2021). *Micailhuitl:Día de Muertos on 34th Av.*

Despite their influential presence, the rich heritage, histories, and contributions of Latino and Latina students' families and communities are at best underrepresented, and at worst misrepresented, in curricular resources and classroom lesson plans. The various boroughs and neighborhoods, or *barrios*, of our

city have raised powerful civic and political leaders and social reformers throughout the last two centuries, but their rootedness in the histories, cultures, and practices that comprise Latinidad has mostly gone overlooked. More robust representation and exploration of Latinidad in schools is necessary, not only because without it we will be transmitting to future generations an incomplete and inaccurate understanding of national history, science, arts, and culture, but also because, as is explained in Section 2, curriculum and pedagogy that affirm and reflect students' identities and backgrounds enhance academic achievement (Cabrera et al., 2014; Dee & Penner, 2017; Sleeter, 2011).

A Latinidad Curriculum in NYCPS stands to improve educational quality and equity by offering resources to help teachers recognize and leverage who their students are and the strengths of the communities they belong to. Because NYCPS are diverse, both in terms of students' and also teachers' lived experiences, we envision the interdisciplinary exploration of Latinidad as an entrance point for *all* teachers and children, and youth of *all* ages and backgrounds, to gain a deeper understanding of the histories and influences of Latinidad in their region and contexts, as well as of the multiple dynamics and perspectives that comprise their contemporary society and communities.

What do we mean by Latinidad?

The Latinidad Curriculum Initiative (LCI) broadly defines Latinidad as a political, social, and cultural self-identification among descendants of Latin American and Spanish-speaking Caribbean people in the US of the 20th and 21st centuries. But Latinidad is more than just an academic concept or definition; it is a shared feeling or ethic of belonging and pride in shared histories and achievements. It is an aspiration to *salir adelante*, to continue achieving. Most of all, Latinidad is a celebration of where students and families come from, of their communities' contributions to the places they call home, and of what they desire for our city, country, and world in the future.

Those who feel a sense of belonging to Latinidad in the US are commonly referred to by many terms, including Hispanic, Latino and Latina, Latinx, and Latine. In her book *Latinoland: A Portrait of America's Largest and Least Understood Minority* (2024), Marie Arana explains that the term "Hispanic" was promoted in the 1970s by President Richard Nixon in his quest to unify and quantify a Spanish-speaking voting bloc. "Latino/a," Arana clarifies, though popularized more recently than "Hispanic," actually derives from the French phrase "*l'Amérique latine*" coined in the early 1800s during the Napoleonic quest to colonize Mexico and distinguish it from Anglo-America. Tracing the origins of identity categories shows their entanglement with geopolitical concerns throughout history and reveals that they are not natural but constructed, often fashioned by those in power.

Latin Americans in their countries of origin are just "people," and usually do not refer to themselves as Latinos. Latino/a is a label that is "activated upon entering the United States," but once applied, it begins to significantly shape people's and families' lives not just politically, but also socially and culturally (Suárez-Orozco & Páez, 2002, p. 3). For the one-third of Latin Americans who are newcomers to the US, it can be a surprise to realize that they have become Latina/o. And for the majority of Latinos, the two-thirds born in the US (Batalova, 2025), although they have been Americans all their lives, they are often erroneously perceived as newcomers to this country. The historical relationship of the US to Mexico, including frequent transborder migration, has contributed to the persistent ideology of Latinos as immigrants. Further, the incursion of US borders into Mexican territory in the 19th century and the consolidation of US political and economic power in the 20th century have propped up a narrative of Anglo-American racial and cultural dominance that deeply affects those of Latin American and Caribbean heritage. In general, those identified as Latino/a, whether born in the US or not, are more likely to be viewed through negative stereotypes that compound their struggles to access quality schooling, higher-paid jobs, and overall social mobility (Suárez-Orozco & Páez, 2002).

INTRODUCTION

So, while panethnic identity labels might be constructed politically and socially, they can still be of great material, social, and psychological consequence.

In turn, because they express and influence our views of ourselves and our possibilities for life, the terms we use to describe ourselves can evoke strong opinions and preferences. For example, according to a 2024 Pew Research Center report on trends from their National Survey of Latinos, when asked specifically about which term they prefer among Hispanic, Latino, or Latinx, 81% of people preferred the terms Hispanic or Latino while 15% had no preference (Pew Research Center, 2024a). Although awareness of the gender-neutral term Latinx has grown (from 23% in 2019 to 47% in 2024), and LGBTQ+, Afro-Latinos, women, and young people are more likely to favor it, only 4% of adults use it to describe themselves. A clear majority (75%) believe Latinx should not be used to refer to the broader Latino or Hispanic population. Traditional terms still dominate: 52% of respondents prefer Hispanic, and 29% prefer Latino, while only 2% and 1% identify with Latinx and Latine, respectively (Pew Research Center, 2024b). And importantly, when asked more broadly how they prefer to identify, the majority (52%) of Latinas and Latinos report that they describe themselves most often by their family's country of heritage (e.g. Ecuadorian), or as American (17%), while only 30% most often describe themselves as Latino, Latinx, or Latine. Overall, research among today's roughly 65 million Latino Americans (United States Census Bureau, 2024) highlights that panethnic identity labels are externally imposed categories that do not fully reflect Latinos' senses of self nor their enduring presence in shaping our American nation. They mask the great diversity, in terms of national origin, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, religion, and even languages spoken, of people and communities who are descendants of Latin American and Caribbean people.

Identity is not a monolithic or static phenomenon, but rather it is contextual, multidimensional, and dynamic: how people define themselves depends on to whom they are defining themselves and in what setting. For example, when filling out the national census, a person might check "Hispanic or Latino," but when asked by a neighbor in Washington Heights, "Where are you from?" that same person might respond "¡*Dominicana*!" or "Nuyorican," or "Mexican-American." As Portes and Rumbaut (2001) have demonstrated in their extensive studies of second-generation immigrant youth in the US, identity is co-constructed and relative, influenced by how others perceive us and how we perceive them. These scholars highlight the importance of the context of reception of immigrant groups, particularly for their children: those groups that encounter discrimination based on their family's national origins are more likely to form reactive ethnic identities that are organized along racial lines, complicating their attempts to find belonging and acceptance in American society. Quoting Gustavo Pérez Firmat, Portes and Rumbaut (2001) refer to the children of immigrants as "translation artists" seeking that elusive balance between embracing their parents' ethnic identities and adopting that of the dominant culture. "Indeed, in this process of translating themselves," they warn us, "some gain in translation, while others may be lost in it" (p. 190).

Perhaps it is this art, the art of defying the myth of the melting pot and embracing the diversity of cultures while helping to build American society, that more than anything defines a sense of belonging to Latinidad. Although the US Constitution grants universal rights to all citizens, the lived experiences of women, people of color, and other historically disenfranchised or subordinate groups have demonstrated that not all citizens are treated as socially and culturally equal, a phenomenon which anthropologist Renato Rosaldo (1997) refers to as "cultural citizenship." Crucially, the concept of cultural citizenship helps us see that the struggle to attain full, "first-class citizenship" is an ongoing one, pushed forward by social movements and their leaders who are "conscious and articulate about their needs to be visible, to be heard, and to belong" (p. 37). While we recognize that they have faced challenges and discrimination as

a group, we celebrate that American history, and particularly New York history, is also rich with examples of Latino/a communities and leaders that, fueled by the persistent drive to attain equality of possibility and the right to cultural citizenship, have helped weave the social fabric of our nation.

WHEN ASKED SPECIFICALLY ABOUT WHICH TERM THEY PREFER AMONG HISPANIC, LATINO, OR LATINX, 81% OF PEOPLE PREFERRED THE TERMS HISPANIC OR LATINO WHILE 15% HAD NO PREFERENCE. *—Pew Research Center, 2024a*

It is these leaders, communities, and achievements that the LCI will seek to highlight. Our conceptualization of Latinidad goes beyond a focus on individual or family traditions, language, ethnic or racial identity, or even cultural origins, to focus on the collective push toward achievement and belonging that American Latinos and Latinas have demonstrated throughout history and continue to work toward. Because individuals can vary in their particular experiences of Latinidad, we also conceptualize and refer to it in the plural, as Latinidades. As the LCI team, we argue that our nation, society, and schools must fully embrace the heterogeneity and complexity of Hispanic Americans, honoring the variety of terms that students, teachers, and community members prefer to use. We believe that naming should be a democratic act, driven by communities themselves, not imposed from above. It is important that a curriculum with and for NYCPS provides all students with an understanding of the multiple existing terminologies, enabling them to research which ones they feel most identified with and freely choose the ones they want to use and why, while understanding why their families select and use the terms they use. This will not only honor their families' and communities' backgrounds but also create space for new voices and provide an opportunity for meaningful, culturally grounded learning. "When citing specific statistics, we use the panethnic term or terms that reporting agencies or organizations do; when writing from our own perspective, we variously use the terms Latino/a, Latinx, Hispanic, and Latine to respect and reflect the diversity of preferences that exist among individuals and groups.

Organization of this Report

This report elaborates on the need to advance the study of Latinidades in NYCPS, on the basis that such a study will contribute to enhanced educational equity for Latine students as well as to enhanced intercultural and collective generation of knowledge for our city. The following section of the report, Section 1, describes the demographic and educational landscapes of NYC, focusing on the historical, geographic, and socioeconomic variables affecting K-12 students and important educational achievement and post-secondary outcomes among them. Section 2 reviews some key curricular initiatives that stem from ethnic studies in other areas of the country, to summarize the importance of such resources and lessons learned that apply to a regional initiative in New York. Section 2 also outlines our LCI team's conceptual vision for a participatory Latinidad curriculum, while Section 3 provides a lesson planning guide for such a curriculum and some sample lessons that represent the kind of content we find lacking in currently existing resources. Section 4 outlines next steps for the year ahead in terms of the LCI's curriculum development and pilot-testing. Those interested in our curriculum blueprint or additional educational resources on how to engage children and youth in the study of Latinidades in NYC may view them on our website. ■

Latinidad in Schools

SECTION 1: LATINIDAD IN NEW YORK CITY

OVERVIEW

As indicated above, Latinidad in NYC is dynamic and multiple, made up of the varied histories and backgrounds of the families and communities that are present in our boroughs, neighborhoods, and schools. This section of the report presents statistical information related to different dimensions of their presence, describing the students, families, and schools that will see themselves and their communities reflected in the Latinidad Curriculum Initiative. Although in this section we focus on the patterns and educational outcomes of Latina and Latino students particularly, we present these data against the backdrop of the wider NYC school system, focusing on how **students and their communities of many different backgrounds have contributed to life in NYC and how teaching about these contributions through a Latinidad curriculum can enhance learning among all students**. We draw on data from New York City Public Schools (NYCPS) (2025a), the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (Ruggles et al., 2021), statistical reports from the CUNY Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies (CLACLS), and School District information from Inside Schools for this analysis. The subsections of Section 1 of this report examine the demographic composition of NYC, the structure of NYCPS, the representation of Latina and Latino students across school districts, socioeconomic factors affecting K-12 Latino students in NYCPS, and students' educational outcomes.[1]

1.1 Demographic and Structural Overview of NYC Public Schools

The NYC public school system serves approximately 1.1 million students across more than 1,800 schools in its five boroughs. In the 2023-2024 academic year, 912,064 students attended 1,596 different public schools, and 145,997 were enrolled in the 274 publicly-funded but independently-operated charter schools. Of those students in the public schools, 42.2% were Hispanic, 19.5% Black, 18.7% Asian, 16.2% White, 1.8% Multi-Racial, and 1.2% were Native American students (NYCPS, 2025a). Importantly, 16.3% were classified as Multilingual Learners, and out of these, the vast majority (67.4%) were Spanish speakers. Lastly, nearly three out of four students (73.5%) were economically disadvantaged, and one out of five (21.6%) was a student with disabilities (NYCPS, 2025a).

Location is an important element of the NYCPS experience for all students, families, administrators, and teachers. Schools are administratively divided into 32 geographic school districts, in addition to two districts that provide alternative programming and programs for students with disabilities. Within these various districts, there exist traditional public schools, specialized high schools that require entrance examinations, selective and screened schools, charter schools, and Alternative Learning Centers for suspended students. Thus, while there is substantial heterogeneity in terms of school type, because the districts are determined primarily geographically, the neighborhood in which families reside has a significant influence on students' educational trajectories, especially in the early grades, as students are typically sorted into schools based on their home addresses within a designated district. Each district is divided into smaller zones, and most students in K-8 attend their zoned school. The zone restriction is relaxed after middle school, as high schools operate under a single, universal choice system. In this system, eighth graders rank up to 12 high school programs in order of preference, and their assignment to schools is determined through a matching formula.

1 For more information regarding the data sources used and why, see Appendix A.

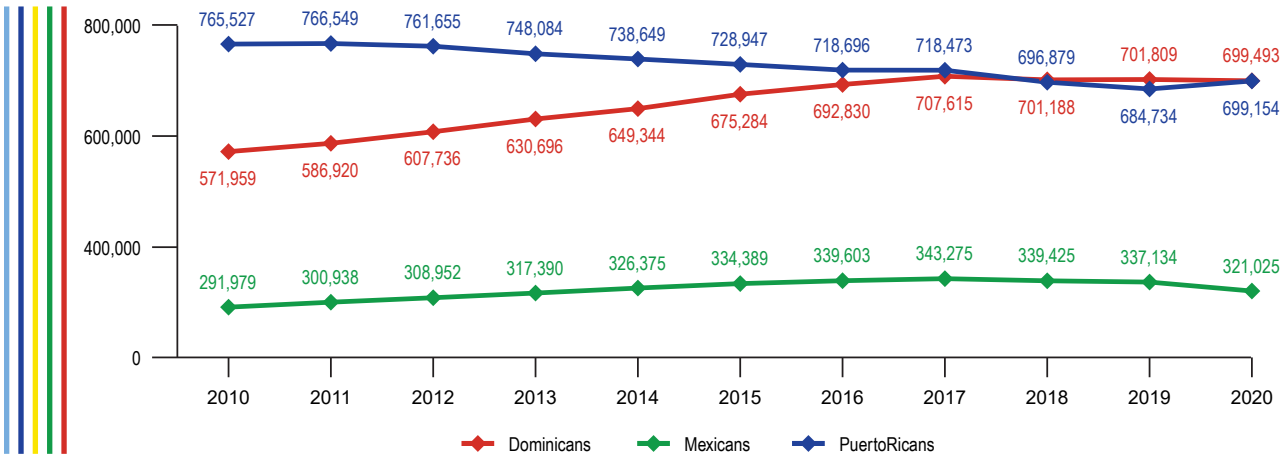
1.2 Histories of Latinx Communities in NYC

NYCPS students' and families' experiences of and connections to Latin American and Caribbean heritage are rich, multifaceted, and heterogeneous. While some students arrive as newcomers to the US from Latin America or the Caribbean, becoming Latinx when they get here, the majority are citizens, born in the US. Thirty-five percent of the students identified as Multilingual Learners by NYCPS in 2023-24 were born in the US (NYCPS Office of Multilingual Learners, 2024). Latinidad for many in our city's schools is influenced by their experiences of being second, third, and higher order generation immigrants. Students and their families are variously descendants of Mexicans who lived in the territory annexed by the US in the 19th century and then moved north; of Puerto Ricans who became US citizens in 1917; of Cubans and Domincians who migrated in large numbers in the 1960s pushed by a combination of US foreign and immigration policies; and increasingly of those whose origins can be traced to other Central and Latin American nations. Many students are children of families who come from several of these backgrounds, with Dominican mothers and Puerto Rican fathers, as just one example. Important to emphasize, as well, are the linguistically, racially, and ethnically diverse backgrounds of such families. Brazilians are Portuguese speakers, and many who migrate from rural Mexico or the highlands of Ecuador, for instance, are Indigenous language speakers; Dominicans, Hondurans, Cubans, and many other peoples who migrate or have migrated from the Caribbean region are Afro-descendants or identify as Black Latinas/os. The ways current students identify will relate not only to their family heritage, but also to their communities and neighborhood settings and socialization experiences in NYC itself.

The groups with the largest representation in NYC–both historically and present-day–are Dominicans, Puerto Ricans, and Mexicans. Figure 1 shows ten years (2010-2020) of the population change of the city's three most represented Latino groups by country of ancestry.

Figure 1.1

Dominicans, Puerto Ricans, and Mexicans in NYC (2010-2020)



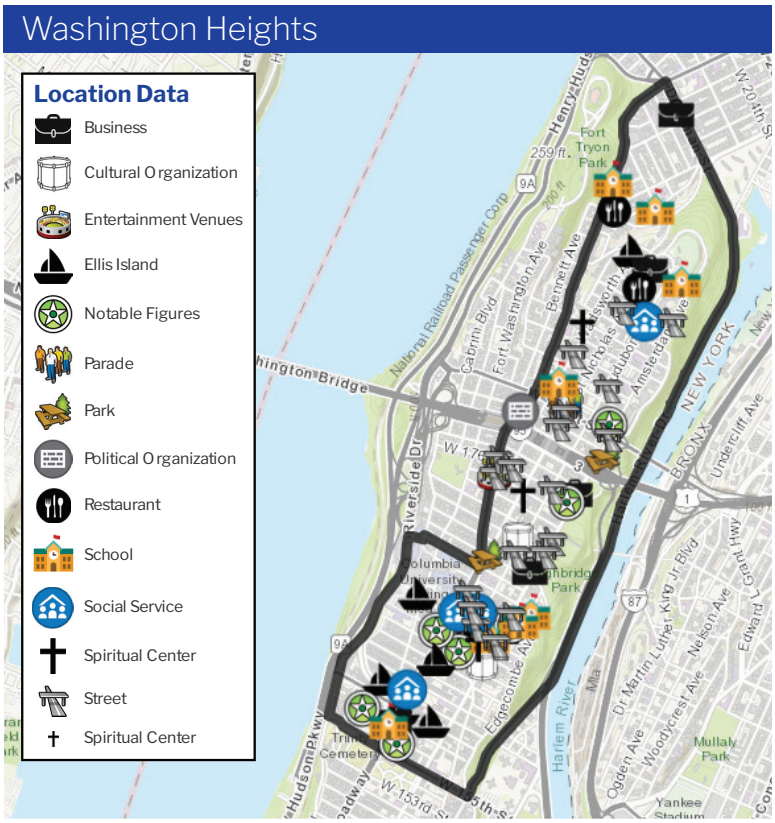
Note: US Census Bureau five-year files for each year excluding Spaniards and including Brazilians.
Source. Adapted from Bergad, 2022d, p. 15.

SECTION 1: LATINIDAD IN NEW YORK CITY

CUNY's CLACLS report, which uses data from the American Community Survey, presents information for Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and Mexicans living in NYC, including those born within and outside of the US. As is clear, since 2018, Dominicans have begun to eclipse Puerto Ricans as the most dominant group of Latinos/as by national origin. The population of Puerto Ricans living in NYC consistently declined from 765,527 in 2010 to 669,154 by 2020, which represents a 12.5% decrease over the decade. In contrast, the number of Dominicans increased from 571,959 in 2010 to 699,493 by 2020, representing a 22.2% population growth over a decade, sufficient to make them NYC's largest Latino group by 2019. Lastly, Mexicans increased from 291,979 in 2010 to a peak of 343,275 in 2017, before declining to 321,025 by 2020 (Bergad, 2022c). These are interesting trends given the history of Latinidad and migration and settlement patterns in NYC. The following sections describe the historical patterns of migration of Latin American and Caribbean communities to the US, highlighting the groups with the largest presence in the NY region.

1.2.1 Dominicans in NYC

Historical records remind us that though the presence of Latin American and Caribbean people in NYC grew exponentially in the latter half of the 20th century, migration from these regions is almost as old as the settlement of Manhattan itself. In her comprehensive study of US Latinos, Arana (2024) describes how "The first Latino to live in what would become NYC was Juan Rodriguez, a Dominican who sailed up the Atlantic coast and stepped onto the verdant shores of Manhattan Island in the spring of 1613" (p. 83). Today, Dominicans are the fifth largest group of Latinos in the US (after Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Salvadorans, and Cubans) and more Dominicans live in NYC than any other city in the world outside of Santo Domingo; indeed, "one out of every three Latinos living in New York is Dominican" (Arana, 2024, p. 85). The surge in the Dominican population in the US in the 20th century was spurred by the political turmoil and US military intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965, which exacerbated political and economic hardships they were facing in their native country. Combined with President Lyndon Johnson's Immigration Act of 1965, which enabled immigration from regions beyond Europe, these conditions drew many Dominicans primarily to New York and other East Coast cities (Arana, 2024).



Source: CUNY Dominican Studies Institute (2025). Dominican Historic Neighborhoods.

The Dominican community grew from a relatively small group of 77,000 individuals in 1970 to become our city's largest Latino group by 2019, when Dominicans surpassed Puerto Ricans at 701,188 Dominican residents in NYC

(Bergad, 2022d). Initially concentrated in Washington Heights and the Bronx, this community has gradually spread: 92% were NYC-based in 1970, whereas 64% were by 2020, many having moved to the surrounding counties of the New York metropolitan area. Among those who live in NYC, the majority (47%) of Dominicans now live in the Bronx, surpassing those in Washington Heights (Bergad, 2022d). Overall, those who earned enough money began to leave the city to find more space in the suburbs, while newcomers and some families affected by economic shocks and rising prices relocated within NYC, in a dynamic process familiar to other groups facing the city's ever-changing challenges and opportunities.

1.2.2 Puerto Ricans in NYC

US foreign policy and political and economic factors have also significantly directed the presence and fluctuations in the population of Boricuas in New York. Puerto Rico became a US territory in 1898, a reward for winning the Spanish-American War. Puerto Ricans officially became US citizens over a century ago, in 1917, when the US was building its armed forces to fight in WWI and was interested in suppressing the rising movement for sovereignty on the island (Briggs, 2002). Yet, scholars have emphasized the second-class nature of that citizenship, because rather than having a say in their governance and fate as a nation, decision-making for them was transferred from Spanish colonists of their island to citizens living in the US mainland (Flores, 2002). Puerto Ricans who live on their island can vote in primaries but not in presidential elections. Puerto Rico has no voting representation in Congress, yet Puerto Ricans are subject to taxes and those living in the mainland US can vote. Subsequently, despite their unique colonial condition among other Latino groups, Boricuas have, for much of American history, faced compelling incentives to move to New York and other East Coast states. **Between 1950 and 1980, "twice as many Puerto Ricans [arrived] in this country as the total population of Puerto Rico itself"** (Arana, 2024, p. 37).

