

November 2017



Photo: Mural at 585 Niagara Street by Betsy Casañas,

# Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction

**Dr. Fatima Morrell, Assistant Superintendent**

**Our Vision:** Through a commitment to equity and excellence, all students will receive a rigorous instructional program which prepares them to compete successfully, and contribute responsibly in a global society.

**Theory of Action:** If we cultivate a culture and environment that fully supports collaboration, shared responsibility, and continuous improvement that is focused on elevating instruction and best practices in all disciplines, then we will strengthen teaching/learning, share accountability, and promote academic success for all students in all content areas in meaningful ways.

## Assistant Superintendent Highlights

### Infusing Latino History and Culture into the Curriculum

November is a great month to consider the valuable contributions of Latino Americans to American History and Culture, as this is the month when we pay tribute to Native Americans and indigenous people in the Americas who also comprise the ancestry of most Latin American citizens. I have always been intrigued by the ancient Mayan, Aztec, and Incan contributions to mathematics, medicine, agriculture and science, as well as Taino contributions to organized society, including their building of large oceangoing canoes and their extensive uses of plants for medicinal and warfare purposes. On the island of Puerto Rico, the Taino made exquisite pottery, and carved enigmatic images from wood, stone, shell and bone(Wikipedia) and enjoyed a highly organized society.. Infusing Latino history and culture into the curriculum can be easily facilitated if we are willing to bring in readily available resources that can be found in the “Our Story” Curriculum on Schoology, and through a myriad of other resources readily available via technology and research.

There is a great story to be told about the decline of these great, ancient civilizations. Within this true history we realize quickly that Christopher Columbus and other conquerors never discovered America, rather land was taken from Native Americans and there was a rapid decline of the Taino, Aztec, and other indigenous populations in much of mesoamerica after historic encounters with european explorers. This is the true history that we can treat in our daily lessons that have been systematically left out of most of our history books and State Standards. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to re-teach our Latino students in a manner

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that is culturally