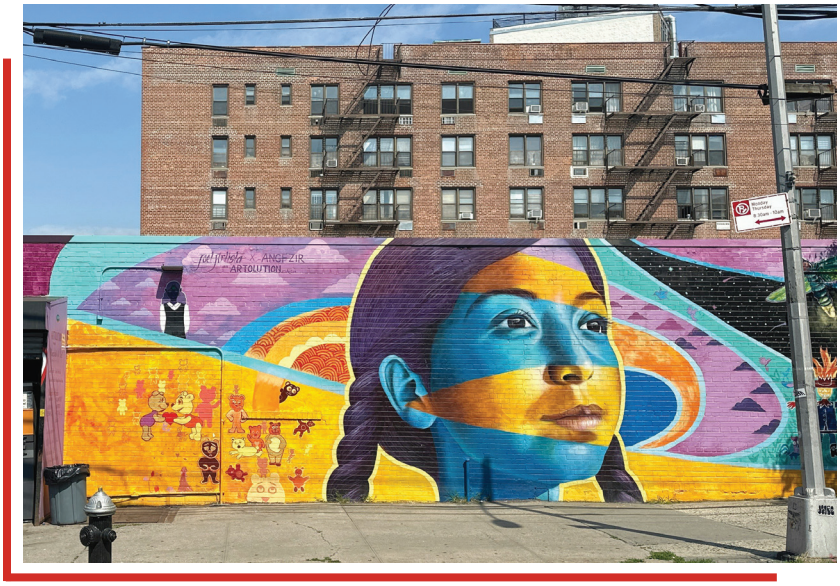
The number of Puerto Ricans in NYC was nearly 900,000 in 1970. However, suburbanization has been a marked pattern of Puerto Rican neighborhood settlement in the region. By 2020, the population of Puerto Ricans living in NYC had declined to 669,164 (Bergad, 2022e). Currently, around 44% of the New York region's Puerto Rican population lives in the suburbs, compared to just 17% in 1970, reflecting a social mobility pattern that pushes and pulls Latinos beyond the city's borders (Bergad, 2022e). Moving to wealthier neighborhoods as they achieve schooling and higher earnings is a strategy that Puerto Ricans have been and are actively continuing to use to work towards equitable or cultural citizenship.

Afro-Latinidad in NYC

Afro-Latinidad in the US can be dated back to the settler colonialism of the 16th century (De la Fuente & Andrews, 2018). In her narration of Juan Rodriguez's history as the first Dominican to settle in NYC, Arana (2024) reminds us that having "been born of an African woman and Portuguese sailor in the bustling, culturally diverse settlement of Santo Domingo," Rodriguez was also the first free Black man, and one of the first non-Native Americans, to settle in what would become the US (p. 91). Latinidad is inextricably connected and intertwined with the African diaspora. By the 19th and 20th centuries, the labor of Afro-Caribbeans was being exploited to build up–economically and physically–Florida, Louisiana, and eventually NYC (Hoffnung-Garskof, 2019). Today, three out of four Dominicans in the US identify as Black or part Black (Arana, 2024, p. 93). And so it is crucial to elaborate here on Afro-Latinidad, particularly as it shapes the experiences of students and families of Caribbean heritage who need to see their layered and dynamic identities and those of their neighbors reflected in curricula.

SECTION 1: LATINIDAD IN NEW YORK CITY

Afro-Latinidad is rooted in shared histories and identities, ones that have been shaped by colonialism and imperialism, the construction of racial difference, and flows of migration and forced displacement; it also transcends geographical and culturally created borders (Láo-Montes, 2005). Like Latinidad, Afro-Latinidad is dynamic, multiple, and multilayered. Yet, Afro-Latinidad or the experience of being Black and Latinx is often left out of both African-centered and Latinx discourses. In their book *The Afro-Latin@ Reader: History and Culture in the United States* (2010), Miriam Jiménez Román and Juan Flores position Afro-Latinx identity as central to our history, politics, and culture in the US and disrupt dominant narratives that construct Latinx and Black as distinct and separate identities. As a response to anti-Blackness within Latinx and US communities more broadly, the term "Afro-Latinx" arose in a spirit of resistance alongside global self-determination and racial justice efforts, and its conception is inspired by strands of Black radical thought such as Pan-Africanism, Negritude, and transnational anti-colonial perspectives (Jiménez Román & Flores, 2010).



Darko Sretenovic. (2024). *Unsplash License.*

While people from across South and Central America, such as many Brazilians, might identify with Afro-Latinidad, people from the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, especially from Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic, have played central roles in Afro-Latino history, especially as it pertains to NYC. As they have struggled against imperial powers, demonstrated resistance by and for enslaved populations, and led revolutionary movements for sovereignty, their histories have been transmitted and shared by migrants, transcending geographical borders and influencing life in NYC throughout generations via storytelling, music, and cultural and political art. Afro-Caribbean migrants have arrived in NYC for various reasons, often amidst intense debates and violent struggles for national independence on their islands. As they settled around various NYC and New Jersey neighborhoods, Afro-Caribbean migrants of the 20th century contributed massively to culture through the Latin music, art, literature, and dance scenes, all while negotiating their new roles in a society that tended to emphasize racial binaries and hierarchies rather than multicultural identities (Hoffnung-Garskof; 2019; De la Fuente & Andrews, 2018).

Afro-Latinxs were also integral to the civil rights struggles of the 1960s and 1970s through activist groups such as the Young Lords Party and leaders such as Pablo Guzmán, Marta Moreno Vega, Sherezada "Chiqui" Vicioso, Piri Thomas, and many more who joined in solidarity with Black power movements to address racial discrimination, police brutality, and inequality within and between their communities (Jiménez Román & Flores, 2010; Hoffnung-Garskof, 2019). Another form of activism of Latinx and Afro-Latinx communities alike has been the preservation of the historical and literary record. Arturo Alfonso Schomburg, an Afro-Puerto Rican activist for the visibility of Black life in all its formations, was most famously known for his archival work (Valdés, 2017). Today, the Schomburg Center in Harlem, which has been active for 100 years, remains one of the beating hearts of preservation of Black life, culture,

and history across African and Afro-Latinx communities in NYC. Afro-Latinx cultural preservation has also flourished in NYC's arts and music scene, through jazz, salsa, and hip hop of today. Afro-Cuban jazz was trailblazed by figures such as Mario Bauzá and Graciela (De la Fuente & Andrews, 2018). Expression through poetry and literature was a specialty of Afro-Latinx writers such as Pedro Pietri, Sandra María Esteves, and Felipe Luciano, as evidenced by the Nuyorican Poets Café (Negrón-Muntaner, 2004), and discourse around AfroLatina feminism was elevated by activists and poets such as Angela Jorge and Mariposa (Jiménez Román & Flores, 2010).

While Afro-Latinx life, intellect, and artistry have fundamentally shaped our city, systemic anti-Blackness within the Latinx community and more broadly deeply affects the ability to build across cultures and ways of knowing (Jiménez Román & Flores, 2010). This calls for an approach to the Latinidad curriculum that is not just inclusive of the multiple and layered identities in our communities, but that makes them the center point for learning. NYC today cannot be understood without the contributions and visibility of Afro-Latinidad.

1.2.3 Mexicans and Central & South Americans in NYC

As shown in **Figure 1.1** above, Mexicans make up the third-largest group of Latinos in NYC. Whereas many Mexicans recruited through the US government's *Bracero* program (1942-1964) settled in the southwestern US to work in agriculture, much of the Mexican migration to the East Coast during this period originated from a particular area, the Mixteca region of Mexico,[2] enabled through family networks they had in New York (Smith, 2002). **Migration to NYC from this region increased between the 1960s and 1980s, when, as mentioned above, people from across Latin America and the Caribbean were seeking relief from extreme economic hardship and political violence.** As Robert C. Smith (2002), who has written extensively about this history has explained, the biggest "explosion" of Mexican migration to NY occurred in the 1980s and 90s, when the US Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 granted amnesty and thus residency to thousands of workers who were already living in the US. Suddenly, these workers could travel more freely between Mexico and the US, and importantly, bring their wives and children here to call it home. What Smith (2002) refers to as the "logic of family reunification" and the subsequent illegalization and associated dangers of undocumented migration together gave rise to more permanent settlement of many Mexican families in New York (p. 98).

> WHILE MEXICANS STILL MAKE UP A CULTURALLY AND ECONOMICALLY IMPORTANT PART OF THE CITY, THEIR NUMBERS GREW FROM 58,000 IN 1990 TO PEAK AT 343,275 IN 2017, BEFORE DECREASING TO ROUGHLY 321,000 BY 2020.
>
> —*Pew Research Center, 2024a*

More recently, newcomers from Mexico arrive not only from La Mixteca, but also from Mexico City and other urban areas, and they settle in regions in the US that have not historically had as much Latino presence, such as the South and the Midwest (Hamann et al., 2015). This is partially reflected in data from NYC: while Mexicans still make up a culturally and economically important part of the city, their numbers grew from 58,000 in 1990 to peak at 343,275 in 2017, before decreasing to roughly 321,000 by 2020 as both annual arrivals of new immigrants slowed and well-established Mexican-American families began leaving the city (Bergad, 2020).

2 The Mixteca region encompasses parts of three Mexican states: Puebla, Oaxaca, and Guerrero, and is made up of largely rural and Indigenous communities where incomes are relatively low

SECTION 1: LATINIDAD IN NEW YORK CITY

While not as sizable as other groups when viewed by country, together Central Americans make up around 2% of the New York Metropolitan Area (nearly 180,000 in 2021), and South Americans make up almost 5% (close to 400,000 in 2021). Ecuadorians are the fourth-largest Latino group in NYC, with nearly 200,000 in their population in 2021 (Bergad, 2022b). They have been one of the fastest-growing immigrant groups in NYC since the 1990s, when Ecuador began to experience severe economic inflation and government instability (Caro-López, 2011). While substantially less than the groups mentioned above, the presence of Central and South Americans in NYC shapes our city's neighborhoods, cultural activities, and school system.

Indigeneity and Latinidad in NYC

Another dimension of Latinidad in NYC that often lacks visibility and is therefore crucial to highlight in a robust and equitable curriculum is the Indigenous backgrounds of many Latina and Latino students and their families. It is difficult to cite statistics on the number of Latinx people who identify as Indigenous, or as belonging to a community or original people whose ancestors were living in the Americas before Spanish colonization, either in NYC or the US, because there is no existing US census data regarding this category. However, advocacy organizations and institutions like the Mexican Consulate of New York (2016) have been calling for more attention to the population of immigrants in our city who speak Indigenous languages. In 2013, for example, a survey that they conducted among 1,500 people who sought consular services found that nearly 20% were speakers of an Indigenous language, predominantly from the Mixtec, Nahua, Zapotec, and Triqui families. This aligns with the more general patterns of migration from the Mixteca region of Mexico, where Mixtec and Nahuatl are commonly spoken.

The Endangered Language Alliance (ELA), an NYC-based nonprofit that supports language documentation and activism for overlooked languages, publishes an ongoing interactive digital "Languages of New York City" map, which visually displays the distribution of the world's most linguistically diverse city. They estimate that while 38% of the city's languages are from Asia, "dozens are Indigenous to the Americas" (ELA, 2021, n.p.). For example, in the areas of Jackson Heights and Corona, Queens, the variety of languages Indigenous to North, South, and Central America that are spoken is remarkable: in addition to the original languages of what is now Mexico, Aymara and Quechua–spoken in the Andean regions of Peru and Bolivia–and Shuar–spoken primarily in the Ecuadorian and Peruvian Amazon–are prevalent.

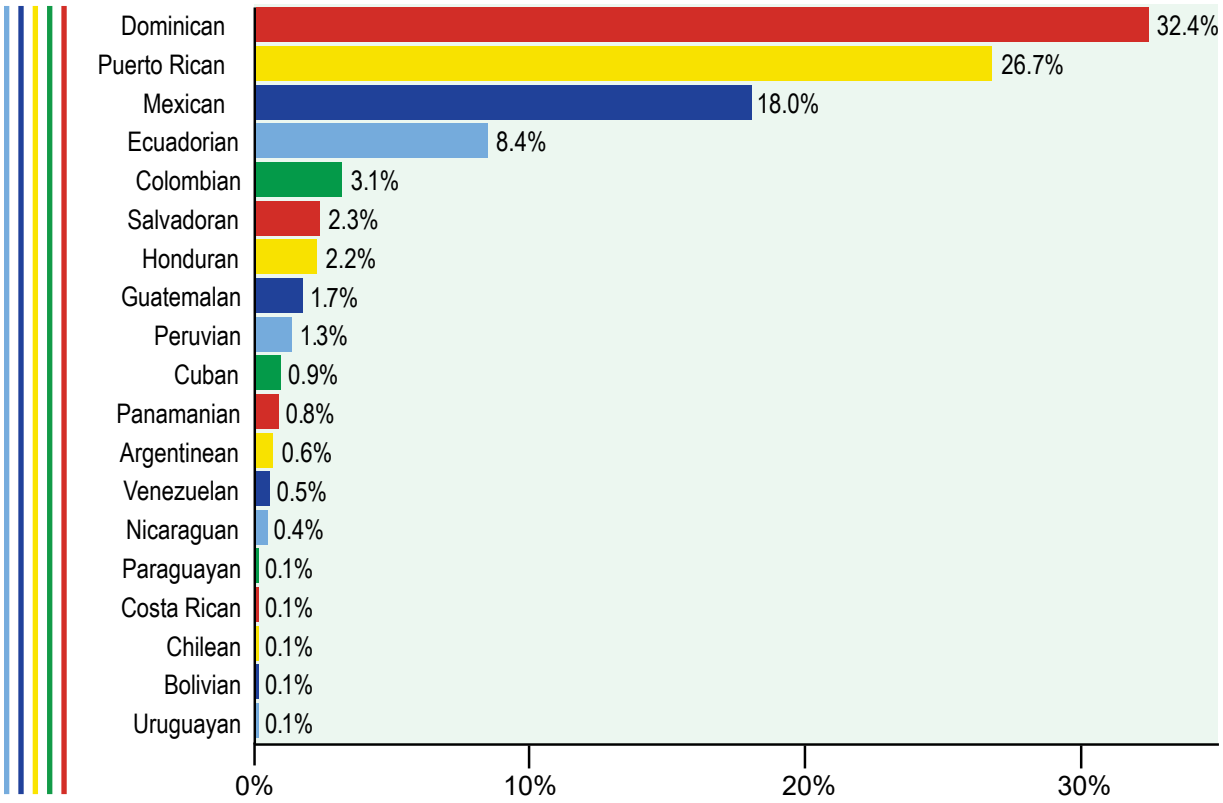
It is key to recognize that **Hispanic or Latinx students who speak Spanish at home might also be speakers of other languages, too, or have parents or family members who do not speak Spanish in its traditional form at all** (Earl, 2020). Also important to highlight is the interconnectedness of Indigenous identities with Afro-Latinidad in many regions of Latin America and the Caribbean. For example, the Garifuna are an Afro-Indigenous people descended from free Black and native Caribbean peoples originally living on the island of St. Vincent. In the 18th century, they were exiled to the coasts of Honduras by the British and from there migrated to Belize and other countries of Central America. Despite years of colonization, violence, and suppression, they maintain unique linguistic and cultural practices. Interestingly, the Bronx is a hub of their community in the US, where approximately 100,000 Garifuna are living (Sequeira, 2022). In summary, students and families with roots in rural and Indigenous areas often speak languages and engage in traditional cultural and economic practices that are unique and central to their worldviews and ways of belonging in their original communities, even as they adjust and adapt to life in urban centers. These practices have historically gone overlooked and underappreciated and must be highlighted in a curriculum seeking to explore and celebrate Latinidad.

1.3 Latina and Latino Students in NYC Public Schools

The population trends explored above provide the historical context to understand the current distribution of Latinidad in US schools, and more specifically in NYCPS. **Figure 1.2** expands the picture beyond the presence of Dominican, Puerto Rican, and Mexican adult populations to show the ratios of K-12 students in our city's schools by country of heritage. In the academic year 2019-2020, Ecuadorians constituted 8.4% of K-12 students and Colombians represented 3.1%, adding these two countries to the list of the five most widely-represented Latino ancestries in NYC. Notably, Ecuadorians showed the most pronounced recent growth among all Latino subgroups, increasing by 12.9% between 2019 and 2021 during the pandemic period when other populations remained relatively stable (Aponte, 2022b). Following these countries, the Central American countries of El Salvador (2.3%), Honduras (2.2%), and Guatemala (1.7%) have sizable representation in NYCPS.

Figure 1.2

Percentage distribution of Latino K-12 Students in NYC (2020) by country of heritage



Source. ACS 5-Year Estimates Selected Population Detailed Tables from Ruggles and colleagues (2021).

Using ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table 1 details school enrollment estimates from nursery to graduate school, as well as the total population of students of Latin American and Caribbean heritage in NYC. The census data should not be taken for a precise estimation of the more recent students' population because of the nature of the sample, population changes, and sampling error. Still, the census estimates offer a valuable insight into the proportions and representation of the Latino communities at different education levels in the city.

Table 1. Census Data Estimation of School Enrollment of Latinos in New York City by Grade: Population 3 Years and Over

Country	Nursery school or preschool	Kindergarten	Grade 1–4	Grade 5–8	Grade 9–12	Under-graduate	Graduate or professional school	K–12	Total
Dominican Republic	11,951	11,362	38,857	43,144	46,607	45,477	7,074	139,970	204,472
Puerto Rico	11,522	8,482	34,649	37,577	34,663	32,988	6,099	115,371	165,980
Mexico	6,038	5,686	24,454	24,855	23,031	20,068	2,765	78,026	106,897
Ecuador	3,005	2,566	10,795	12,283	10,733	11,526	2,203	36,377	53,111
Colombia	1,058	997	3,780	4,573	4,135	7,782	2,456	13,485	24,781
Salvador	749	902	3,883	2,811	2,546	2,463	545	10,142	13,899
Honduras	873	679	2,843	2,974	3,168	3,057	458	9,664	14,052
Peru	529	395	1,625	1,559	2,256	3,224	819	5,835	10,407
Cuba	794	203	930	1,457	1,362	2,035	986	3,952	7,767
Guatemala	604	630	2,531	2,432	1,939	2,047	433	7,532	10,616
Panama	292	325	990	1,012	934	1,638	119	3,261	5,310
Argentina	374	382	688	798	890	661	565	2,758	4,358
Venezuela	181	237	459	719	638	1,020	436	2,053	3,690
Nicaragua	440	114	812	389	388	554	104	1,703	2,801
Chile	147	0	209	226	145	373	226	580	1,326
Costa Rica	68	18	139	170	285	443	145	612	1,268
Bolivia	83	55	149	134	79	212	58	417	770
Paraguay	0	36	217	174	190	222	59	617	898
Uruguay	63	0	105	148	30	153	75	283	574

Source. United States Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American community survey 5-year estimates. NYC, all available Hispanic origins.

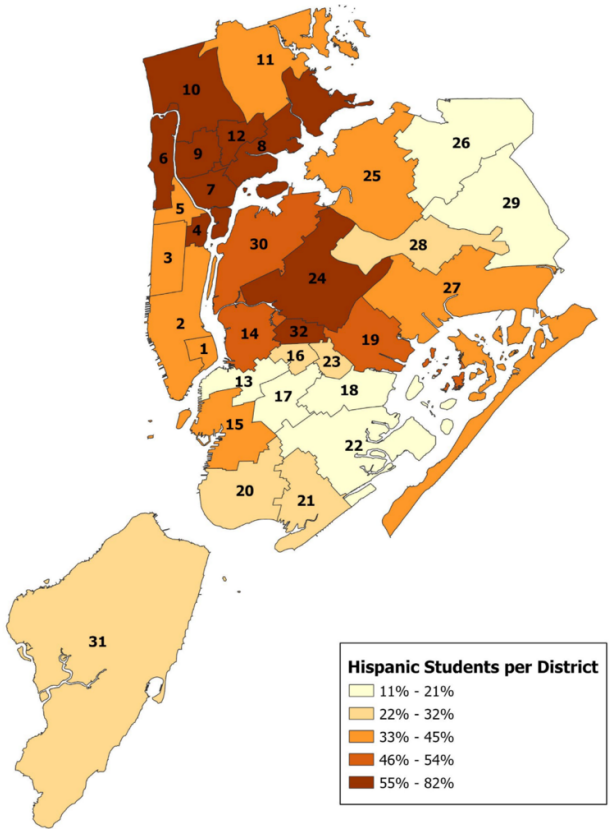
1.3.1 Latina and Latino Students' Neighborhoods and School Districts

Place of residency determines which schools students can enroll in, and in NYC, where school districts reflect social disparities, students' academic experiences and trajectories can vary greatly from neighborhood to neighborhood. A report from the Research Alliance for New York City Schools found that the opportunity to attend classes with rigorous coursework–defined as advanced courses such as AP or college credit-bearing courses–was not equitably distributed among students in the city, and that Latino students were the most likely to attend low-opportunity schools (18%) and the least likely to attend high-opportunity schools (27%). Notably, neighborhood income level explained a significant share of the differences: students in the most affluent neighborhoods demonstrated double the rate of access to high-opportunity schools compared to their peers living in the poorest neighborhoods (Farley et al., 2025). In summary, location is essential due to the correlation between wealth and zip codes, and by extension, its impact on equitable access to education.

Figure 1.3 illustrates the geographic distribution of Latino students across NYC's 32 school districts. The districts with the highest proportion of Latino students (55%-82%, shown in dark brown) are primarily concentrated in the Bronx (Districts 7, 8, 9, 10, and 12), northern Manhattan (Districts 4 and 6), Brooklyn (32), and Queens (24).

Figure 1.3

Hispanic Students by District in Academic Year 2023-24



Source. NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. NYCPS Demographic Snapshot Summary (2025b).

Melissa Figueroa. (2020). *Unsplash License.*

In addition to CUNY's CLACLS reports, this section utilizes school district information from the InsideSchools website (2025). InsideSchools is a project from the New School for Social Research's Center for New York City Affairs that provides timely and accurate information to families, enabling them to navigate the City's school system effectively. Given their unique histories and the number of Latinx students and families they serve, the following districts are likely to benefit from a Latinidad curriculum.

Bronx: Districts 7, 8, 9, 10, and 12

Though they were originally concentrated in northern Manhattan's Washington Heights neighborhood, Dominicans have moved to other boroughs over time. The proportion of the NYC Dominican community living in the Bronx has increased, reaching 47% by 2020 (Bergad, 2022d).

- **District 7** is situated in the South Bronx and encompasses a diverse range of landscapes, from vacant lots and industrial buildings to vibrant shopping districts and historic brownstones. This district was the home of NYC's first Spanish and English bilingual school, PS 25.
- **District 8** demonstrates acute socioeconomic inequality, as it is home to some of the most economically disadvantaged neighborhoods in NYC, in addition to wealthier zones like Throgs Neck and Soundview.
- **District 9** includes the neighborhoods of Grand Concourse, Morrisania, and Tremont. It is also the site of Yankee Stadium, which has a positive impact on the economic and social dynamics of the South Bronx.
- **District 10** encompasses wealthy communities, such as Riverdale and Wave Hill, as well as working-class neighborhoods including Fordham, Belmont, and Kingsbridge.
- **District 12** includes Crotona Park, the Bronx Zoo, and the 250-acre New York Botanical Garden.

SECTION 1: LATINIDAD IN NEW YORK CITY

Manhattan: Districts 4 and 6

Districts 4 and 6 in northern Manhattan are among the most representative in terms of Latinidad, with long histories of Caribbean settlement and cultural activity in the area.

- **District 4** in East Harlem, historically known as *El Barrio* and associated with the history of Puerto Ricans in New York, extends from East 96th Street and Second Avenue to East 125th Street and the Harlem River. Although a significant share of the Puerto Rican community now lives in the wider metro area, *El Barrio* is still vibrantly connected to Puerto Rican heritage and inhabited by Latino populations.

- **District 6**, which includes Washington Heights and Inwood, is also central in the history of New York Latinidad. It is bordered by the Harlem River to the North and East, and the Hudson River to the West; its southern border is located at 163rd Street. Despite Dominicans moving to the Bronx, District 6 preserved its share of the Latino population from 1990 to 2015, with the Dominican community increasing in size over these twenty-five years. Its economic data reveals positive changes, with a 66% increase in Dominican households earning over $100,000 annually (adjusted for inflation) and an 18% increase in employment rates among Dominicans since 1990, alongside a 16% decrease in poverty rates (Cappello, 2019).

Brooklyn Districts 32, 14, and 19

The Hispanic population of Brooklyn has also undergone significant changes over the years. The cases of Bushwick and Sunset Park stand out because, despite their connections to Latinidad, their demographic composition has shifted. In Bushwick, from 1990 to 2017, the Puerto Rican population decreased from 66.7% to 33.1%, while the Dominican population increased from 15.6% to 23.0%, the Mexican representation rose from 2.8% to 20.9%, and the Ecuadorian population increased from 5.9% to 12.2%. Meanwhile, the share of the "non-Hispanic White" population also increased, from 5.1% to 21.5%. In contrast, the changes in Sunset Park were driven by a dramatic increase in the Asian population, from 13.1% to 32.1% (Yim, 2021).

- **District 32** serves Bushwick and the northern tip of Bedford-Stuyvesant, and serves the greatest proportion of Hispanic students relative to the other districts in Brooklyn.

- **Districts 14** and **19** serve lower but still considerable proportions of Hispanic students (46-54%). District 14 is situated on the south side of Williamsburg, adjacent to the large Jewish Orthodox community there. District 19 is situated in the southeast corner of Brooklyn in the New Lots area, between Brownsville and East New York. It serves a mostly low-income population, including residents of the 19 Tower Boulevard public housing project and the Linden Houses.

Queens: Districts 24 and 30

Queens is another bastion of Latinidad in NYC, home to many groups from South America, such as those of Colombian and Ecuadorian descent. Though District 30 is not among the top districts in terms of Hispanic students served, that population is growing. In the Corona, Elmhurst, and Jackson Heights neighborhoods, between 1990 and 2019 the Latino population grew from 43.3% to 60.3% of residents, while Non-Hispanic Whites decreased from 23.8% to 8.3%, Non-Hispanic Blacks from 13.6% to 4.0%, and the Asian community increased steadily from 19.3% to 27.3%, demonstrating a significant demographic shift toward Latino and Asian representation. More specifically, in Corona, Elmhurst, and Jackson Heights during that time window, Ecuadorians saw a population increase from 12.5% to

27.2%, Mexicans from 4.7% to 24.6%, while Dominicans decreased from 24.8% to 14.7% and Colombians from 22.1% to 11.0%, with Peruvians maintaining a relatively stable presence (5.9% to 5.0%) (Aponte, 2022b).

- **District 24** includes neighborhoods such as Corona, Glendale, Ridgewood, Elmhurst, Long Island City, Maspeth, and Middle Village.
- **District 30** encompasses the neighborhoods of Astoria, Ditmars, East Elmhurst, Hunters Point, Jackson Heights, Long Island City, Sunnyside, and Woodside.

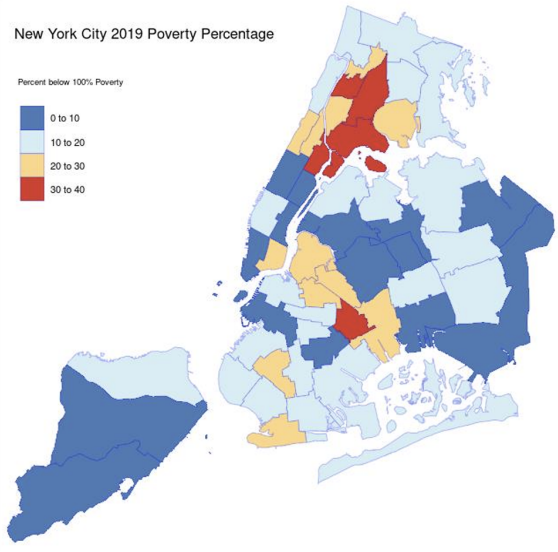
In contrast to the districts with high percentages of Hispanic students served, some districts in eastern Queens (Districts 26 and 29), southern Brooklyn (Districts 13, 17, 18, and 22), and Staten Island (District 31) are learning sites for fewer Hispanics and more of other racial groups. These districts could benefit from a Latinidad curriculum in unique ways, as it would give them exposure to histories and cultures that influence their city but that they might not know as much about.

1.3.2 Socioeconomic Factors Affecting Latina and Latino K-12 Students

Education has played a significant role in the upward trajectory of many Latino families, contributing to their increased earnings and social mobility. Their outcomes on economic measures are multilayered and not always linear, as Latinos, like their neighbors of all identities, experience both social mobility and certain roadblocks. Figure 1.4 shows the geographical distribution of poverty in the city for the year 2019. NYC's poverty rate was 18.8% in 1990, peaked at 21.1% in 2000, and then steadily declined to 16.1% in 2019 (Castillo, 2022).

Figure 1.4

Poverty Distribution in NYC in 2019



Source. *Castillo (2022).*

NYC's Latino communities continue to experience low median incomes and disproportionately high poverty rates. In 2019, the poverty rate among Latinos was 21.4%, higher than the 16.1% of the overall population rate and subgroups such as women (17.4%), the elderly (18.7%), and non-Hispanic Blacks (19.4%) (Castillo, 2022). However, there has been recent improvement. Between 1990 and 2018, NYC's Latino communities experienced a 17.9% increase in median household income and a 7.9 percentage point reduction in poverty rates[3] (Aponte, 2022a). Notably, household composition plays a moderating role in families' socioeconomic conditions due to gendered differences in wages and labor market opportunities: Latina-headed households earn significantly less than male-headed households on average, and at the same time represent a substantial portion of families (60-62% among Puerto Ricans and Dominicans; Bergad, 2022d; 2022e). Measures of poverty and income also vary depending on the country of origin or

3 See Appendix B for details on the definition of poverty in this report.

ancestry, as well as across neighborhoods of residence. Poverty remains concentrated in specific areas, particularly in the school districts serving a higher share of Latinos and non-Hispanic Black residents, which entrenches the social barriers in the neighborhood and impacts school resources and opportunities. The overlap between Figure 1.3, which shows the distribution of Latina and Latino students in NYC school districts, and Figure 1.4 immediately above highlights the need for networks of solidarity to be built between schools, neighborhoods, and the wider city. Enhanced educational opportunities, including rigorous curricula and teaching, could help all neighborhoods overcome the more persistent social barriers our students and families face across the city.

Latinos have done an impressive job as of late navigating unprecedented social and economic challenges in NYC. The COVID-19 pandemic, beginning in 2020, created stressors and economic pressures for all neighborhoods: Latinos in the Corona, Elmhurst, and Jackson Heights neighborhoods, for example, experienced COVID-19 case rates of approximately 1 in 16-19 people and higher (Aponte, 2022b). Nevertheless, contrary to early reports of a mass exodus from the city during the pandemic, data show that the Latino population in NYC remained relatively stable, with the Hispanic population growing by 1.4% between 2019 and 2021 (Aponte, 2022b). Many groups showed population growth between 2019 and 2021: Ecuadorians had the largest increase (12.9%), followed by Mexicans (5.3%), Puerto Ricans (4.1%), Dominicans (0.8%), and Colombians (0.3%) (Bergad, 2022b).

Confirming the importance of education, the economic returns on college degrees have remained strong for Latinos in NYC, as college graduates earned significantly higher median household incomes ($107,721) compared to high school graduates ($61,879) in 2020 (Bergad, 2022a). For Puerto Ricans in NYC, college graduation rates have grown from 0.6% in 1970 to 18% in 2020, and they also have higher median household incomes, suggesting patterns of intergenerational upward social mobility (Bergad, 2022a; 2022e). Relatedly, among Dominican adults, college graduation rates increased from 1.4% in 1970 to 17.5% in 2020, suggesting a shift in their capacity to navigate educational institutions and support their children's academic development (Bergad, 2022a; 2022d). Language is also a crucial element of solidarity, well-being, and the capacity for succeeding academically. The Mexican community has strong bilingual characteristics, with 90% speaking Spanish at home and 70% reporting proficiency in English. Since much research has shown that bilingualism can support positive academic achievement and social integration, the multilingualism of many Latinx communities represents an opportunity for educational systems to leverage languages spoken at home as assets for learning.

1.3.3 Educational Attainment and Outcomes

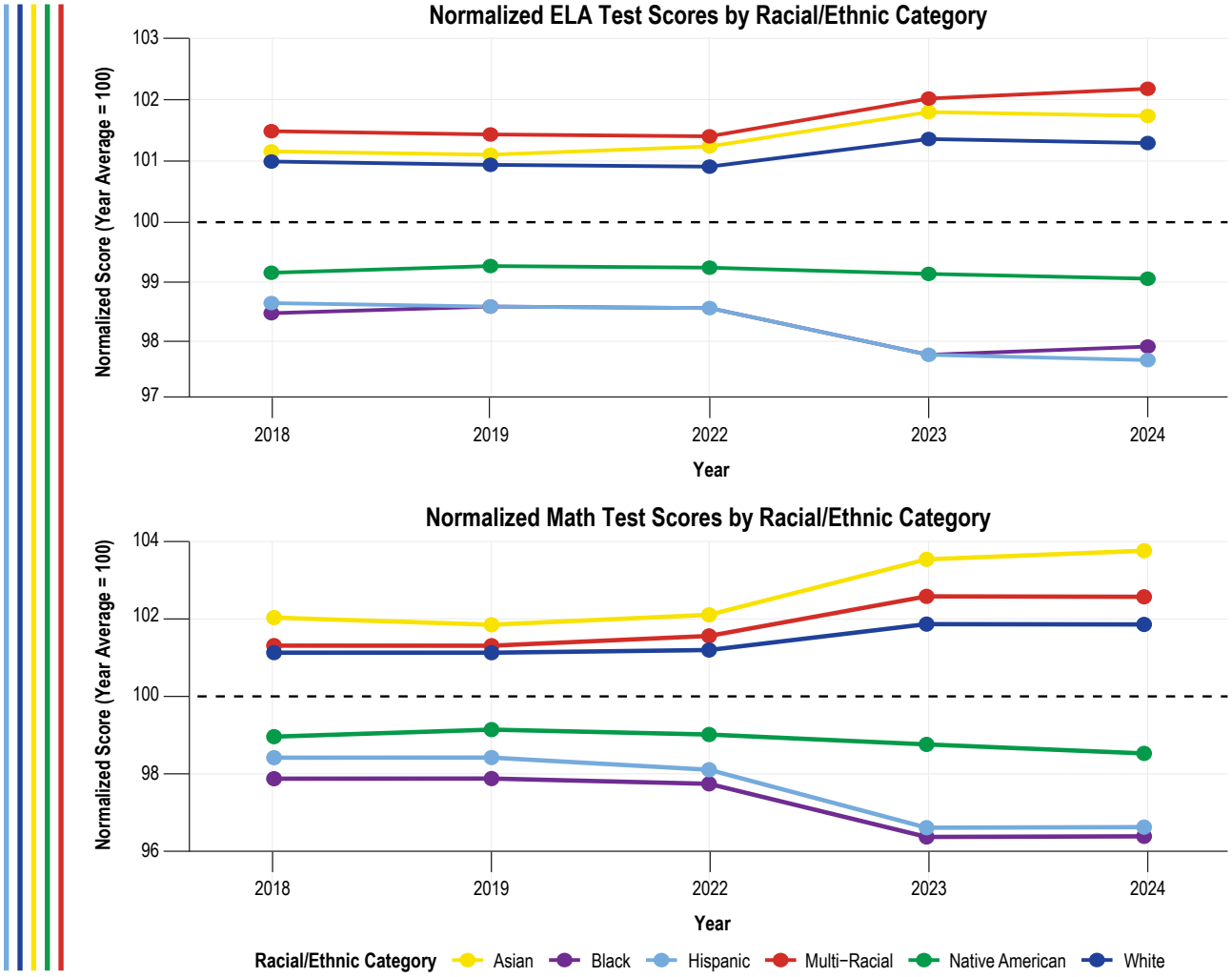
The capabilities for NYCPS students to attain upward social mobility are not only dependent on where they live, but also, most importantly for our purposes, on their educational attainment in K-12, which allows them to pursue higher education and its benefits. The following sections shed more light on the statistical aspects of achievement and school outcomes among NYC Latino students as compared to other groups, to illustrate how a curriculum that recognizes their backgrounds and leverages their family and community experiences and expertise could support enhanced engagement, achievement, and persistence.

School Achievement as Measured by Regents Exam Scores

One way of measuring school achievement is through student test scores on the Regents Examinations, standardized tests meant to assess whether students' learning in core high school subject areas meets New York State standards, and which, in some cases, are required for graduation. Figures 1.5 and 1.6 plot the scores of students on the Math and English Language Arts (ELA) Regents Exams by NYCPS race/ethnicity categories for the period from 2018 to 2024, subtracting the year's mean score to normalize the data. These figures show the persistent achievement gaps between Hispanic and other students that have remained relatively stable across time.

Figures 1.5 and 1.6

Latino Students' ELA & Math Test Scores (2018-2024)



Source. *NYCPS (2024a; 2024c).*

SECTION 1: LATINIDAD IN NEW YORK CITY

As can be seen from Figures 1.5 and 1.6, among all ethnic/racial categories, Asian students consistently achieve higher test scores, particularly in math, with Multi-Racial students performing similarly. White students maintain scores slightly above average (101-101.8%). In contrast, Hispanic and Black students consistently score below the average (97-98% of the mean), with this gap widening to approximately 3% below average in the 2023-2024 academic year.

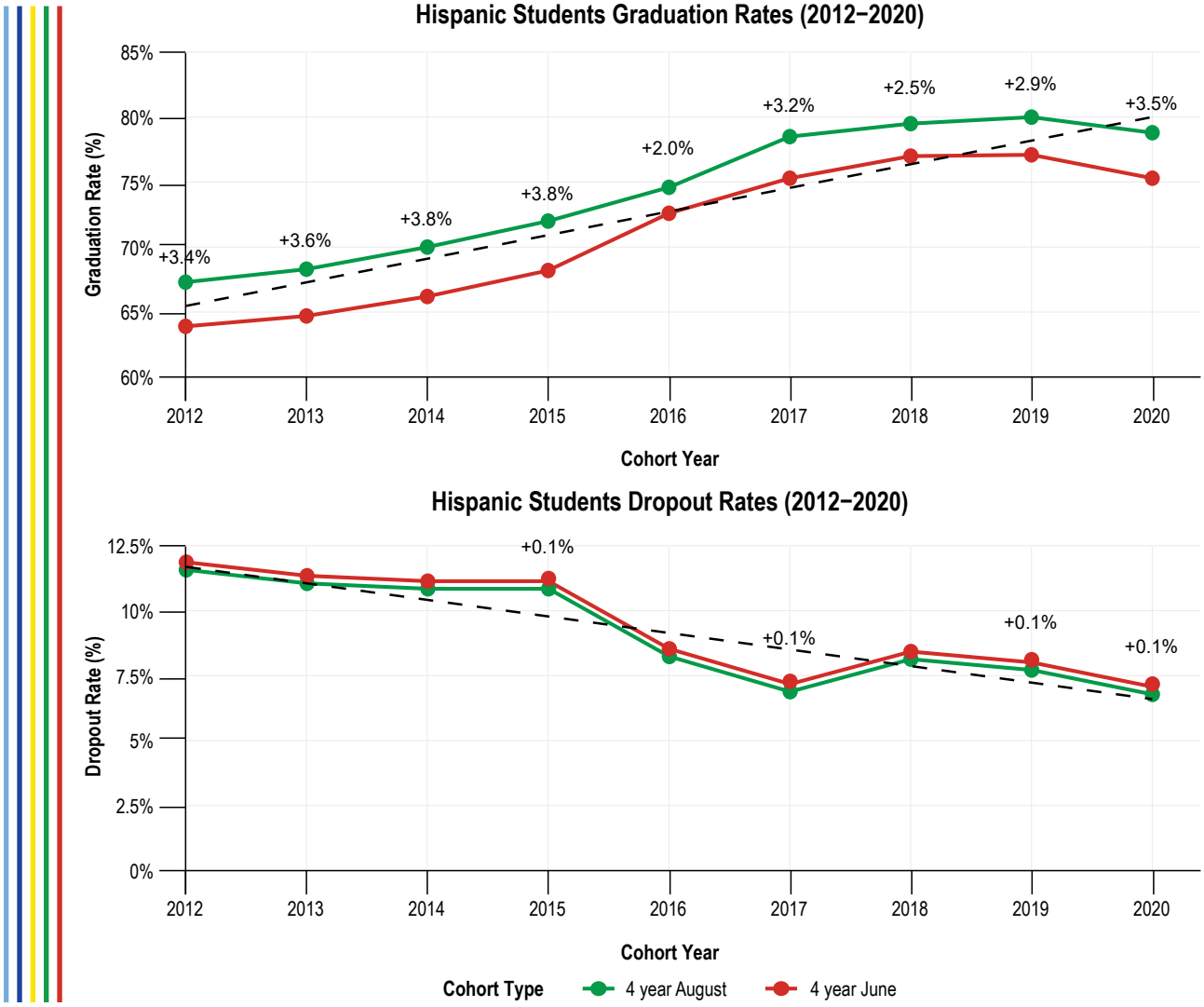
High School Completion and Postsecondary Outcomes

Despite the comparatively low achievement in test scores, there is reason for optimism, as Latina and Latino students in NYC have improved their school completion rates over time. Figures 1.7 and 1.8 illustrate significant improvements in graduation rates and lower dropout rates for Hispanic students from 2012 to 2020. For those cohorts of students completing high school in four years, in either June or August, graduation rates increased from 67-68% in 2012-2013 to 75-80% in 2019. Figure 1.7 shows that August graduation rates are higher than June rates by 2-4 percentage points, underscoring the critical role of summer school and extra support in achieving positive graduation outcomes.

Andy Orin. (2013). *Unsplash License.*

Figures 1.7 and 1.8

Hispanic Students' Graduation and Dropout Rates for the 4-Year August and June Cohorts



Source. *NYCPS (2024b).*

Dropout rates have also decreased over time for Hispanic students. Figure 1.8 shows that these rates have decreased from approximately 11% for the 2012-2013 cohorts to 6-7% for the 2020 cohorts. We must be careful when interpreting these statistics, however. Researchers have pointed out that annual dropout rates minimize "disparities across grade levels and racial categories," and therefore are only one piece of the puzzle in analyzing school completion of Latinos (De Jesús & Vásquez, 2005, p. 5). Despite the lack of precision in the annual estimate, though, the trend shows that dropout rates have decreased as graduation rates have increased.

Another important factor to consider is not simply whether, but also *how,* students are meeting graduation requirements, which are tied to the Regents Exams Students in NYCPS can earn one of three types of diplomas upon completing

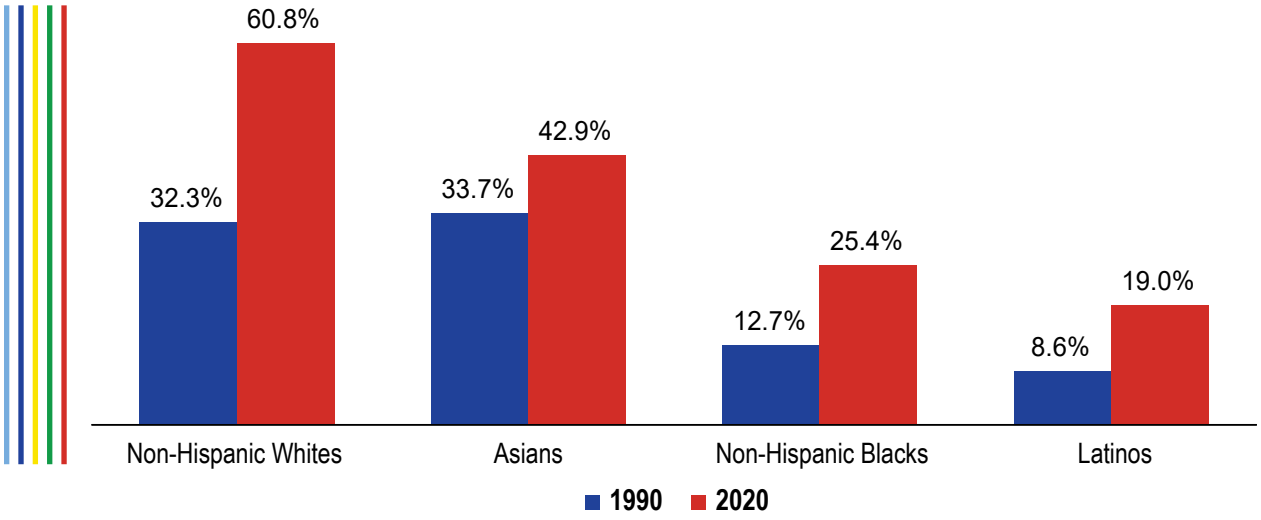
high school: a Local Diploma, a Regents Diploma, or an Advanced Regents Diploma. In general, to graduate, students must achieve passing scores (over 65) on the Regents Examinations in English, mathematics, science, and social studies Eligible students with a score of 45-65 can receive a Local Diploma, which requires 44 course credits plus 5 exams (4 Regents Exams and 1 other State-approved testing option), while the standard Regents Diploma requires the same number of credits and exams but with scores of 65 or higher The Advanced Regents Diploma is the most rigorous option, requiring 44 credits plus 9 exams (8 Regents Exams and 1 other State-approved option) with passing scores of 65 or higher.

Prior studies have identified the type of diploma received by students as one of the primary sources of variation in educational trajectory for Latino students (Schwartz & Stiefel, 2005) As it is an indicator of students' college-readiness, the type of diploma impacts students' post-graduation outcomes: students getting an Advanced Regents Diploma are tracked to apply to competitive colleges, and students receiving the Regents Diploma have a more clear pathway to higher education, while students graduating with the Local Diploma face more obstacles to attending 4-year colleges As one of the main reasons students might pursue a Local Diploma is their status as Multilingual Learners, any effort to offer them a curriculum that simultaneously is rigorous and recognizes and utilizes their multilingualism would be beneficial in opening up pathways to postsecondary education for them.

As another positive trend, there has been a decline in the share of Latino students receiving a Local Diploma after 2015, which was followed by a rapid increase in the achievement of standard Regents Diplomas after 2016 (NYCPS, 2024b). Earning Regents Diplomas should translate into more educational opportunities and stronger intergenerational mobility for Latino families, as it promotes higher education attainment. Postsecondary education is associated with positive social and economic benefits for all groups. For instance, as reported above in section 1.3.2, Latino college graduates with bachelor's degrees earn higher median household incomes than their high school graduate counterparts (Bergad, 2022a).

Figure 1.9

College Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity, NYC (1990-2020)



Source. Bergad (2022a, p. 6).

So it is notable that Latinos demonstrate, on average, lower postsecondary attainment in the form of college completion rates (19% in 2020) as compared with other groups, as is reflected in Figure 1.9.. Within the larger category of Latino, college completion also differs across characteristics such as gender, country of birth, and affiliation with a country-of-origin community; therefore, some groups are at a clearer advantage in terms of social mobility. As is true for the wider population, Latinas consistently earn bachelor's degrees at higher rates than Latinos. Additionally, CUNY campuses are central to the higher education outcomes of New York Latinx students, as they comprised 31% of all CUNY undergraduates in Fall 2019, including a meaningful representation at Lehman College (52%), John Jay College (45%), and City College (34%) (Bergad, 2022a).

1.4 Pursuing Educational Equity in NYC through Latinidad

Section 1 of this report has depicted the overall spatial and socioeconomic landscape of Latino communities and their presence in NYC and its public school system, to emphasize their multidimensional backgrounds, histories, and efforts to attain upward mobility through social action and education. **NYC is home to a great number of Latino communities that send their children to NYCPS, with the largest being Dominicans, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and Ecuadorians**. Indeed, 42% of the roughly one million K-12 students enrolled in our city's public schools are of Hispanic background. Yet within the larger categories of "Hispanic" and their national-origin groups exists great diversity not only in terms of migration histories, linguistic and cultural engagement, and racial/ethnic identities, but also in terms of their settlement patterns and residency within the New York metropolitan area, their labor and economic conditions, and therefore the schools they attend and the academic performance and graduation rates they are able to achieve.

Analysis of data on educational attainment in NYC shows that compared with other racial/ethnic groups, Latinx students still face persistent inequalities in outcomes and opportunities. Economic ebbs and flows that challenge all NYC residents, strict standardized testing, and barriers to enrolling in and persisting through postsecondary education remain challenges to work on for Latinx students, as well as others. Yet despite these barriers, education remains the most powerful pathway to social mobility, as evidenced by the income differential between Latino college graduates and high school graduates.

Despite these challenges, Latinos continue to turn to schooling, to believe in the power of education to *salir adelante*, to excel. In turn, as teachers and educators, we must believe in them and their communities. There is a need for curricular and pedagogical innovations that can contribute to expanding educational quality and equity. A curriculum that spotlights Latinidad stands to interest more of those students who, finding the current school curricula irrelevant to their daily and community lives, opt out or drop out. Further, if well-designed, a Latinidad curriculum stands to increase the available resources, such as rigorous and engaging course offerings, that will build on the good work of NYC teachers and recent positive upward trends not just for Latinos, but for all students and their families served by NYCPS.

SECTION 2: A LATINIDAD CURRICULUM BLUEPRINT FOR NYC SCHOOLS: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

OVERVIEW

As discussed in the Introduction, Latinidad is complex, dynamic, and heterogeneous, shaped by race, ethnicity, culture, migration, and sociopolitical histories. Within the context of education, understanding Latinidad is essential for developing curricula that reflect and affirm the diverse experiences of Latinx students as well as their families, neighbors, and classmates of other backgrounds. In NYC, home to one of the largest and most diverse populations in the US, the need for culturally sustaining pedagogies is urgent. This section explores the curricular imperative of studying Latinidad in NYC, where nearly 30% of the population is Latinx. Grounded in the statistical and community landscape of Latinx populations, histories of advocacy and curriculum development and participatory research with youth serve as foundational frameworks for the development of the Latinidad Curriculum Initiative. Our focus here is on the perspectives and principles that underpin our thinking as we imagine–and embark on creating–curricular resources.

As discussed in Section 1, NYC's Latinx population is expansive and diverse, encompassing communities from the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Ecuador, Colombia, and other Latin American and Caribbean nations. Within this demographic, **Afro-Latinidad is a critical yet often overlooked aspect of identity, highlighting the intersection of Blackness and Latinidad in the Caribbean diaspora**. The Indigenous cultural and linguistic backgrounds and skills of Latinx students are also often overlooked (Cortina & Gendreau, 2001; Earl, 2020). Socioeconomic disparities persist, with Latinx communities facing higher rates of poverty, limited access to quality education, and systemic barriers to upward mobility (Anyon et al., 2018). Educational inequities disproportionately affect Latinx students, with high dropout rates, underrepresentation in gifted programs, and linguistic discrimination against Spanish-speaking youth. These structural challenges necessitate curricular interventions that are not only responsive but also transformative, centering the lived experiences, histories, and knowledge of Latinx communities (Brion-Meisels & Alter, 2018). Educational leaders, many of them from Hispanic communities, have been dedicated to promoting such interventions.

2.1 The Movement for Latinx Educational Justice through Curriculum and Pedagogy

The movement for Latinx educational justice has been long-standing, from bilingual education advocacy to student-led campaigns for ethnic studies. Historically, Latinx students and their supporters have organized against discriminatory practices in schools, pushing for more inclusive curricula and equitable access to resources (Kornbluh et al., 2015). They have advocated for more pedagogical models that empower students themselves as agents of change. For too long, Latinx perspectives have been underrepresented—or misrepresented—in textbooks and classroom lessons. Many students grow up never seeing their families and cultural histories reflected at school. This gap sends a harmful message: their experiences are not important, and their communities have not shaped our country. Newer Latinx curriculum efforts attempt to push back against that narrative. They aim to reflect real, untold histories and create spaces where students feel connected to what they learn. These programs are rooted in teaching that values culture, community, and critical thinking, and these programs benefit all students, not just those who identify as Latine.

Seeking to learn from and build on these efforts and programs, we undertook a review of the literature on curriculum and examples of Latinx curricula from other places in the country. Many of these examples are based in Latinx Critical Theory, or LatCrit, which "elucidates Latinas/Latinos' multidimensional identities and can address the intersectionality of racism, sexism, classism, and other forms of oppression" (Solorzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001, p. 312). LatCrit adds to critical theory by paying specific attention to "issues often ignored by critical race theorists…such as language,

immigration, ethnicity, culture, identity, phenotype, and sexuality" (Delgado Bernal, 2002, p. 108). Similar to our conception of Latinidad, LatCrit also emphasizes the panethnic label of Latinx as a strength, hoping to build solidarity for social progress around it (Villalpando, 2010, p. 622). Indeed, in their book *Latinx Curriculum Theorizing*, Berry and colleagues (2019) define the "Latinx collective as a group of people across different regions whose identities and work reflect their unique historical roots and Indigenous histories that were shaped socially by shared experiences..." (p. 196). Therefore, though it is not as commonly used among the wider Latino population of the US (see Introduction), we predominantly use the term Latinx throughout this section as it is the term often used by scholars and advocates in curriculum studies.

2.2 Curricular Examples from Across the Country

In our review of existing curricular examples, a few stood out. Mentioned just above, Berry and colleagues' (2019) *Latinx Curriculum Theorizing* argues for a framework of Latinx curriculum that supports resistance against inauthentic and stereotypical narratives (in other words, counternarratives) of Latinx communities. They propose that we should look at curriculum in three central dimensions: "curriculum as experience," "curriculum as a plan for instruction," and "curriculum as content.," taking into account its goals, objectives, and overall purposes. Additionally,

Flickr. (2021).

they support the concept that knowledge comes from students' and families' lived experiences, and that curricula can also be autobiographical (Pinar et al., 1995). For example, one curricular program they highlight is described in Chapter Two: "'To Serve the People': Transformational Praxis of the Chicago Young Lords." In this chapter, authors Ann Alives, Richard Benson, and Erica Davila draw on historical documents and interviews with members of the Young Lords, a Puerto Rican community organization active in the 1960s and 70s, to uncover how their advocacy helped the movement for social justice, particularly through education. A program based on this research teaches students about the group's fight for justice in areas like housing, education, and healthcare. It encourages students to see the curriculum not just as schoolwork but as a powerful tool to understand identity, community, and activism. The authors argue that teaching about and replicating the educational efforts of Latinx-led organizations like the Young Lords offers a more responsive and culturally grounded approach to meeting the needs of Latinx students and their communities.

THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT RECENTLY PASSED A LAW REQUIRING PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS TO OFFER A BLACK AND LATINX HISTORY ELECTIVE BY 2022. *—Wlodarczyk Hickey, 2020*

The absence of Latinx stories and narratives has motivated the creation of curricula that highlight key figures in Latinx history. In California, for example, a collaboration between the Latino Leaders Network and the California Global Education Project–a state professional learning network for educators–gave rise to a curriculum guide entitled *Latino Leaders Speak: Personal Stories of Struggle and Triumph* (Ibarra & Brown, 2017). The guide offers instructional plans for the short speeches recounted by real-life Latinx leaders from throughout the US, from astronauts to journalists to civil rights activists. Each lesson asks students to reflect on their own lives and values while learning about the accomplishments and challenges these leaders faced. Activities include writing speeches, creating presentations, and exploring topics like identity, perseverance, and civic engagement. Such projects should urge us to question why these pedagogical narratives and tools remain absent from, or are not mandated within, mainstream curricula.

Innovative curriculum initiatives have also been developed in the South. *Latinx Studies Curriculum in K-12 Schools: A Practical Guide*, edited by David Colón and Max Krochmal (2022), highlights a curriculum developed in collaboration with the Fort Worth Independent School District and Texas Christian University (TCU). Its goal is simple but powerful: to help every student answer the question, "What major contributions have Latinxs made to the United States?" (p. 4). The guide covers themes like pre-colonial history, civil rights, and migration, and includes hands-on tools to support student engagement. This guide identifies seven major themes that encapsulate the breadth of Latinx history and culture. These themes span different eras and aspects of the Latinx experience, ensuring that the curriculum is not a narrow ethnic studies addendum but a wide-ranging exploration of Latinx contributions to US and world history. The curriculum is also structured around the Backward Design and Understanding by Design framework (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), with the use of "enduring understandings" and "essential questions" to provide curricular planning for educators who might have considered these themes in the past but do not know how to implement the material. This guide is grounded in the principles of culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995) and culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris & Alim, 2017) to establish a more accurate, equitable, and culture-centered narrative of history. They argue that by rooting their guide in both empirical research and community demographics, they can drive up student engagement and achievement while enriching all students' understanding of American history. Ultimately, the guide explores counternarratives and the need for more Latinx voices. Rather than treating Latinx Studies as supplementary, the guide frames it as a vital and rigorous curriculum of its own.

In Connecticut, the Yale New Haven Teachers Institute developed a Latinx history course that helps students think critically about whose stories are told and how history is shaped (Braginsky, 2019). Students learn through art, debates, storytelling, and even create a Latinx History Museum Exhibit. The course is structured around six essential questions, encouraging students to explore identity, resistance, and solidarity with other groups. The state of Connecticut recently passed a law requiring public high schools to offer a Black and Latinx history elective by 2022 (Wlodarczyk Hickey, 2020). The Yale curriculum supports this law by providing ready-to-use materials for teachers and meaningful learning experiences for students.

Looking across states, a recent UnidosUS and Johns Hopkins University (2023) study examined US History textbooks in seven states, including New Mexico, California, Texas, Florida, Iowa, West Virginia, and our own New York; these states represent some of the states with both the most and least Latinx students served. **The researchers found that while some books include Latinx topics, most fail to give these stories the space and depth they deserve. The study highlights the need for curricula that go beyond a few paragraphs on Hispanic Heritage Month and instead include Latinx voices throughout the year.**

Overall, ethnic studies courses that center Latinx histories, literatures, and contributions have been linked to increased student engagement, academic achievement, and self-empowerment (Sleeter, 2011). While rigorous quantitative studies are few, research on programs like the Mexican American Studies (MAS) curriculum in Tucson, Arizona, demonstrates that ethnic studies foster critical consciousness and counter hegemonic narratives while also increasing academic achievement (Cabrera et al., 2014). In other words, research shows that ethnic studies or Latinx-focused curricula are not simply supplementary or remedial, but can be beneficial for every student's learning (Cuauhtin et al., 2019). However, political opposition and legislative bans on ethnic studies courses in certain states pose significant barriers to implementation (Acosta, 2019). Despite the growing body of research supporting Latinx curriculum initiatives, systemic challenges remain. Standardized testing mandates often prioritize narrow sets of knowledge and skills, limiting curricular flexibility (Au, 2009). Additionally, school funding inequities disproportionately affect Latinx-majority schools, limiting access to culturally relevant materials and trained educators (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Resistance from policymakers and school administrators further complicates efforts to integrate Latinx perspectives into mainstream curricula (Valenzuela, 2010).

Thus, Latinx curriculum is an essential component of equitable education that we must continue to support to foster academic success and cultural affirmation for Latinx students. These curriculum efforts are not just about academics—they are about belonging. When students see their families' and cultures' stories in the classroom, it boosts their confidence, their connection to school, and their ability to succeed. At the same time, non-Latinx students can benefit by gaining a fuller understanding of American history and the diverse people who shape it. And teachers can benefit by learning about their students' backgrounds and feeling more prepared and confident in how to teach them.

2.3 Participatory Frameworks for Latinidad-Centered Pedagogies

Drawing on preexisting examples, the main principle that influences our thinking about how to create a useful, rigorous, and engaging pedagogy to teach about Latinidad is the ethic of belonging. This means that students, children, youth, and their families and communities must feel authentic ownership and influence on the pedagogical process as well as curricular content. Incorporating Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) into the design and development processes is one strategy to accomplish that.

YPAR is a transformative educational approach that positions students as co-researchers, investigating issues that directly impact their communities, allowing them to increase their connection and sense of belonging to the curriculum. YPAR fosters critical consciousness, sociopolitical development, and academic skill-building, aligning with contemporary standards while challenging traditional, top-down models of education (Kornbluh et al., 2015).

Caraballo and colleagues (2017) argue that YPAR disrupts common and dominant ideas of what we think of as knowledge by centering youth as knowledge producers. This critical framework aligns with the principles of culturally sustaining pedagogy, affirming linguistic diversity, community engagement, and historical agency. Similarly, Zaal and Terry (2013) highlight the transformational benefits of YPAR, demonstrating how youth participation in research fosters confidence, self-awareness, and civic engagement. Additionally, Anyon and colleagues (2018) provide a systematic review of YPAR methodologies and their impact on youth outcomes, reinforcing their effectiveness as a tool for Latinx student empowerment. These studies collectively underscore YPAR's potential to cultivate a Latinidad curriculum that is reflexive, justice-oriented, and deeply rooted in community realities.

2.4 Toward a Participatory Process for Building a Latinidad Curriculum for NYC Public Schools

A Latinidad curriculum grounded in our NYC communities' perspectives and values and designed in collaboration with them offers a powerful model for educational equity in NYCPS. By centering Latinx youth and family voices, histories, and sociopolitical realities, such a curriculum would not only meet but also challenge and disrupt narrow content and standards while affirming students' identities and fostering more accurate community representation on a larger scale. Structural changes in NYC's education system must prioritize these approaches to create inclusive, justice-driven learning environments that reflect the full spectrum of Latinidad life experiences. Morrell (2008) emphasizes the transformative potential of youth-initiated research in reshaping the very foundations of educational inquiry. He argues that when students, particularly those most impacted by educational inequities, are equipped with the tools to conduct research, they "ask fundamentally different questions in fundamentally different ways" (p. 30). This perspective highlights how youth bring unique insights, urgency, and relevance to the research process and underscores the need to elevate their voices in conversations around educational justice. Morrell insists that the educational research community must create more spaces for participatory research and curricular creation, not simply as a pedagogical tool, but as a critical shift in how we construct knowledge in justice-oriented scholarship.

This aligns closely with Caraballo and colleagues (2017), who frame youth inquiry as "a radical effort in education research to value the inquiry-based knowledge production of the youth who directly experience the educational contexts that scholars endeavor to understand" (p. 311). These researchers assert that young people, especially those navigating structural inequalities, possess not only the lived expertise but also the analytical capacity to transform educational systems. Together, they argue for a paradigm shift in which students are positioned not just as subjects of research or beneficiaries of reform, but as co-creators of knowledge and catalysts for equity.

Drawing from these scholarly insights, the LCI team considers that a curriculum that adequately and authentically explores Latinidad should be: 1) intersectional, recognizing that Latinidad is experienced by many different people in many different ways; 2) participatory, community- and inquiry-based, rooted in the real-world experiences of families and students and on issues they want to transform; and 3) culturally responsive and sustaining, positioning those whose voices and histories have been left out as creators of knowledge (Bernal, 2002) as holders of historical knowledge

(Villalpando, 2010) and therefore as central to the informing of all decisions regarding content, pedagogy, and assessment.

To develop a blueprint for the Latinidad Curriculum Initiative, in Year 1, we intentionally included youth in the process as a way to challenge the traditional model of education that places educators as the sole arbiters of knowledge. The team began brainstorming by identifying the core values and concepts that would be used to design a curriculum for students across grade levels and content areas. After the team created a list of values, the concepts were organized into larger categories, which would later be turned into a visual representation and shown to teachers and students. After several iterations, we identified the four main pillars that form our framework–a foundation for all phases of our project, from input to design to implementation:

- **Belonging** - an overall value or ethic that guides all subsequent elements of the Latinidad project, including design processes, professional development, pedagogy, and content;
- **Multiple Ways of Knowing** - a perspective on knowledge that requires teachers and students to reflect not only on what they know but how; in other words, that recognizes that there are a variety of sources of data that can inform knowledge creation;
- **Dynamic & Inquiry-based Learning** - a pedagogical approach that emphasizes problem-based, student- and community-centered, and experiential learning whenever possible; and
- **Critical Skills across Contexts** - a set of competencies that encourage perspective-taking, the ability to understand, appreciate, interact, and collaborate with people from different cultures, and questioning to arrive at one's conclusions.

We then created a flowchart to illustrate the relationship between the conceptual framework and design principles that would guide the blueprint and curriculum mapping. Consultations with students illustrated the importance of the blueprint being written in accessible language and demonstrating how the principles could be applicable across different grade levels and subjects, regardless of the lessons teachers decide to use. These learnings have informed the lesson planning guide and sample lesson plans that are presented in Section 3 of this report, and the current version of the blueprint is accessible on our website.

SECTION 3: LESSON PLANNING GUIDE AND SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

OVERVIEW

The previous sections have provided an introduction to Latinidad in NYC, including the demographic landscape, an overview of educational achievement and outcomes for Latino communities and NYC students more broadly, and an outline of the theoretical perspectives that will inform our creation of a Latinidad Curriculum for K-12 NYCPS students. Following our theoretical and ethical perspectives discussed in Section 2, the creation of our Latinidad curriculum will be participatory, including content, input, and feedback from teachers, students, and community members; dynamic and adaptable to the contextual needs of different classrooms, schools, and student and teacher backgrounds; and celebratory, highlighting the intellectual and social contributions of the multitude of Latina and Latino leaders and movements that have influenced NYC and the US.

Section 3 introduces some tools the LCI team has created to begin the curriculum development process, including a curriculum writer checklist for collaborators, a lesson planning guide, and four sample lesson plans. Rather than definitive templates, we present these tools as examples of the kind of content and inquiry that are currently missing from many school curricula. They are meant as resources, as a launching pad from which to create a scope and sequence to incorporate the teaching of Latinidad in an interdisciplinary way across the K-12 grades.

3.1 Design Process of Sample Curricular Resources

In developing our lesson planning guide and subsequent sample lesson plans, consultation with multiple stakeholders and experts has been a continuous and reiterative process from the beginning. In addition to input from key partners and community stakeholders, our colleagues from the Black Education Research Center at Teachers College, Columbia University have generously collaborated with us to share their knowledge gained from their similar process of creating *Black Studies as the Study of the World: A PK-12 Black Studies Curriculum for New York City Public Schools* and launched in 2024 (available through the WeTeachNYC.org website). We are especially grateful to Dr. Samantha Chung, who helped with the design of our lesson planning guide, curriculum writer checklist, as well as some sample lesson plans.

Drawing from these consultations and our pedagogical expertise, we kept certain overarching considerations in mind in terms of design and structure as well as the potential content of our curricular resources. Regarding structure, we implemented Backward Design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), meaning we started with our desired outcomes, as defined by our conceptual framework, to work backwards to inform the development of our lesson planning guide, keeping in mind how we might support teachers as they construct their lessons. For example, the learning objective prompts for each lesson (Belonging: What is my connection to this lesson?; Knowledge: What do I know, and how do I know it?; Inquiry: What questions do I have?; and Critical Skills: What can I do?) are drawn from the four pillars of our conceptual framework (see Section 2).

The learning objectives included in the lesson planning guide are intended to capture the values of multiplicity of knowledge–the idea that what we know can be a product of multiple sources and strands of knowledge–and dynamic inquiry. Opportunities for civic, community, and family engagement proposed in the lessons align with the "impact-driven" and "participatory" elements of the conceptual framework and the call from parents and community stakeholders for authentic and expansive representation. The Planning Guide thus includes space for planners to think about the critical skills they want their students to develop across and between disciplinary contexts. Across the lessons, we have provided opportunities for students to revisit content and skills. We also incorporated Teaching

Protocols, which include See, Think, Feel, Wonder; Think, Pair, Share; and Observe, Reflect, Question. As such, students in later grades can build on their prior studies of conceptions of Latinidad in NYC and apply their previous exposure to the protocols when analyzing images and primary sources, for example

We also sought to make our lesson plans intelligible to educators **We recognize that teachers are often familiar with certain lesson structures and consider the feasibility of using lesson plans. Therefore, we designed our lessons with teachers in mind to enhance the likelihood that they will use these materials.** We also considered that the curriculum often functions as professional development for those who implement it Not all teachers or students will have the same relationship to Latinidad, and so we provided spaces to encourage teachers to consider how their own identities, unique experiences, and content knowledge can influence how they approach and engage with these lessons and in their students' explorations within them

As we engaged in the lesson plan development process, we adjusted our lesson planning guide to better align with the overarching objectives embedded in our conceptual framework For example, the lessons now include a suggested Grade Band, which means that they can be used for a range of grade levels instead of being tied to a specific grade. Yet, teachers can ultimately draw from and incorporate elements of these lessons into any grade We have also provided translations of academic vocabulary terms connected to these lessons Currently, these translations are all in Spanish However, we recognize that translations might appear in other languages, such as Portuguese, French, or even Indigenous languages, in future lessons, when appropriate Future development of these lesson plans should also consider and include accommodations for students with disabilities Moreover, we again acknowledge that teachers will approach these lessons with varying levels of familiarity with the content Therefore, we included the "Teacher May Say" prompts as suggestions for what teachers could say at different steps of the lessons for guidance, if necessary They are not meant to be prescriptive, but rather are modifiable based on different teachers' needs and aims.

OVER THE PAST DECADE, THE NYCPS, THROUGH ITS DIVISION OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION, AND WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF NYCPS TEACHERS, HAS DEVELOPED A RANGE OF RESOURCES, MATERIALS, PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES, AND PROGRAMMING FOR K-12 STUDENTS...

Finally, regarding content, of utmost importance was making lessons relevant to students' lived experiences Youth themselves have called for elaborations on Latine stories and contributions that go beyond token or stereotypical representations of events from history that they are used to encountering in school curricula Over the past decade, the NYCPS, through its Division of Curriculum and Instruction, and with the assistance of NYCPS teachers, has developed a range of resources, materials, professional learning opportunities, and programming for K-12 students, some of which address Latinx history and culture Aiming not to reduplicate existing resources unnecessarily while seeking to fulfill the real gaps within them, **our team also undertook a review of these existing resources, focusing on those created through the Department of Social Studies and Civics, including of their Passport to Social Studies curriculum, Hidden Voices series, and Civics for All curriculum. We looked for instances where they acknowledge or engage with the history of the Americas, including Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the contributions of Latinos in the US, a fuller analysis of which can be found in Appendix C.** Our analysis demonstrated how there is opportunity to expand the focus on Latinidad in NYCPS in terms of grade, perspective, and geographical focus For instance, there is a need to emphasize Latinidad as made up of a diversity of cultural, racial, and linguistic experiences and to expand coverage beyond episodic and individual characteristics of

well-known figures, to focus on community-driven and collectively led social movements by Latinx leaders. There is also a need to focus on the contributions of US Latinas and Latinos, not just in Latin America or in the past, but to the history and current social fabric of NYC.

As such, our sample lessons are aimed not to set boundaries or fixed content, but to exemplify the broad horizon of possibilities for building on quality existing curricular resources in the aforementioned ways. For example, our proposed "Latinidad in My Community" sample lesson asks students to explore the varying cultural identities of their neighborhoods in NYC, and "Exploring Latinidad Through Photography" encourages students to reflect on the different ways that Latinidad in their communities can be captured in visual imagery. The "Sounds of Latinidad" lesson makes possible an embodied and sensory exploration, as well as analysis, of the unique musical and artistic genres that arose when distinct traditions from different countries came together to take hybrid forms in NYC. In turn, the "Mobilizing for Equity in Education: The Save Hostos Movement" highlights the long history of the movement for bilingual and culturally sustaining schooling that Latine communities in NYC have led. We hope these serve as starting rather than ending points for stakeholders of all kinds, but most importantly, teachers and students, to begin an in-depth and academically and personally meaningful exploration of Latinidad.

3.2 LESSON CREATION TOOLS AND SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

Curriculum Writer Checklist		
Check	Criteria	Definition
		Pre-Classroom Planning
☐	Grade Band	The specific grade level(s) for which the lesson is designed (e.g., 3rd grade, 9th-10th grade)
☐	Subject(s)	The academic discipline(s) or content area(s) (e g , Mathematics, English Language Arts, Science)
☐	Lesson Title	The lesson title with a specific focus or subject matter.
☐	Duration (45 to 90 Minutes)	The duration of the lesson. One or two periods of 45 minutes
		Learning Objectives
☐	Learning Objectives	Specific goals that state what students will know or be able to do after the lesson. The following questions structure the learning objectives: • **Belonging:** What is my connection to this lesson? • **Knowledge:** What do I know and how do I know it? • **Inquiry:** What questions do I have? • **Critical Skills:** What can I do?
☐	Standards	Grade-specific learning requirements are aligned with state standards.
☐	Curriculum Connections	Links between this lesson and other curricula available, such as Passport to Social Studies and BERC's Black Studies Curriculum

Curriculum Writer Checklist		
☐	Essential Question	A broad, thought-provoking question that encourages deep exploration and critical thinking around a central theme or concept; cannot be answered by 'yes' or 'no'.
☐	Focus Questions	Specific, targeted questions that narrow the scope of inquiry and guide the investigation or discussion toward a particular aspect
Check	Criteria	Definition
		Learning Objectives
☐	Connected Academic Vocabulary	Three to nine key terms and concepts students need to understand for the lesson
☐	Formative and Summative Assessments	Activities that evaluate student understanding, including formative (ongoing) and summative (final) assessments.
☐	Materials	All items, tools, technology, and resources needed to implement the lesson
☐	Connections to Students' Prior Knowledge	How the lesson builds upon students' expected knowledge
☐	What Teachers Should Know/ Challenging Misconceptions and Featuring Counternarratives	Important background information for teachers, including common misunderstandings to address
		Classroom Lesson and Activities
☐	Opener (Time)	Introduction activities that engage students and set the stage for learning.
☐	Mini Lesson (Time)	Brief lecture to build the context and provide crucial information Time for independent work
☐	Activities (Time)	Time for independent work and group work
☐	Closure (Time)	Activities that summarize, reflect on, and solidify learning.
☐	Homework and Beyond this Lesson (YPAR/Civic, Community, and Family Engagement)	Assignments to complete outside class and additional enrichment opportunities
☐	Differentiation and Resources for Multilingual Learners	Accommodations and scaffolds to support diverse learners and language development
		Additional Resources to Support Educators
☐	Community Resources (Museums, Archives, Cultural Centers, Spaces of Memory, etc.)	Opportunities for real-world connections and family involvement
☐	Related Articles, Books, Videos, etc	Supplementary materials, references, and tools to support teaching and learning

LATINIDAD in Schools

Sounds of Latinidad

Pre-classroom Planning	
Grade Band	K-2nd
Subject(s)	Music, Social Studies, ELA
Lesson Title	Sounds of Latinidad: Exploring Family and Traditions Through Music
Duration (45 to 90 Minutes)	45 minutes
Learning Objectives:	
Belonging What is my connection to this lesson?	Students will recognize how music can connect to and reflect their family traditions and practices
Knowledge What do I know, and how do I know it?	Students will examine how music can reflect family values, traditions, and experiences and contribute to spaces that bring people together to share memories and care for each other
Inquiry What questions do I have?	Students will consider how different rhythms, instruments, and songs connect to family traditions and everyday life
Critical Skills What can I do?	Students will identify key instruments and rhythms associated with Latinidad and express how music makes them feel connected to their families and communities
Standards (Grade Specific)	**NY STATE K-8 SOCIAL STUDIES FRAMEWORK** • **1.1b:** People and families of diverse racial, religious, national, and ethnic groups share their beliefs, customs, and traditions, which creates a multicultural community • **1.1c:** Awareness of America's rich diversity fosters intercultural understanding • **1.3c:** As global citizens, we are connected to people and cultures beyond our community and nation, and we have a shared responsibility to protect and respect our world **NEW YORK STATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS (ELA)** • **Craft and Structure 1R4:** Identify specific words that express feelings and senses. • **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 1R9:** Make connections between self and text (texts and other people/ world)

Pre-classroom Planning

Learning Objectives:

Essential Question (A broad, thought-provoking question that encourages deep exploration and critical thinking around a central theme or concept; cannot be answered by 'yes' or 'no')	• How can we use music to celebrate family values and traditions?
Focus Questions (Specific, targeted questions that narrow the scope of inquiry and guide the investigation or discussion toward a particular aspect)	• What do the sounds, rhythms, and lyrics in music rooted in Latinidad tell us about what families value and celebrate in New York City? • How do we use music in our own families to show what is important to us and connect to our heritage? • In which ways does music bring together communities?
Connected Academic Vocabulary (3-9 Terms and Brief Definitions)	• **Celebration/Celebración:** A special time when people come together to honor something important • **Heritage/Herencia:** Memory and stories that are passed down from older family members • **Family/Familia:** People who care for each other and may live together or share special connections. • **Instrument/Instrumento:** A tool that makes music when you play it • **Latinidad:** The shared experiences, traditions, and culture of people with roots in Latin America living in the United States • **Rhythm/Ritmo:** The pattern of beats in music that we can feel and move to. • **Maracas:** A rhythmic shaker instrument filled with beads that adds lively percussion to music. • **Claves:** A pair of wooden sticks struck together to create a sharp, rhythmic pulse that drives Latin music. • **Güiro:** A scraped percussion instrument with a raspy, rhythmic sound. • **Congas:** Tall, narrow, single-headed drums of Afro-Cuban origin, typically played in sets of two or more with the hands
Formative and Summative Assessments	**Formative:** • Class discussions about music and instruments that are usually heard and played at home. • Student participation in rhythm activities • Drawings in response to music from traditions tied to Latinidad • Think-Pair-Share discussions about family traditions **Summative**: • Exit ticket on the role that music has in the family

SECTION 3: LESSON PLANNING GUIDE AND SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

Pre-classroom Planning

Learning Objectives:

Materials

- Recordings of children's songs and lullabies connected to Latinidad (e.g , "Los Pollitos Dicen," "De Colores," "Arroz con Leche")
- Pictures or videos of instruments commonly associated with Latinidad (maracas, claves, güiro, conga drums)
- Simple rhythm instruments for students to use (maracas, claves, tambourines), or technology to play available YouTube videos on Maracas, Claves, Güiro, Congas
- Chart paper and markers
- Drawing paper and coloring supplies
- Photos of musical celebrations in US communities that reflect Latinidad (Three Kings Day parades, Puerto Rican Day parades, Día de los Muertos celebrations)

Connections to Students' Prior Knowledge

- Many students in NYC have experience with music in their homes and families, whether through lullabies, celebrations, or everyday activities like cooking or cleaning
- Students have likely heard different types of music rooted in Latinidad in their New York City neighborhoods, on the radio, at community events, or in their homes.
- Student families have special ways of celebrating important events, so they have background knowledge on the link between family, music, and special moments

What Teachers Should Know/ Challenging Misconceptions and Featuring Counternarratives

Teacher Notes (for Teachers Only):

Although suggested "Teacher May Say" statements are included, remember that each teacher, classroom, and student is unique. It is essential to adapt this lesson to best meet the needs of your students.

Consider your positionality or perspective as a teacher. Do you have a personal connection with this topic? Do you have prior beliefs? Are you aware of the sources of information that back your beliefs? Take a moment to reflect upon these questions, remembering that your background might or might not match your students' background.

- The sounds of Latinidad in New York City are deeply rooted in the experiences of Latino/a/x communities, particularly among Puerto Ricans who migrated in large numbers during the mid-20th century In the 1940s and 1950s, musicians such as Machito and Mario Bauzá began blending jazz with Afro-Cuban rhythms in New York City to create new sounds, including the mambo. At places like the Palladium Ballroom, Latin dance music became a cultural phenomenon By the 1960s and 70s, a new wave of Nuyorican artists gave rise to salsa, which mixed Cuban musical traditions with jazz and soul, reflecting the identity, pride, and daily life of communities tied to Latinidad in the city
- Artists such as Celia Cruz, Willie Colón, and Héctor Lavoe used music to tell stories about migration, love, community struggles, and resilience. Their songs helped keep family values, cultural pride, and traditions alive in New York City For many families in the city, Latin music helped bridge generations, allowing children to understand their roots while building a sense of belonging. As such, music has been a powerful expression of Latinidad

Classroom Lesson and Activities

Opener (Time)	**DO-NOW: MUSIC MAKES ME FEEL (5 MINUTES)** • As students enter, play a cheerful song rooted in Latinidad like "Arroz con Leche " **Teacher May Say:** *"As you listen to this song, I want you to think about how it makes you feel and how you could describe it in one word."* • Ask students to show with their faces and bodies how the music makes them feel • Invite 2–3 students to share one word about how the music made them feel **Teacher May Say:** *"Today we're going to learn about how music helps families in our communities share what's important to them and connect to their heritage."*
Mini Lesson (Time)	**MINI-LESSON: SOUNDS OF OUR FAMILIES (10 MINUTES)** **Teacher May Say:** *"We are going to look at instruments that many families in New York City use to make music during special times together. The music helps families share stories and show what's important to them. Have you ever seen or heard these instruments before in your homes, neighborhoods, or at community events?"* • Show pictures of 3–4 musical instruments associated with Latinidad (maracas, claves, güiro, congas) being played in US contexts like neighborhood festivals or family gatherings Three Kings Day parades, Puerto Rican Day parades, and Día de los Muertos celebrations are good examples • Demonstrate or play sound clips (YouTube videos) of each instrument: – Maracas – Claves – Güiro – Congas
Activities (Time)	**MOVEMENT ACTIVITY: FEEL THE RHYTHM (10 MINUTES)** **Teacher May Say:** *"Now we are going to explore some rhythms that will help us create wonderful music with these instruments."* • Teach students a simple rhythm pattern using clapping, patting their legs, and stomping • Play a song rooted in Latinidad and have students keep the beat with their bodies You can use the sample video of the musical instruments **Teacher May Say:** *"When families make music together, they show how important it is to spend time together and have fun. This helps us stay connected to our cultures and heritage."* **LISTENING AND DRAWING: MUSIC STORIES (10 MINUTES)** • Play a lullaby common in Latinidad like "Los Pollitos Dicen " • Ask students to reflect on the lullaby: Are they familiar with it? What did they hear? What does it make them think about?

SECTION 3: LESSON PLANNING GUIDE AND SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

Classroom Lesson and Activities

Activities (Time)	**Teacher May Say:** *"This is a lullaby that many families with roots in Latinidad sing to help children fall asleep. It shows how families care for each other and pass down traditions."* · Ask students to draw a picture of how the music makes them feel or what they think the song might be about · Use a See, Think, Feel, Wonder protocol to ease students into sharing their drawings. By pairs or in small groups, they can answer the following questions: **Protocol: See, Think, Feel, Wonder** · **See:** What do you notice in the image? What stands out? · **Think:** What do you think about this drawing? Is there any connection with the one you did? · **Feel:** How do you feel when you see this drawing? · **Wonder:** What questions do you have about this drawing? What would you like to learn?
Closure (Time)	**EXIT TICKET: MUSIC IN MY FAMILY (5 MINUTES)** **Teacher May Say:** *"Now we will bring this lesson to a close by thinking of the role that music has in our family and how it is connected to the moments we spend together."* · Students complete the sentence: "Music helps my family _____ " · Students can write, draw, or tell a partner their answer · Collect responses or have a few students share with the class
Homework and Beyond this Lesson (YPAR/Civic, Community, and Family Engagement)	· **Family Music Share:** Invite family members to visit the classroom and share a song or instrument that is important in their culture or family heritage · **Community Connection:** Create a simple map of the classroom or school neighborhood and mark places where students have heard music connected to Latinidad (parks, community centers, homes, churches)
Differentiation and Resources for Multilingual Learners	· **Pre-teach Vocabulary:** Introduce key vocabulary words such as *music (música), family (familia), celebration (celebración), tradition (tradición), heritage (herencia),* and *instrument (instrumento)* before the lesson Display these words with images to support understanding · **Sentence Frames:** Provide sentence frames for students during discussions and activities: — "This music makes me feel _____ " — "In my family, we listen to _____ when we _____ " — "This instrument sounds like _____ " — "Music helps families to _____ " — "This song reminds me of _____ " · **Visual Supports:** Provide visual aids, including: — Picture cards of instruments, family celebrations, and emotions — Photos of NYC neighborhoods where Latinidad is celebrated — Visual schedule of lesson activities — Illustrated song lyrics — Visual representation of rhythm patterns using symbols or colors

Additional Resources to Support Educators	
Community Resources (Museums, Archives, Cultural Centers, Spaces of Memory, etc.)	• Museo del Barrio • Museum of the City of New York Exhibition "Rhythm & Power: Salsa in New York" (2017) • The Hispanic Society Museum and Library • International Salsa Museum
Related Articles, Books, Videos, etc.	• Lapidus, B (2021) *New York and the international sound of Latin music, 1940–1990* University Press of Mississippi • Allen, R , & Wilcken, L. (Eds.) (2001). *Island sounds in the global city: Caribbean popular music and identity in New York* University of Illinois Press.

LATINIDAD *in Schools*

Latinidad in My Community

Pre-classroom Planning	
Grade Band	3rd-5th
Subject(s)	Social Studies, Art, Literacy
Lesson Title	Latinidad in My Community
Duration (45 to 90 Minutes)	90 minutes
Learning Objectives:	
Belonging What is my connection to this lesson?	Students will explore the cultural identities of their neighborhoods in New York City.
Knowledge What do I know, and how do I know it?	Students will identify features of New York City neighborhoods that express the community life and multiple ways to access the cultural heritage at the heart of Latinidad by analyzing narratives and works of art
Inquiry What questions do I have?	Students will ask questions about how community and identity are connected.
Critical Skills What can I do?	Students will create a drawing of their neighborhood, incorporating ways of life, practices, and cultural elements they have learned about from New York's Latino communities

SECTION 3: LESSON PLANNING GUIDE AND SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

Pre-classroom Planning	
Standards (Grade Specific)	**NEW YORK STATE K-8 SOCIAL STUDIES FRAMEWORK** • **3.2.1:** The history of the local community, including a focus on its people, places, and events • **3.3.3:** Identify the relationship between culture and geography within communities • **3.4.1:** Examine how people express cultural identity through language, food, art, and architecture **NEW YORK STATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS (ELA)** • **Reading Standards for Informational Text RI.3.1:** Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text
Essential Question (A broad, thought-provoking question that encourages deep exploration and critical thinking around a central theme or concept; cannot be answered by 'yes' or 'no')	• How do neighborhoods in New York City shape cultural identity, and how can we represent our neighborhoods through art?
Focus Questions (Specific, targeted questions that narrow the scope of inquiry and guide the investigation or discussion toward a particular aspect)	• What makes my neighborhood special? • How do neighborhoods in New York City reflect the culture, traditions, and history of Latino and other communities? • What does it mean to be part of a community in New York City?
Connected Academic Vocabulary (3-9 Terms and Brief Definitions)	• **Community/Comunidad:** A group of people who live in the same area and share common interests, often connected by cultural identity. • **Culture/Cultura:** The shared customs, traditions, and ways of life of a group of people, including their language, food, and practices • **Identity/Identidad:** The characteristics, beliefs, and culture that define a person or group • **Immigrant/Inmigrante:** A person who moves from one country to another to live permanently. • **Family/Familia:** Two or more people connected by biology, adoption, marriage, or strong emotional bonds • **Language/Lenguaje:** A system of communication used by humans • **Mural:** A large, often colorful painting or artwork on a wall that represents the culture, history, or politics of a community • **Neighborhood/Barrio:** A district or area where people live, often with a strong sense of community.
Formative and Summative Assessments	**Formative:** • Observation of student participation during the drawing and sharing activities **Summative**: • Review of students' completed neighborhood drawings and their explanations to ensure understanding of the cultural elements incorporated from New York City's neighborhoods

Pre-classroom Planning

Materials

Read-Aloud: *Islandborn* by Junot Diaz or *Mi Tierra* by Adria Quiñones

Images: *Consider the following images from the permanent collection of El Museo:*

1. **Silvia De Leon Chalreao, "People from the Street":** A vibrant depiction of community life, reflecting the strength and identity of a neighborhood.
2. **Gregorio Marzan, "Empire State Building":** A symbolic representation of New York City, connecting the city's iconic landmark with the diverse communities that inhabit it.
3. **Prefete Duffaut, "Harbor/Vue de Jacmel avec le Pont Noel":** A depiction of a Haitian community, offering insight into the neighborhood through colorful imagery and cultural symbols.

- **Drawing materials:** paper, colored pencils, markers.
- **Map of New York City and the local community.**
- **1D materials brought in from student homes that represent communities** (i e , paper menu from a restaurant, family photos, heirlooms, objects of affection)

Connections to Students' Prior Knowledge

- Many students in NYC have prior exposure to the diverse cultures within their community, including knowledge of different neighborhoods, languages, and celebrations they may have encountered or participated in, such as parades or festivals
- Students can make connections to other holidays or cultural celebrations from other communities and use that knowledge to help them understand how communities with roots in Latinidad celebrate their cultures in similar and unique ways.

What Teachers Should Know/ Challenging Misconceptions and Featuring Counternarratives

Teacher Notes (for Teachers Only):

Although suggested "Teacher May Say" statements are included, remember that each teacher, classroom, and student is unique. It is essential to adapt this lesson to best meet the needs of your students.

Consider your positionality or perspective as a teacher. Do you have a personal connection with this topic? Do you have prior beliefs? Are you aware of the sources of information that back your beliefs? Take a moment to reflect upon these questions, remembering that your background might or might not match your students' background.

- **Did You Know?** Many communities in New York City with significant roots in Latinidad, such as those in Washington Heights, Jackson Heights, and East Harlem/El Barrio, have long histories of cultural influence, activism, and resilience. These neighborhoods reflect the Latino experience, blending heritage with modern-day community life
- **Clarifying Misconceptions:** Spanish-speaking neighborhoods in New York City in which Latinidad is vividly expressed are often stereotyped as being monolithic In reality, they are diverse, with many different cultural backgrounds and a rich history of artistic, political, and community engagement.

SECTION 3: LESSON PLANNING GUIDE AND SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

Classroom Lesson and Activities	
Opener (Time)	**INTRODUCTION/HOOK (10 MINUTES)** **Teacher May Say:** *"Today, we're going to explore what makes neighborhoods unique. Have you ever thought about what your neighborhood says about you and the people who live there?"* **Activity:** Show an image or video of a famous Latinx neighborhood in New York City (e g., Washington Heights, Jackson Heights, or East/El Barrio) **Protocol: See, Think, Feel, Wonder** · **See:** What do you notice in the image? What stands out? · **Think:** What do you think about this neighborhood? What is it like there? · **Feel:** How do you feel when you see this image? · **Wonder:** What questions do you have about this neighborhood? What would you like to learn? **Discussion:** After giving students time to respond, ask them to share their thoughts, and write them on the board for a whole-class discussion
Mini Lesson (Time)	**TEACHER MAY SAY (5 MINUTES)** *"A neighborhood, or barrio, is more than just where people live. It's a place where people share culture, traditions, and values."* **Activity:** Discuss with students how neighborhoods, **barrios**, are often more than just spaces where people live Discuss how **comunidad** (community) brings people together, families, or **familia**, are at the heart of the neighborhood, and **cultura** (culture) shows up in the music, food, and art And **lenguaje** (language) is how we communicate and stay connected
Activities (Time)	**READ-ALOUD AND THINK-ALOUD (15 MINUTES)** **Teacher May Say:** *"As we read this book, think about what the children thought about when they drew pictures of the country they were originally from. What do the people and places in the neighborhood tell us about who lives there? What do you notice about the community's culture and identity?"* **Activity:** Read *Islandborn* by Junot Diaz OR *Mi Tierra* by Adria Quiñones Focus on the narrator's thoughts and feelings about where she came from and her neighborhood · **Before Reading:** What do you think the title *Islandborn* means? Have you ever heard of an island before? What do you know about islands? · **Think-Alouds During Reading:** *(Stop at key points to ask)* — *Lola's teacher asks the class to draw where they are from. Why do you think Lola says, "I was just a baby when we left"?* — *Lola asks her family and neighbors to tell her about the island. Why do you think she wants to learn more, even though she does not remember it?* — *Lola hears different stories about the island—some happy and some sad. How do you think Lola feels hearing all these different memories?* — *When Lola hears about the "monster" on the island... What do you think the monster really is? Why do people call it that?*

Classroom Lesson and Activities

Activities (Time)

Guiding Questions for After Reading:

- How did Lola learn about her island, even though she could not remember it?
- What are some ways people remember where they come from?
- Why is it important to learn about your family's history and where you're from?
- What does this story teach us about identity and pride?
- What would you include in your drawing about where your family is from?

MODELING (10 MINUTES)

Teacher May Say:

"Now that we've talked about neighborhoods, I'm going to show you how we can represent our neighborhood through art. Let's take a look at another image (choose from the following images from the permanent collection of El Museo del Barrio:

1. **Silvia De Leon Chalreao, "People from the Street":** A vibrant depiction of community life, reflecting the strength and identity of a neighborhood.
2. **Gregorio Marzan, "Empire State Building":** A symbolic representation of New York City, connecting the city's iconic landmark with the diverse communities that inhabit it
3. **Prefete Duffaut, "Harbor/Vue de Jacmel avec le Pont Noel":** A depiction of a Haitian community, offering insight into the neighborhood through colorful imagery and cultural symbols.

   Notice how the elements of the community, like the architecture, colors, and gathering places, tell a story about the people who live there "

Discuss how New York City's neighborhoods reflect the experience of the American Latino, the immigrant experience, and the heritage of the Latin American and Caribbean diaspora Show students how to begin drawing their neighborhoods by including elements that reflect culture, community, and identity Demonstrate how to incorporate features like street art, communal spaces, or elements that represent cultural practices in their drawings

GROUP/INDEPENDENT WORK (25 MINUTES)

Teacher May Say:

"Let's get started on your drawings! Think about what makes your neighborhood special. You can choose to write about the neighborhood you live in now or a neighborhood you used to live in. What kind of spaces do you see in your community that tell a story about who lives there?"

Activity:

- **Drawing Activity:** Students will draw their neighborhoods, thinking about what makes their community unique They should include features like parks, streets, homes, and other elements that represent their community's culture and identity Encourage them to incorporate elements they saw in the neighborhoods of NYC that express Latinidad, such as murals, restaurants, or public gathering spots
- **Caption it:** Students write a caption for the image that captures how they feel about their neighborhood. Consider providing sentence starters, if necessary:
  - "My neighborhood has _____, which shows our _____ "
  - "In my drawing, I included _____ because it is important to our community"
  - "The mural in my neighborhood shows _____ "

SECTION 3: LESSON PLANNING GUIDE AND SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

Classroom Lesson and Activities

Activities (Time)	**GALLERY WALK (10-15 MINUTES):** Students put their completed images on their desks In pairs, they engage in a gallery walk and discuss what they see, think, feel, and wonder **Teacher May Say:** *"Let's share your drawings. As you walk around the room, talk to your partner about what you see, think, and wonder about the image."* • "I see..." • "I think..." • "I feel..." • "I wonder..."
Closure (Time)	**Teacher May Say:** *"Now, let's think about what we learned today. How do the neighborhoods of New York City express and shape the culture and community of the people who live in them?"* **Protocol: Think-Pair-Share (5 minutes)** • **Think:** Give students a moment to think individually about how their neighborhood reflects culture and community. • **Pair:** Have students share their thoughts with a partner. • **Share:** Invite pairs to share their reflections with the class.
Homework and Beyond this Lesson (YPAR/Civic, Community, and Family Engagement)	• **Neighborhood Walk:** If possible, take a walking tour of a nearby neighborhood in New York City with a significant presence of Latinidad, allowing students to take notes or sketches on their observations • **Research Project:** Have students research a specific neighborhood in New York City rooted in the history of Latinidad in the city, such as Jackson Heights or East Harlem/El Barrio
Differentiation and Resources for Multilingual Learners	• **Pre-teach Vocabulary:** Introduce key vocabulary words such as *neighborhood (barrio), community (comunidad), mural (mural), identity (identidad)*, and *culture (cultura)* before the lesson Display these words with images to support understanding • **Sentence Frames:** Provide sentence frames for students during centers to encourage language production in writing and speech: — "My neighborhood has _____, which shows our _____ " — "In my drawing, I included _____ because it is important to our community" — "The mural in my neighborhood shows _____ " • **Visual Supports:** Provide visual aids like maps, images of Latinidad expressed in the neighborhoods, and charts with vocabulary terms to support understanding.

Additional Resources to Support Educators

Community Resources (Museums, Archives, Cultural Centers, Spaces of Memory, etc.)	• El Museo del Barrio • Museum of the City of New York • Hispanic Society of America
Related Articles, Books, Videos, etc.	• The Latino Experience in NYC website • Baver, S , Falcón, A , & Haslip-Viera, G (Eds) (2017) *Latinos in New York: Communities in transition* (2nd ed) University of Notre Dame Press

LATINIDAD in Schools

Exploring Latinidad Through Photography

Pre-classroom Planning	
Grade Band	6th-8th
Subject(s)	Social Studies, Art, ELA
Lesson Title	Exploring Latinidad Through Photography
Duration (45 to 90 Minutes)	45 minutes
Learning Objectives:	
Belonging What is my connection to this lesson?	Students will explore personal connections to Latinidad through photographs and images, and recognize how their own experiences contribute to the creation of a shared visual memory of New York City
Knowledge What do I know, and how do I know it?	Students will use photographs as historical evidence, documenting the diverse expressions of Latinidad across different New York City neighborhoods, including everyday practices, community engagement, and meaningful interactions with urban spaces
Inquiry What questions do I have?	Students will ask questions about how photography can reveal both visible manifestations and hidden dimensions of Latinidad in their neighborhoods and day-to-day lives.
Critical Skills What can I do?	Students will analyze photographs to identify specific elements of Latinidad and compare representations across different communities
Standards (Grade Specific)	**NEW YORK STATE K-8 SOCIAL STUDIES FRAMEWORK** • **6.3a:** Humans living together in settlements develop shared customs, beliefs, ideas, and languages that give identity to the group **NEW YORK STATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS (ELA)** • **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 6R7:** Compare and contrast how different formats, including print and digital media, contribute to the understanding of a subject

SECTION 3: LESSON PLANNING GUIDE AND SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

Pre-classroom Planning

Essential Question (A broad, thought-provoking question that encourages deep exploration and critical thinking around a central theme or concept; cannot be answered by 'yes' or 'no')	• How do visual elements captured in photography reveal the diverse expressions and lived experiences of Latinidad across different NYC neighborhoods?
Focus Questions (Specific, targeted questions that narrow the scope of inquiry and guide the investigation or discussion toward a particular aspect)	• How do photographs help us capture aspects of cultural identity and create a visual memory that can be shared over generations? • What aesthetic elements of Latinidad have the power to bring communities in New York City together?
Connected Academic Vocabulary (3-9 Terms and Brief Definitions)	• **Aesthetic/Estética:** How we experience and make sense of visual art, like how photographs can make us feel or think about the world in new ways • **Community/Comunidad:** A group of people with shared characteristics, interests, or geographic location • **Cultural expression/Expresión cultural:** The ways people practice their cultural values through daily activities such as art, language, food, music, and work • **Identity/Identidad:** The characteristics, beliefs, and cultures that define a person or group • **Latinidad:** The shared experiences, traditions, and culture of people with roots in Latin America living in the United States • **Visual narrative/Narrativa Visual:** Telling a story through images
Formative and Summative Assessments	**Formative:** • Class discussions on the meaning of Latinidad • Analysis worksheets for the visual material reviewed • Peer feedback sessions **Summative**: • Student-created photography exhibition with written reflections • Class presentation explaining their visual documentation choices • Digital or physical gallery exhibition
Materials	• Digital devices with cameras (smartphones, tablets, or digital cameras) • **The Latino & Puerto Rican Cultural Center at New York City Public Library's Bronx Library Center:** Cultural hub preserving Latino and Puerto Rican heritage through literature • **Alamy Collection on Alamy:** Commercial stock photography platform with documentary images Major cultural events are documented here (Puerto Rican Day Parade, Dominican Day Parade). • **Nuevayorkinos Archive:** An Instagram-based archive (@nuevayorkinos) was founded in 2019 Collects vintage family photographs and stories from the Latino diaspora in NYC • Printed photographs from the photography collections • Photo analysis worksheets • Poster boards/display materials for final presentations

Pre-classroom Planning

Connections to Students' Prior Knowledge	• Students can be familiar with the concept of Latinidad from previous lessons included in this guide and through personal and community experiences • Many students in NYC have prior exposure to the diverse groups and cultural traditions within their community, including knowledge of different neighborhoods, languages, and celebrations they may have encountered or participated in, such as parades or festivals
What Teachers Should Know/ Challenging Misconceptions and Featuring Counternarratives	**Teacher Notes (for Teachers Only):** *Although suggested "Teacher May Say" statements are included, remember that each teacher, classroom, and student is unique. It is essential to adapt this lesson to best meet the needs of your students.* *Consider your positionality or perspective as a teacher. Do you have a personal connection with this topic? Do you have prior beliefs? Are you aware of the sources of information that back your beliefs? Take a moment to reflect upon these questions, remembering that your background might or might not match your students' background.* • **Clarifying Misconceptions:** The main misconception teachers should address in this lesson is emphasizing that "Latinidad" is not a monolithic concept Latinidad encompasses diverse experiences across many countries, races, and cultures Indeed, the concept of Latinidad highlights the vibrant link that unites diverse identities, including Afro-Latino, Indigenous, and mixed-race people People of Latin American and Spanish-speaking Caribbean descent are often grouped as "Hispanic" or "Latino" through narratives that emphasize immigration, poverty, and cultural differences However, these all-encompassing labels do not adequately express the heterogeneity of Latinidad Throughout the lesson, you can insist that there is no single way to "look" or "be" Latino/a or Latinx and that these terms themselves are contested.

Classroom Lesson and Activities

Opener (Time)	**DO-NOW: WHAT IS LATINIDAD? (5 MINUTES)** Display 3-4 images from the different collections offered as examples (Nuevayorkinos, Alamy, or NYPL's "What is Latinidad?" exhibition). Ask students to jot down what they observe in the images using the **Thinking With Images Protocol.** • Based on your observations of these images, what does Latinidad look like...? • Have students discuss their findings with the **Think-Pair-Share Protocol**.
Mini Lesson (Time)	**MINI-LESSON (10 MINUTES)** **Teacher May Say:** *"Today, we're going to explore how various communities are connected in multiple ways of creating visual art. We'll focus on Latinidad and examine how the diverse experiences of different communities can be visually expressed through photography."* **What is Latinidad?** Latinidad refers to cultural commonalities of American Latinos, who are the descendants of the Latin American and Caribbean communities in the United States

SECTION 3: LESSON PLANNING GUIDE AND SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

Classroom Lesson and Activities

Mini Lesson (Time)

Teacher May Say:

"Have you ever considered what your neighborhood reveals about you and its residents? Each community features unique visual elements that reflect its culture, such as architecture, murals, businesses, and celebrations. Is there any aesthetic or visual element that you find particularly engaging in your neighborhood?"

- **Visual Narratives and Aesthetics**: These visual elements establish meaningful relationships and foster communities Latinidad has been explored, shared, and enriched by individuals from diverse backgrounds, demonstrating how cultures can influence one another.
- **Cultural traditions** are formed, preserved, and transformed through generations Each new generation learns from these traditions and adapts them to changing circumstances This intergenerational transmission of shared practices fosters cultural memory with significant visual elements.

Teacher May Say:

"We will explore photography collections that capture Latinidad, including the Latino & Puerto Rican Cultural Center at New York City Public Library's (NYPL) Bronx Library Center, the Nuevayorkinos collection, and Alamy's photos of Latinos in NYC."

Activities (Time)

LATINIDAD STATIONS JIGSAW ACTIVITY (20 MINUTES)

Set up five stations around the classroom, each with images representing different aspects of Latinidad:

- **Station 1:** Food and Celebrations
- **Station 2:** Family and Community
- **Station 3:** Art and Music
- **Station 4:** Language and Expression
- **Station 5:** NYC Neighborhoods
  - Divide students into 5 groups that will visit one station initially. Note that students will regroup later into "jigsaw" groups, which should have one representative of each original station
  - Students analyze images at their assigned station using the suggested guided questions (10 min) Guide them in discussing the questions and recording key ideas in the notebook

Station 1: Food and Celebrations

- What specific foods or celebration elements in these photographs represent an aesthetic of Latinidad in NYC?
- How might these food traditions and celebrations bring different communities together in New York City?

Station 2: Family and Community

- What visual elements in these family photographs reveal aspects of Latinidad in NYC communities?
- How do these family portraits and community gatherings preserve beliefs, values, and identity through visual memory?

Classroom Lesson and Activities

Activities (Time)

Station 3: Art and Music

- What specific visual elements of Latinidad in art and musical practices are captured in these photographs?
- How might art and music serve as unifying elements across diverse communities in New York City?

Station 4: Language and Expression

- What words, hand gestures, or symbols do you notice that show Latino culture and identity?
- Why is language and expression an important element of communities' visual expressions?

Station 5: NYC Neighborhoods

- What elements in these neighborhood photographs indicate the presence and contributions of Latinidad in NYC communities?
- Which elements of neighborhood life shown in these photographs build connections between different communities across NYC?

— Regroup into "jigsaw groups" with one representative from each station

— Students share their station's insights about Latinidad with their jigsaw group Consider using these discussion prompts in jigsaw groups:

- *What common visual elements of Latinidad did you discover across all five stations?*
- *Which visual elements seem most powerful for preserving visual memory?*
- *What surprised you about the diversity of visual representations of different communities in NYC?*

Closure (Time)

EXIT TICKET OPTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Ask your students to complete the following prompt:

"I used to think Latinidad was _____, but now I understand it's also _____ "

Lastly, ask for volunteers to share their answers with the class Emphasize the use of the sentence stem to highlight how their beliefs have changed through the class

Homework and Beyond this Lesson

(YPAR/Civic, Community, and Family Engagement)

Homework:

- Research a specific aspect of Latinidad that interests you and take 5-10 photographs in your community that represent aspects of Latinidad (with parent/guardian supervision) Is it sports? Parks? People? Businesses?

Beyond this Lesson:

- In the following class, students can bring photos in which Latinidad is portrayed and discuss them with their classmates using the guiding questions of the jigsaw groups These photos might be captured by them, family, or community members.

SECTION 3: LESSON PLANNING GUIDE AND SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

Classroom Lesson and Activities

Differentiation and Resources for Multilingual Learners	• **Pre-teach Vocabulary:** Introduce key vocabulary words such as *neighborhood (barrio), community (comunidad), mural (mural), identity (identidad)*, and *culture (cultura)* before the lesson Display these words with images to support understanding • **Sentence Frames:** Provide sentence frames for students during centers to encourage language production in writing and speech: — "My neighborhood has _____, which shows our _____ " — "In the photograph, I notice _____which represents Latinidad because _____ " — "The sign/mural/symbol in this image shows _____which is important because _____ " — "These photographs connect different Latino communities by showing _____ " • **Visual Supports:** Provide visual aids like maps, images of Latinidad expressed in various neighborhoods, and charts with vocabulary terms to support understanding

Additional Resources to Support Educators

Community Resources (Museums, Archives, Cultural Centers, Spaces of Memory, etc)	• El Museo del Barrio • The Museum of the City of New York • International Center of Photography
Related Articles, Books, Videos, etc.	• NYPL exhibition: "*What is Latinidad?*" by Alex Chavez • *Latinx Photography in the United States: A Visual History* by Elizabeth Ferrer • *PBS Latino Americans* documentary series • Smithsonian Latino Center digital resources • StoryCorps Latino USA stories (audio)

Afzal Hossain. (2020). *Jackson Heights Strong Mural. https://www.afzalhossain.com/jackson-heights-strong/*

LATINIDAD in Schools

Mobilizing for Equity in Education: The Save Hostos Movement

Pre-classroom Planning	
Grade Band	9th-12th
Subject(s)	Social Studies, ELA, Spanish
Lesson Title	Mobilizing for Equity in Education: The Save Hostos Movement
Duration (45 to 90 Minutes)	45 minutes
Learning Objectives:	
Belonging What is my connection to this lesson?	Students will recognize the importance of the Save Hostos Movement in demanding educational equality and creating a sense of belonging and identity for communities in New York City
Knowledge What do I know, and how do I know it?	Students will learn how collective action and advocacy help to preserve ways of living and knowing, improve educational experiences, and develop community resources by engaging in primary source analysis
Inquiry What questions do I have?	Students will ask questions about how the fight to save Hostos Community College reflects the broader struggles for educational equity and representation in New York City
Critical Skills What can I do?	Students will demonstrate their ability to analyze primary source materials as a way to understand the motivations and outcomes of the Save Hostos Movement
Standards (Grade Specific)	**NEW YORK STATE K-8 SOCIAL STUDIES FRAMEWORK** • **Research to Build and Present Knowledge 7:** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation **NEW YORK STATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS (ELA)** • **Key Ideas and Details 9-10R2:** Determine one or more themes or central ideas in a text and analyze its development, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; objectively and accurately summarize a text. • **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 9-10R7:** Analyze how a subject/content is presented in two or more formats by determining which details are emphasized, altered, or absent in each account (e g , analyze the representation of a subject/content or key scene in two different formats, examine the differences between a historical novel and a documentary)

SECTION 3: LESSON PLANNING GUIDE AND SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

Pre-classroom Planning

Essential Question (A broad, thought-provoking question that encourages deep exploration and critical thinking around a central theme or concept; cannot be answered by 'yes' or 'no')	• How did the Save Hostos Movement reflect the civic agency of New York City Latino communities?
Focus Questions (Specific, targeted questions that narrow the scope of inquiry and guide the investigation or discussion toward a particular aspect)	• What were the main goals of the Save Hostos Movement, and how did community leaders and students use activism to achieve them? • How did community leaders and students use activism to achieve these goals and contribute to the broader struggle for educational access in the 1970s? • What can we learn from the Save Hostos Movement about the relationship between civic agency, activism, cultural preservation, and social justice?
Connected Academic Vocabulary (3-9 Terms and Brief Definitions)	• **Activism/Activismo:** Taking action to promote, impede, or direct social, political, environmental, or economic change • **Coalition Building/Formación de coaliciones:** The act of creating alliances or partnerships between different groups or organizations to work together toward a common goal • **Community Organizing/Organización Comunitaria:** The process of bringing people together to take collective action for social, political, or economic change • **Cultural Preservation/Preservación cultural:** The effort to protect and maintain the cultural heritage, traditions, and practices of a community or group • **Civic Agency/Agencia Cívica:** Civic agency is the capacity of individuals to actively participate in and shape their communities • **Equity/Equidad:** The fair treatment, access, and opportunity for all people, recognizing and addressing systemic inequalities • **Mobilization/Movilización:** The process of rallying people and resources to take action or support a specific cause or movement. • **Protest/Protesta:** A public demonstration or action to express opposition or dissatisfaction with something, often related to social or political issues • **Social Justice/Justicia Social:** The pursuit of fairness and equality in society, ensuring that all individuals and groups have the same rights and opportunities • **Solidarity/Solidaridad:** Unity and mutual support within a group, especially in the pursuit of a common cause or against shared challenges
Formative and Summative Assessments	**Formative:** • Check for understanding as students participate in the Do Now activity and take notes about the establishment of Hostos Community College and Save Hostos Movement; Assess students' understanding as they engage in the primary source analysis and debrief discussion **Summative**: • Assess students' understanding of the implications of the Save Hostos Movement through the primary source graphic organizer and their comparisons to a contemporary issue affecting their communities; the closing activity also provides summative feedback.

Pre-classroom Planning

Materials

- Projector and screen to display images and slides
- Guided notes document
- Copies of primary source materials
- Graphic organizer to record observations and analyses
- Access to computers and the Internet
- Rubric for presentation
- Graphic organizer or question document for notes

Connections to Students' Prior Knowledge

- Many NYC students come from diverse backgrounds, including Latino, Black, and immigrant populations. Students can examine how the Save Hostos Movement relates to the struggle for educational access and civic agency for communities similar to their own.
- NYC students can build on their understanding of social movements such as the Civil Rights Movement, the Women's Movement, or movements advocating for immigrant rights or racial justice.
- NYC students are familiar with the City University of New York (CUNY) higher education system and can relate this content to the educational experiences of their own family and community members

What Teachers Should Know/ Challenging Misconceptions and Featuring Counternarratives

Teacher Notes (for Teachers Only):

Although suggested "Teacher May Say" statements are included, remember that each teacher, classroom, and student is unique. It is essential to adapt this lesson to best meet the needs of your students.

Consider your positionality or perspective as a teacher. Do you have a personal connection with this topic? Do you have prior beliefs? Are you aware of the sources of information that back your beliefs? Take a moment to reflect upon these questions, remembering that your background might or might not match your students' background.

- **Clarifying Misconceptions:** Spanish-speaking neighborhoods in New York City in which Latinidad is vividly expressed are often stereotyped as being monolithic In reality, they are diverse, with many different cultural backgrounds and a rich history of artistic, political, and community engagement

  The Eugenio María de Hostos Community College, part of the City University of New York (CUNY), first held classes in the fall of 1970. The College was established in response to the city's Open Admissions policy, which guaranteed city residents with a high school diploma the right to attend CUNY schools Located in the heart of the South Bronx, a predominantly Latino and Black community, Hostos was intended to meet the educational, social, and cultural needs of its residents It became the only bilingual college in the New York City area to serve the region's large Spanish-speaking population Despite its crucial role in the community, Hostos faced an array of challenges, many tied to its inadequate facilities in a repurposed abandoned factory

  From 1973 to 1978, the Save Hostos Movement became one of New York City's most successful grassroots efforts, uniting students, faculty, staff, and local residents in a series of campaigns to preserve and improve the College. Over five years, the movement achieved notable victories–participants secured a new space for the College, prevented its closure, and obtained funds to renovate its buildings The mobilization of different student groups, faculty, and local activists was crucial to this Movement's success These activists used a combination of political lobbying, direct action, and civil disobedience to advance their cause The Movement protected Hostos and galvanized greater Latino and community solidarity, leaving a legacy on the College's culture and political activism on campus

SECTION 3: LESSON PLANNING GUIDE AND SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

Classroom Lesson and Activities

Opener (Time)

DO NOW (5 MINUTES)

- Display the following image on the board, taken from the *CUNY Digital History Archive* OR *The Hostos Archive at CUNY* (Translate into English, if necessary)
- Have students engage individually in the **See, Think, Feel, Wonder Protocol** Students can write down their responses in their notebooks
- Ask students to share their responses
- Introduce the lesson topic about the Save Hostos Movement

Mini Lesson (Time)

DIRECT INSTRUCTION • PART I (5 MINUTES)

Teacher May Say:

"Today, we're going to examine the Save Hostos Movement, which brought students, educators, and community members together to fight for educational equity in New York City. We'll explore how their activism helped protect access to higher education in the Bronx."

- Introduce the historical background of the Save Hostos Movement in a short lecture/direct instruction Encourage students to take notes or provide guided notes that they can complete
- Information can include:

Overview of Hostos Community College

- **Establishment of Hostos:** Hostos Community College, part of the City University of New York (CUNY), was founded in 1968 in response to the city's Open Admissions policy, which allowed high school graduates to attend CUNY colleges
- **Community Need:** Located in the South Bronx, Hostos was specifically created to serve the educational needs of a predominantly Latino and Black population, providing access to higher education for bilingual communities
- **Mission and Identity:** The college was named after Eugenio María de Hostos, a Puerto Rican intellectual and activist who advocated for women's education, the abolition of slavery, and the independence of Puerto Rico. This reflects the college's mission to serve the Latino community, offering bilingual education and a culturally relevant curriculum that aligns with the students' lived experiences and needs

Early Year Struggles

- **Facilities and Resources:** Hostos initially operated out of a single, five-story building, repurposed from an old factory Despite its progressive mission, the College faced severe underfunding and inadequate facilities.
- **Cultural and Educational Needs:** Many students at Hostos were from Puerto Rican families and spoke Spanish as their first language. The College's bilingual offerings and programs tailored to the Latino community were especially significant.

The Rise of the Save Hostos Movement

- **Context of the Movement:** In the 1970s, CUNY was facing financial challenges and political pressures that led to the proposal to close several community colleges, including Hostos This prompted students, faculty, and community members to take action to save the College

Classroom Lesson and Activities

Activities (Time)

PART II (5 MINUTES): MODEL PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS

Teacher May Say:

"Now we're going to examine the goals and strategies of the Save Hostos Movement through primary sources. As you rotate through stations, think about what these documents reveal about the fight for educational equity and why community members took action."

Choose one of the primary sources below to model primary source analysis using the **Observe, Reflect, Question Protocol:**

- What can you *observe*?
- *Reflect* on your observations
- What *questions* do you have?

PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS STATIONS (30 MINUTES)

Students will spend 10–15 minutes at each station to analyze a primary source from *CUNY Digital History Archive* and the *Hostos Library Archives* with the same **Observe, Reflect, Question Protocol.**

*(**Note that some materials are in Spanish. Integrate materials that address the goals of the movement participants and strategies designed to attain their goals.)*

- Why struggle? For Hostos and education
- Letter to Mayor Abraham Beame from Charles B. Rangel: Notice of potential Hostos closure
- Community Coalition to Save Hostos Organizing Workshop

In groups, students can use an optional graphic organizer to guide discussion
Suggestions for a graphic organizer include:

- Identify the historical context
- Intended audience
- Purpose
- Point of view
- Outside information (HIPPO)

Other teacher considerations for activity modifications:

- Do students have to visit each station?
- Can they select the order of stations they visit?
- Do they have to work individually, or can they work with a partner or two?

DEBRIEF DISCUSSION (15 MINUTES)

Teacher May Say:

"Let's come back together to discuss what these sources revealed about the reasons why Save Hostos participants mobilized and the ways they fought for change at Hostos."

Ask students to share what they learned by analyzing the sources:

- What motivated movement participants to act? What strategies did they enact?
- What did they achieve?
- How did this Movement relate to conceptions of Latinidad?
- Is there a problem in your community that you believe needs to be addressed?
- What did you learn from this lesson that can be applied to your community?

Classroom Lesson and Activities

Closure (Time)

EXIT TICKET (5 MINUTES)

Teacher May Say:

"We're going to conclude today's lesson by reflecting on what we've learned about the Save Hostos Movement in a Think-Pair-Share Exit Ticket. First, answer the three questions on your own, then discuss your responses with a partner, and then we'll share a few ideas as a class before you turn in your Exit Ticket."

Use the **Think-Pair-Share Protocol:** Have students answer the following three questions on a piece of paper:

1. What was one key lesson you learned about the Save Hostos Movement?
2. How do you think the Save Hostos Movement relates to the issues students face today?
3. Why is it important for communities to come together to fight for education/ issues affecting their community?

After responding individually, have students discuss their answers with a classmate Then invite students to share their answers with the class Collect Exit Tickets as a form of assessment

Homework and Beyond this Lesson

(YPAR/Civic, Community, and Family Engagement)

Oral History Interview:

- Students can interview someone who was involved with or remembers the Save Hostos Movement They should prepare questions to ask about the significance and impact of the Save Hostos Movement in the community. Students can provide a transcript or summary of the interview and share what they learned from the conversation, particularly as it relates to Latinidad

Differentiation and Resources for Multilingual Learners

- **Pre-teach Vocabulary:** Introduce key vocabulary words such as *neighborhood (barrio), community (comunidad), mural (mural), identity (identidad)*, and *culture (cultura)* before the lesson Display these words with images to support understanding
- **Sentence Frames:** Consider providing sentence frames for students during primary source analysis to encourage language production in writing and speech:
  - "The protesters wanted _____ because _____ "
  - "The Save Hostos Movement used strategies such as _____ and _____ to achieve their goals "
  - "The primary source shows that community members felt _____ about the threat to close Hostos "
  - "This movement connects to issues in our community today because _____ "
- **Visual Supports:** Provide visual aids such as:
  - Timeline of the Save Hostos Movement with key events illustrated
  - Maps showing the location of Hostos Community College in relation to the South Bronx community
  - A visual glossary of protest terminology with images representing different activist strategies.
  - Graphic organizers with visual cues for primary source analysis

Additional Resources to Support Educators

Community Resources (Museums, Archives, Cultural Centers, Spaces of Memory, etc.)	• *CUNY Library Archives*
Related Articles, Books, Videos, etc.	• Jiménez, Ramón J *"Hostos Community College: Battle Of The Seventies."* Centro Journal 15.1 (2003): 98. Academic Search Complete: • Meyer, Gerald *"Save Hostos: Politics And Community Mobilization To Save A College In The Bronx, 1973-1978."* Centro Journal 15.1 (2003): 72. Academic Search Complete • *CUNY Digital History Archive* • *Save Hostos Movement: A Brief History of the Save Hostos Movement* • La Lucha: *The Struggle to Save Hostos in the South Bronx, 1975–76* (Written by Archivist William Casari for Metropolitan Archivist/The Medium) • "*Hostos: The Struggle, the Victory*" documentary

Diane Picchiottino. (2022). *Unsplash License.*

SECTION 4: THE YEARS AHEAD

OVERVIEW

During **Year 1 (FY 2025)** of the Latinidad Curriculum Initiative, the Gordon Institute for Advanced Study at Teachers College, Columbia University assembled a cross-disciplinary team of professors, researchers, graduate students, and teacher-researchers who in collaboration have produced this strategic report, ***The Need to Advance the Study of Latinidad in NYC Public Schools***, explaining the justification, design principles, and framework that provide the mapping for the Latinidad Curriculum Initiative blueprint We also included a lesson planning guide and examples of four lesson plans of our new curriculum Our overarching goal is to provide the opportunity for NYC Public School teachers and students to explore, celebrate, and expand their study of Latinidad across academic content areas

With continued support from the New York City Council, the Edmund W Gordon Institute for Advanced Study at Teachers College, Columbia University team will carry out Year 2 (FY 26) of the LCI work In FY26, we will develop lesson planning guides across grade levels and content areas, as well as design and pilot a plan for professional learning to support the implementation and assessment of the new curriculum We will put systems in place for information access and dissemination

Proposed Work for Year 2, FY26:

Curriculum Development

- Develop standards-aligned interdisciplinary K–12 Curriculum, integrating existing NYCPS resources such as *Hidden Voices*, *Passport to Social Studies*, the Black Studies Curriculum, and other available resources in the NYC Public Schools
- Design lesson planning guides for multilingual learners across content areas
- Active consultation with curriculum and content experts is critical in this phase of the project

Professional Learning Plan

- Create a professional learning model for the implementation and assessment of the Latinidad Curriculum Initiative, in collaboration with educators and students We will organize meetings with leadership and create district partnerships for piloting lessons, as well as host monthly virtual lesson demonstrations

Information Access and Dissemination

- **Symposium:** A one-day event to present lesson plans across grade levels and content areas of the Latinidad curriculum
- **Website Development (open access), Design, and Content:** An interactive and open-access website to make available all types of resources, lesson plans, oral interviews, art exhibitions, and community resources

During **Year 3 (FY27)**, we will pilot curriculum implementation with school partners and begin professional development programming In **Year 4 (FY28)** we will launch the curriculum with professional development support for the adoption of the full spectrum of curricular resources by school districts, while expanding support for access and dissemination

NY Creative Commons courtesy photo.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. DETAILS ON DATA SOURCES USED IN THIS REPORT

This report, primarily Section 1, uses data from NYCPS (NYCPS, 2025a), and the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS), which contains information from a representative sample of US citizens and non-citizens (Ruggles et al , 2021) We also use data from statistical reports published by the CUNY Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies (CLACLS), which are cited based on the author(s) of each report [e g Aponte (2022a; 2022b); Bergad (2020; 2022a; 2022b; 2022c; 2022d; 2022e, 2022f); Cappello (2019); Caro-López (2011); Castillo (2022); and Yim (2021)] In Section 1, NYC School District information comes from the InsideSchools project website (InsideSchools, 2025)

Several studies have highlighted that census data likely underestimates the number of Latinos in the US (Aponte, 2022a; Bergad, 2022c) For example, undocumented families enrolled in schools have reasons to protect their personal information, thus resulting in an underestimation of their presence Additionally, distinct data sources differ in their estimation of the size of the Latino population in NYC For instance, differs exist between US Census Bureau redistricting data (2,397,592), ACS 2020 one-year experimental estimates (2,303,228), CUNY's Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies (CLACLS) estimates from ACS one-year experimental raw data (2,303,228), ACS 2016-2020 five-year estimates from Census Bureau (2,387,517), and Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) raw data files for both standard (2,396,411) and CLACLS estimates (2,369,742) (Bergad, 2022c).

Acknowledging these limitations, we use the ACS five-year estimates from the Census Bureau for two reasons: first, it is a publicly accessible source of information that roughly matches the proportion of Hispanic students as reported by the NYCPS (2025a); second, it provides information disaggregated by country of origin or ancestry, which fits our purpose of unveiling the cultural diversity concealed by all-encompassing terms like "Hispanics "

APPENDIX B. DEFINITION OF POVERTY IN THIS REPORT

Section 1.3.2 discusses socioeconomic factors affecting Latino PK-12 students, including household poverty levels. For this purpose, we use the US federal government's measure of poverty as defined by the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS, 2025): poverty status is operationalized by the Census Bureau using income thresholds that change based on family size and composition An individual is considered to be living in poverty if their total income falls below the threshold established for their particular household situation

APPENDIX C. REVIEW OF NYC PUBLIC SCHOOLS' CURRICULAR RESOURCES

As part of our Year 1 research, we reviewed existing resources that address Latinx history, culture, and education that were created by the NYCPS through its Division of Curriculum and Instruction and with the assistance of NYCPS teachers. *The Passport to Social Studies* curriculum, the *Hidden Voices* series, and the *Civics for All* curriculum were all created through the Department of Social Studies and Civics in recent years and are aligned with New York State Standards. As official social studies resources, their level of engagement with or acknowledgement of the history of the Americas, including Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the contributions of Latinos in the US, provides a benchmark for how Latinidad is being taught through NYCPS curricula The following is a brief analysis of how our Latinidad Curriculum Initiative can build on and contribute to these existing resources

Passport to Social Studies

Passport to Social Studies comprises teacher guides, scope and sequence documents, unit plans, and sample lessons for grades K-12, available in both print and digital formats Aligned with the current New York State Education Department's Social Studies Framework and the NYC DOE Scope and Sequence, these resources emphasize an instructional shift away from facts and recall towards depth of conceptual and content knowledge and connections between them; away from teacher-centered interpretation toward student-centered inquiry and investigation; and away from a separation between literacy skills and content knowledge toward an integration, treating students like social scientists in their own right

Across the units for each grade, there is content regarding Latin America and American Latinos in the Social Studies curricular resources of the NYCPS, as summarized in **Table A**.

Table A. References to Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino History and Experiences in the NYCPS' Passport to Social Studies K-12 Curriculum

Grade	Unit	*Passport* Book Title	Day and Lesson
K		No explicitly relevant content.	
1	1	Families and Communities are Important	Includes references to the text "My Family" by Carmen Lomas Garza
1	2	Families, Now and Long Ago	Display images related to Latino traditions
1	2	Families, Now and Long Ago	Display images related to Latino traditions
2	2	New York City over Time	Facilitates discussions about migration
3	1	Introduction to World Geography and World Communities	Includes references to the Aztecs and South America
3	Special Case	Peru	Study Unit
4	2	Native Americans: First Inhabitants of New York State	States that Native American innovations greatly influenced cultures in Europe and Latin America.
4	4	Freedom and the New Nation: Federal, State, and Local Government	Reference Melissa Mark-Viverito, the first Latino leader of the New York City Council.
5	1	Geography and Early Societies of the Western Hemisphere	Day 20: Lesson 14. Latin American Geography
			Day 21: Lesson 15. Exploring Latin America
			Day 22: Lesson 16. Thematic Maps of Latin America
			Day 23–25: Lesson 17. Latin American Regions
			Days 26–28: Compare and Contrast Maya, Aztec, and Inca Societies and Civilizations
			Days 29–32: Lesson 18. A Day in the Life of a Maya
5	2	European Exploration	Day 9–10: Lesson 5. Explorer or Conqueror? Hernán Cortés and the Spanish Exploration
			Day 16: Spain and Portugal
			Day 17: Dividing Lines: Understanding the Treaty of Tordesillas (sample lesson)
			Day 18: The Columbian Exchange (sample lesson)
5	Special Case	Mexico	Study Unit
		Dominican Republic	Study Unit
		United States	Study Unit
5	4	The Western Hemisphere Today	Mexico and Dominican Republic are used as examples in the analysis of social issues.
7	1	Native Americans, Early Encounters, and Colonial Development	Days 8-9: The Golden Age of Exploration
			Day 10: Lesson 5. The Encounter: Columbus and the Taíno. Fall in all myths of conquest.
			Day 11: Lesson 6. The Columbian Exchange. Myths of conquest.
			Day 14: Analyzing Perspective: Interactions of Native Americans and European Settlers
7	4	A Nation Grows: Expansion and Reform 1800–1860	Day 7: Lesson 6. U.S. Acquisition of Territory: Annexation of Texas
			Day 8: Justification for the Annexation of Texas and the Mexican-American War

APPENDICES

Grade	Unit	*Passport* Book Title	Day and Lesson
8	2	A Changing Society and the Progressive Era	Day 7: Lesson 4. Coming to America.
8	3	The United States as an Expansionist Nation	Day 9: Lesson 6. Imperialism or Anti-Imperialism
			Day 13: Lesson 8. Big Stick, Dollar, and Moral Diplomacy.
			Day 14: Lesson 9. The Panama Canal
			Days 16-17: U.S. interaction with the world, Cuba, and Puerto Rico
8	5	The United States Assumes Worldwide Responsibilities	Day 24: Lesson 14. Cuban Missile Crisis
8	6	America After World War II: The Changing Nature of the American People	Day 2: Lesson 1. Segregation in America
9	2	Expanding Interregional Networks: Exchange and Encounter	Day 29: Was Globalization before 1500 CE Truly Globalization?
9	5	Africa and the Americas pre-1600	Day 1: Historical Narratives for the Americas Pre-1600 CE
			Day 2: Historical Narratives about Africa Pre-1600 CE
			Day 8: Comparing the Aztecs and the Incas
			Day 9: Historiography and the History of Women in Africa and the Americas pre-1600
			Day 10: Examining How Women in the Americas Are Represented in Historical Sources
			Day 13: The Role of Outside Perspectives in Developing Historical Interpretations
			Day 14: Artifacts from the Aztec Empire
			Day 15-16: Innovation in the Inca Empire
			Day 18: Emerging Evidence and the History of the Inca
			Days 23-25: Museum Project: Africa and the Americas Pre-1600

Grade	Unit	*Passport* Book Title	Day and Lesson
9	6	Interactions and Disruptions During The First Global Age (ca. 1400–ca 1750 CE)	Day 4: Exploration in the First Global Age
			Day 5: Spice Networks
			Days 6–7: The Encounter?
			Day 8: European Colonization in the Atlantic World during the First Global Age
			Days 9-10: Mercantilism, Resource Extraction, and Colonization
			Day 11: Sugar Changed the World
			Day 12: Columbian Exchange
			Day 13: The Role of Outside Perspectives in Developing Historical Interpretations
			Day 14: Numbers in History Matter
			Day 15: Demographic Change as a Result of Colonization and the Columbian Exchange
			Day 16: Indigenous Resistance
			Days 20-22: Arguments about the Development of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade
			Day 25: The Influence of the People of African Descent on the Americas in the First Global Age
			Days 27-29: Gender in the First Global Age
			Day 33: The Most Significant Event or Phenomenon?
10	1	The World in 1750 CE	Day 17: A Demand for Commodities
10	2	An Age of Revolution and Empire	Day 11: Historical Circumstances that Led to the Haitian Revolution
			Day 12: The Haitian Revolution and the Competition for Power
			Day 13: Major Events of the Haitian Revolution
			Day 14: Historical Circumstances that Led to the Creation of Haiti's Founding Documents
			Day 15: The Effects of the Haitian Revolution
			Day 21: Citizenship and Nationalism in Latin America

Grade	Unit	*Passport* Book Title	Day and Lesson
10	3	Unresolved Global Conflict (1914–1991 CE)	Day 21: The Cuban Missile Crisis and the Threat of Nuclear War
			Day 22: Non-alignment and the Cold War
10	4	Decolonization and Nationalism	Day 1: Decolonization Across the Globe
			Day 2: Imperialism and Decolonization: Continuity and Change
			Day 4: Decolonization: Human Agency and Structural Forces
			Day 30: Latin America in the 20th Century
			Day 31: Socialism and Latin American Resistance
10	5	Tensions between Traditional Cultures and Modernization	Day 3: Modernization and Latin America
			Day 6: Defining Urbanization
			Day 7: Addressing the Challenges of Urbanization
			Day 8: The Benefits and Consequences of Urbanization
			Day 11: Modernization and Economic Development
			Day 12: Effects of Modernization on Women
10	6	Globalization and the Changing Environment	Day 6: Globalization as an Enduring Issue
11	1	Forming a Union: Colonial and Constitutional Foundations	Day 2: Early Colonization and Indigenous Communities
			Day 3: French, English, Dutch, and Spanish Colonization of the Americas
			Day 4: Indigenous View of European Colonization Prior to 1700
			Day 10: Native American Resistance to European Colonization
			Day 11: The Development of Race and Racial Hierarchy in Early America
11	2	Expansion, Nationalism, and Sectionalism (1800-1865)	Day 10: The Mexican-American War
			Day 11: Westward Expansion and Constitutional Crises
			Day 12: Causes of Increasing Sectionalism

Grade	Unit	*Passport* Book Title	Day and Lesson
11	3	Post-Civil War America: Industrialization, Urbanization, and the Progressive Movement (1865–c. 1900)	Day 9: Following the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo
			Day 10: Progress and Decline: Perspectives on Westward Expansion
			Day 15: Immigration and Historical Empathy
			Day 18: Immigration Trends
11	4	Prosperity and Depression: At Home and Abroad (ca. 1890–1941)	Day 5: The Spanish-American War
			Day 6-7: U.S. Imperialism in Latin America and the Caribbean
			Day 8: The Imperialism Debate
			Day 9: Writing about U.S. Expansion and Imperialism
			Days 32–33: Mexican and Mexican American Repatriation and Deportation
11	5	World War II and the Cold War (1935–1990)	Day 1: Overview of U.S. Foreign Policy 1935–1990
			Day 9-10: Above and Beyond the Call of Duty: Contributions of Americans to the War Effort
			Day 11: Continuities and Changes for People of Mexican Descent in the U.S.
			Day 15: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Women Behind the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
			Day 21: Cuban Missile Crisis
			Day 27: Foreign Policy: The Cold War and the Caribbean, Latin America, and South America
11	6	Social and Economic Change: Domestic Issues (1945–present)	Day 4: Civil Rights Movements of the 1950s and Early '60s
			Day 5: Civil Rights Movement Legislation
			Day 11: 1968
			Day 14: Constitutional and Civic Issue: Latinx Civil Rights
12		No explicitly relevant content.	

APPENDICES

As can be seen in **Table A**, there are recurring direct references to Latin American history Across grades and units, there is content based on the history, experiences, and activism of Latin Americans and Latinos in the US Still, lesson plans touching on these topics focus mainly on the Indigenous World before 1492, on colonization of Latin America, and American imperialism in Latin America There is a scarcity of content on American Latinos as an active group involved in US history, and they are mostly to be found in 11th-grade materials In the other grades, Latinos tend to be depicted from the perspective of the Anglo world, seeing Latinos as part of the Hispanic world and separate from US history, not as equal citizens and political constituents Eleventh grade is a turning point as some lessons in the sixth unit, "Latinos Social and Economic Change: Domestic Issues (1945–present)," center the narrative on American Latinos, although the scope remains limited to their experience in the realms of immigration, labor, or civil rights

A curriculum centered on Latinidad can build upon what *Passport* has initiated, particularly in 11th grade, and develop a sequence of lessons highlighting the significant contributions of Latinidad in NYC.

Broadly, the curricular resources by grade, unit, and instructional day relevant to understanding the history of American Latinos can be categorized as follows:

Immigration:

- **Grade 11 – Unit 3 Day 15:** Immigration and Historical Empathy
- **Grade 11 – Unit 3 Day 18:** Immigration Trends
- **Grade 11 – Unit 4 Days 32-33:** Mexican and Mexican American Repatriation and Deportation

Labor and Civil Rights:

- **Grade 11 – Unit 5 Day 11:** Continuities and Changes for People of Mexican Descent in the US
- **Grade 11 – Unit 6 Day 4:** Civil Rights Movements of the 1950s and Early '60s
- **Grade 11 – Unit 6 Day 5:** Civil Rights Movement Legislation
- **Grade 11 – Unit 6 Day 11:** 1968
- **Grade 11- Unit 6 Day 14:** Constitutional and Civic Issue: Latinx Civil Rights

American Imperialism

- **Grade 11- Unit 4 Day 5:** The Spanish-American War
- **Grade 11- Unit 5 Day 27:** Foreign Policy: The Cold War and the Caribbean, Latin America, and South America

Tension Between Anglo-European and Hispanic World:

- **Grade 7 – Unit 4 Day 7:** Lesson 6. US Acquisition of Territory: Annexation of Texas and the Mexican-American War
- **Grade 11 – Unit 1 Day 3:** French, English, Dutch, and Spanish Colonization of the Americas
- **Grade 11- Unit 1 Day 11:** The Development of Race and Racial Hierarchy in Early America
- **Grade 11 – Unit 2 Day 10:** The Mexican-American War
- **Grade 11 – Unit 2 Day 11:** Westward Expansion and Constitutional Crises
- **Grade 11 – Unit 3 Day 9:** Following the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo
- **Grade 11 – Unit 3 Day 10:** Progress and Decline: Perspectives on Westward Expansion

The identification and categorization of these materials allows us to map with precision how the narratives about the presence of Latinos in US history have been shifting. These narratives can be further enriched to reflect the actual living memories and contributions of this sector of NYC's population

Hidden Voices

The *Hidden Voices* project is intended to be used in conjunction with the *Passport to Social Studies* resources to highlight underrepresented voices in the pursuit of culturally responsive teaching practices In addition to the series "Untold Stories of New York City History," "LGBTQ+ Stories in United States History," "Asian Americans in United States History," "Stories of the Global African Diaspora," and "Americans with Disabilities in United States History," the NYCPS at this time is working on publishing series on "Muslim Americans in United States History," "Jewish Americans in United States History," and "Latinos in United States History"

Many of these cover stories feature people of Latin American and Caribbean descent and/or Latino Americans, such as Antonia Pantoja, Roberto Clemente, Emerson Roberto, and other notable individuals While these stories are certainly important for NYC students of all ages to learn about, the blueprint for our Latinidad curriculum aims to build on the individual experiences and achievements of the American Latinos that are featured in *Hidden Voices* to emphasize the ways that the communities these individuals belong to have formed part and parcel of American civil society, and as activists and leaders, have helped shape the historical and political trends and progress of the US and NYC in particular. The following demonstrate the general characteristics of the individuals profiled in the *Hidden Voices* series on Latinos in the US:

- **National Origins:** Puerto Rico (13), Mexico (5), Dominican Republic (5), Cuba (3), US-born Latinos (8), and others from Guatemala, Honduras, Ecuador, and Brazil
- **Temporal Distribution:** Colonial era (1474-1700): 6 figures; 18th-19th centuries: 5 figures; Early 20th century (1900-1950): 12 figures; Post-1950: 16 figures.
- **Gender Balance:** 13 women (33%) and 27 men (67%)
- **Professional Diversity:** Activists (11), educators/scholars (7), writers/journalists (6), artists (4), athletes (4), political leaders (4), religious figures (2), and others in various fields.
- **Connection to NYC:** Individuals explicitly identified as NYC-based, with several others working in education (10 total).
- **Puerto Rican Representation:** Nearly one-third of the featured individuals are Puerto Rican, reflecting their significant presence in NYC, but potentially overrepresenting this group relative to others.
- **Emphasis on Activism:** A substantial proportion of the featured individuals are identified as activists, focusing on civil rights, education, and labor movements, which may reinforce a narrative that frames the history of Latinidades primarily in terms of struggle
- **Limited Connection to NYC:** Despite being designed for NYC schools, relatively few voices are explicitly identified as having connections to the City, potentially missing opportunities for local historical engagement
- **Indigenous Inclusion:** The representation of Indigenous perspectives, as seen in figures like Po'pay, acknowledges the rich dimensions of Latinidades beyond European colonization narratives The indigenous identities and languages of present-day students and their families could be further elaborated in a Latinidad curriculum
- **Educational Figures:** The inclusion of several educators and those who worked in education highlights the significance of educational activism in the struggles for equality within Latino communities.

APPENDICES

Civics for All

The *Civics for All* curriculum, whose goal is to equip students for civic participation, incorporates Latino experiences at the middle and high school levels, with lessons that address civil rights, political participation, and identity Specific lessons, such as "School Segregation," "The 1964 School Boycott," and "Voting Rights History," highlight the struggles and contributions of Latino groups to American civic life The curriculum structure reveals an intentional effort to include Latino perspectives, though with varying degrees of depth across grade levels

The curriculum features eminent figures, including Sylvia Rivera, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, and Dolores Huerta, who represent various aspects of civic engagement, ranging from social activism to elected leadership These selections highlight the diverse trajectories of various figures and their multifaceted contributions to shaping American democracy Incorporating lessons on census representation and demographic patterns suggests an effort to address the growth of the Latino population and its impact on civic representation

- **Grade Bands:** Relevant content appears primarily in grades 6-8 and 9-12, with limited representation in elementary grades
- **Geographic Focus:** Strong emphasis on NYC contexts with some broader national perspectives
- **Historical Periods:** Predominantly focused on the post-1950s civil rights era
- **Relevant Topics:** Heaviest representation in civil rights, voting rights, and political participation; limited cultural or economic focus
- **Diverse Groups:** This category primarily encompasses experiences from Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans

The NYCPS curriculum resources represent a significant effort to incorporate the stories of multiple Latinx groups in a way consistent with the New York State Standards for Social Studies *Passport to Social Studies* invites students to become social scientists, setting them on a journey to discover how the story of the country and the world unfolds The *Hidden Voices* project provides chronologically expansive biographical portraits spanning five centuries, while the *Civics for All* curriculum highlights civic engagement through well-known leaders However, the current resources predominantly focus on colonization, imperialism, in the wider US and Latin American world, and on the civil rights struggles of individual figures rather than presenting Latino communities as integral co-creators of American identity. Thus, there are multiple entry points for expansion to produce a robust Latinidad curriculum rooted in students' communities and real-world experiences

Time, perspective, and geographical focus are three ways this project can expand the efforts already put in place by the City to serve its students The concentration of substantive content related to Latinos primarily in upper grades (8th and 11th) highlights the need for more developmentally appropriate materials for younger students Moreover, the set of personal experiences being articulated as expansions to the main historiographic narrative necessitates a shift in the narrative itself, which can be achieved through a reimagined curriculum that centers on the structural and community transformations made by Latino populations Indeed, a more comprehensive curriculum would go beyond portraying Latino communities merely as subjects of historical processes or as defined primarily by activism and resistance, and instead recognize them as fundamental, continuous participants in the fabric of American Democracy and NYC's story

Pepe Domit Photography.

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

1. Acosta, Christina. (2019). Gonzalez v. Douglas: Overturning the ban on ethnic studies in Arizona. *Ethnic Studies Review, 42*(2), 115-30.
2. American Community Survey (ACS). (2023). *American community survey.* ACS. Retrieved from: https://www.census.gov/
3. Anyon, Yolanda, Bender, Kimberly, Kennedy, Heather, & Dechants, Jonah. (2018). A systematic review of youth participatory action research (YPAR) in the United States: Methodologies, youth outcomes, and future directions. *Health Education & Behavior, 45*(6), 865-78.
4. Aponte, Oscar. (2022a). *Socioeconomic conditions of foreign-born and domestic-born Latinos in*
5. *New York City, 1990-2018 (No. 113)*. Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center. Retrieved from: academicworks.cuny.edu
6. Aponte, Oscar. (2022b). *The socioeconomic background of the COVID-19 pandemic in New York City: Latinos in Corona, Elmhurst, and Jackson Heights, 1990-2019 (No. 109)*. Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center. Retrieved from: academicworks.cuny.edu
7. Arana, Marie. (2024). *LatinoLand: A portrait of America's largest and least understood minority*. Simon & Schuster.
8. Au, Wayne W. (2009). High-stakes testing and discursive control: The triple bind for non-standard student identities. *Multicultural Perspectives, 11*(2), 65-71.
9. Batalova, Jeanne. (2025, March 12). *Frequently requested statistics on immigrants and immigration in the United States*. Migration Policy Institute (MPI). Retrieved from: migrationpolicy.org
10. Bergad, Laird W. (2020). *Demographic and socioeconomic transformations among the Mexican-origin population of New York City, 1990-2017 (No. 92)*. Caribbean and Latino Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center and Mexican Studies Institute of the City University of New York. Retrieved from: academicworks.cuny.edu
11. Bergad, Laird W. (2022a). *Changing college graduation rates among New York City's Latino populations, 1990-2020 [105]*. Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center. Retrieved from: academicworks.cuny.edu
12. Bergad, Laird W. (2022b). *Did the COVID pandemic result in an exodus of the Latino population of New York City and the New York metropolitan region? (No. 104)*. Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center. Retrieved from: academicworks.cuny.edu
13. Bergad, Laird W. (2022c). *Estimating the Latino population in New York City, 2020*. Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center. Retrieved from: academicworks.cuny.edu
14. Bergad, Laird W. (2022d). *The Dominican population of the New York metropolitan region, 1970-2020 (No. 103)*. Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center. Retrieved from: academicworks cuny edu
15. Bergad, Laird W. (2022e). *The Puerto Rican population of the New York metropolitan region, 1970-2020 (No. 112)*. Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center. Retrieved from: academicworks.cuny.edu

16. Bergad, Laird W. (2022f). *Were Latinos undercounted in the 2020 census? An assessment of Latino demographic data from 2010 through 2020 (No. 101)*. Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center. Retrieved from: academicworks.cuny.edu

17. Berry, Theodorea R., Kalinec-Craig, C. A., & Rodríguez, Mariela A. (2019). *Latinx curriculum theorizing*. Rowman & Littlefield.

18. Braginsky, Nataliya. (2019). *Latinx history*. Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute.

19. Briggs, Laura. (2002). *Reproducing empire: Race, sex, science, and US imperialism in Puerto Rico*. University of California Press.

20. Brion-Meisels, Gretchen, & Alter, Zanny. (2018). The quandary of youth participatory action research in school settings: A framework for reflecting on the factors that influence purpose and process. *Harvard Educational Review, 88*(4), 558-84.

21. Cabrera, Nolan, Milem, Jeffrey F., Jaquette, Ozan, & Marx, Ronald W. (2014). Missing the (student achievement) forest for all the (political) trees: Empiricism and the Mexican American studies controversy in Tucson. *American Educational Research Journal, 51*(6), 1084-118.

22. Cappello, Lawrence. (2019). *Gentrification in Upper Manhattan? (No. 79)*. Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center. Retrieved from: academicworks.cuny.edu

23. Caraballo, Limarys, Lozenski, Brian D., Lyiscott, Jamila J., & Morrell, Ernest. (2017). YPAR and critical epistemologies: Rethinking education research. *Review of Research in Education, 41*(1), 311-36.

24. Caro-López, Howard. (2011). *Ecuadorians in New York City, 1990-2008*. Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center. Retrieved from: academicworks.cuny.edu

25. Castillo, Marco. (2022). *Poverty in New York City: Social, demographic and spatial characteristics, 1990-2019 (No. 110)*. Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center. Retrieved from: academicworks cuny edu

26. Colón, David, & Krochmal, Max. (2022). *Latinx studies curriculum in K-12 schools*. Texas Christian University Press.

27. Cortina, Regina, & Gendreau, Mónica (Eds.), *Immigrants and schooling: Mexicans in New York*. Center for Migration Studies of New York.

28. Cuauhtin, R. Tolteka, Zavala, Miguel, Au, Wayne, & Sleeter, Christine. (Eds.). (2019). *Rethinking ethnic studies*. Rethinking Schools.

29. Darling-Hammond, Linda. (2010). Teacher education and the American future. *Journal of Teacher Education, 61*(1-2), 35-47.

30. Dee, Thomas S., & Penner, Emily K. (2017). The causal effects of cultural relevance: Evidence from an ethnic studies curriculum. *American Educational Research Journal, 54*(1), 127-66.

31. De Jesús, Anthony and Vasquez, Daniel W. (2005). *Exploring the education profile and pipeline for Latinos in New York State (Policy Documents No. 13; NYLARNet)*. University of Albany.

32. De la Fuente, Alejandro, & Andrews, George Reid. (2018). *Afro-Latin American studies: An introduction.* Cambridge University Press.

REFERENCES

33. Delgado Bernal, Dolores. (2002). Critical race theory, Latino critical theory, and critical raced-gendered epistemologies: Recognizing students of color as holders and creators of knowledge. *Qualitative inquiry, 8*(1), 105-126.
34. Earl, Amanda K. (2020). *Leveraging Latin American cultural and linguistic diversity for academic achievement: A professional development guide for US Teachers*. ILAS K-12 Outreach Program Curriculum Guides, Volume 7. Institute of Latin American Studies, Columbia University.
35. Endangered Language Alliance (ELA). (2021, April 15). *The digital NYC language map is live!* ELA. Retrieved from: ELAalliance.org
36. Farley, Chelsea, Kemple, James, & Readling, Erin. (2025). *Equity indicators: High school opportunities (spotlight on NYC Schools)*. Research Alliance for New York City Schools. Retrieved from: Steinhardt.nyu.edu
37. Flores, Juan. (2002). Islands and enclaves: Caribbean Latinos in historical perspective. In M. M. Suárez-Orozco & M. M. Páez (Eds.), *Latinos remaking America* (pp. 59-74). University of California Press.
38. Gay, Geneva. (2000). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. Teachers College Press.
39. Hamann, Edmund, Wortham, Stanton, and Enrique G. Murillo (Eds.). (2015). *Revisiting education in the new Latino diaspora.* Information Age Publishing.
40. Hoffnung-Garskof, Jesse. (2019). *Racial migrations: New York City and the revolutionary politics of the Spanish Caribbean*. Princeton University Press.
41. Ibarra, Mickey, & Pérez Brown, María. (Eds.). (2017). *Latino leaders speak: Personal stories of struggle and triumph.* Arte Público Press.
42. InsideSchools. (2025). *InsideSchools: NYC public schools*. The New School: Center for New York City Affairs. Retrived from: insideschools.org
43. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS). (2025). *Definition of poverty in the IPUMS samples*. IPUMS. Retrieved from: usa.ipums.org
44. Jiménez Román, Miriam, & Flores, Juan. (2010). *The Afro-Latin@ reader: History and culture in the United States*. Duke University Press.
45. Kornbluh, Mariah, Ozer, Emily J., Allen, Carrie D., & Kirshner, Ben. (2015). *Youth participatory action research as an approach to sociopolitical development and the new academic standards: Considerations for educators*. Springer Science+Business Media.
46. Ladson-Billings, Gloria. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, *32*(3), 465-91.
47. Láo-Montes, Augustín. (2005). Afro-Latinidades and the diasporic imaginary. *Iberoamericana, 5*(17), 117-30.
48. Mexican Consulate of New York. (November 7, 2016). *Consulado General participa en conferencia "Contribución del conocimiento indígena a la educación: Respondiendo a la nueva migración en las escuelas de Nueva York."* Mexican Consulate of New York. Retrieved from: consulmex.sre.gob.mx
49. Meyer, Gerald. (2003). Save Hostos: Politics and community mobilization to save a college in the Bronx, 1973–1978. *Centro Journal*, *15*(1), 72-97.

50. Morrell, Ernest. (2008). Six summers of YPAR: Learning, action, and change in urban education. In J. Cammarota & M. Fine (Eds.), *Revolutionizing Education: Youth Participatory Action Research in Motion* (pp. 155-83). Routledge.
51. Negrón-Muntaner, Frances. (2004). *Boricua pop: Puerto Ricans and the Latinization of American culture*. NYU Press.
52. New York City Public Schools (NYCPS). (2024a). *ELA test results 2018 to 2024* [Dataset]. NYCPS. Retrieved from: infohub.nyced.org/
53. New York City Public Schools (NYCPS). (2024b). *Graduation results for cohorts 2001 to 2020* [Dataset]. NYCPS. Retrieved from: infohub.nyced.org/
54. New York City Public Schools (NYCPS). (2024c). *Math test results 2018 to 2024* [Dataset]. NYCPS. Retrieved from: infohub.nyced.org/
55. New York City Public Schools (NYCPS). (2025a). *Department of Education data at a glance*. NYCPS. Retrieved from: schools.nyc.gov
56. New York City Public Schools (NYCPS). (2025b). *Information and Data Overview*. NYCPS.
57. NYCPS Office of Multilingual Learners. (2024). *2023-2024 ELL demographics at a glance*. NYCPS Office of Multilingual Learners. Retrieved from: infohub.nyced.org/
58. NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. (2021). *A demographic snapshot: NYC's Latinx immigrant population.* NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. Retrieved from: nyc.gov
59. Paris, Django, & Alim, H. Samy. (2017). *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world*. Teachers College Press.
60. Peña, Jessica, Álvarez Figueroa, Magdaliz, Rios-Vargas, Merarys, & Marks, Rachel. (2023, May 25). *One in every four children in the United States were of Hispanic origin in 2020*. United States Census Bureau. Retrieved from: census.gov
61. Pew Research Center (PRC). (2024a). *Who is Hispanic?* PRC. Retrieved from: pewresearch.org
62. Pew Research Center (PRC). (2024b). *Latinx awareness has doubled among U.S. Hispanics since 2019, but only 4% use it*. PRC. Retrieved from: pewresearch.org
63. Pinar, William F., Reynolds, William M., Slattery, Patrick, & Taubman, Peter M. (1995). Chapter 10: Understanding curriculum as autobiographical/biographical text. *Counterpoints, 17*, 515-66.
64. Portes, Alejandro & Rumbaut, Rubén G. (2001). *Legacies: The story of the immigrant second generation*. University of California Press.
65. Rosaldo, Renato. (1997). Cultural citizenship, inequality, and multiculturalism. In W. V. Flores, & R. Benmayor (Eds.), *Latino cultural citizenship* (pp. 27-38). Beacon Press.
66. Ruggles, Steven, Flood, Sarah, Foster, Sophia, Goeken, Ronald, Pacas, Jose, Schouweiler, Megan, & Sobek, Matthew. (2021). *IPUMS USA: Version 11.0* (Version 11.0) [Dataset]. IPUMS. Retrieved from: ipums.org
67. Schaeffer, Katherine. (2024, September 24). *Key facts about public school teachers in the US*. Pew Research Center. Retrieved from: pewresearch.org
68. Schwartz, Amy Ellen, & Stiefel, Leanna. (2005). *Public education in the dynamic city: Lessons from New York City* [Economic Policy Review]. Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

REFERENCES

69. Sequeira, Robbie. (2022, August 19). *The Bronx is home to the largest Garifuna community in the US, but it still lacks representation*. Bronx Times. Retrieved from: bxtimes.com
70. Sleeter, Christine E. (2011). *The academic and social value of ethnic studies*. National Education Association.
71. Smith, Robert C. (2002). Imagining Mexican educational futures in New York. In R. Cortina & M. Gendreau (Eds.), *Immigrants and schooling: Mexicans in New York* (pp. 93-119). Center for Migration Studies of New York.
72. Solorzano, Daniel G., & Delgado Bernal, Dolores. (2001). Examining transformational resistance through a critical race and LatCrit theory framework: Chicana and Chicano students in an urban context. *Urban Education, 36*(3), 308-42.
73. Suárez-Orozco, Marcelo, & Páez, Mariela. (2002). *Latinos: Remaking America*. University of California Press.
74. Thomas, Piri. (1967). *Down these mean streets*. Alfred A. Knopf.
75. Valenzuela, Angela. (2010). *Subtractive schooling*. State University of New York Press.
76. United States Census Bureau. (2024, August 15). *Hispanic heritage month: 2024*. United States Census Bureau. Retrieved from: census.gov
77. UnidosUS & Johns Hopkins. (2023, May). *Analyzing the inclusion of Latino contributions in the US history curricula for high school.* UnidosUS & Johns Hopkins.
78. Wiggins, Grant, & McTighe, Jay. (2005). *Understanding by design* (2nd Ed.). Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
79. Wlodarczyk Hickey, Melissa K. (2020). *African American, Black, Latino, and Puerto Rican course of studies*. Connecticut State Board of Education.
80. Villalpando, Octavio. (2010). Self-segregation or self-preservation? A critical race theory and Latina/o critical theory analysis of a study of Chicana/o college students. *Qualitative Studies in Education, 16*(5), 619-46.
81. Yim, Sejung Sage. (2021). *Latinos in Brooklyn: Demographic and socioeconomic transformations in Sunset Park/ Windsor Terrace and Bushwick, 1990-2017 (No. 97)*. Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center. Retrieved from: academicworks.cuny.edu
82. Zaal, Mayida, & Terry, John. (2013). Knowing what I can do and who I can be: Youth identify transformational benefits of participatory action research. *Journal of Ethnographic & Qualitative Research, 8*, 42-55.

For additional resources on how to engage children and youth in the study of Latinidades in NYC, visit the Resources page of our website.

Resources

Jon Tyson. (2018). *Unsplash License.*

Amanda Earl. (2024).

Edmund W. Gordon Institute
for Advanced Study
Teachers College, Columbia University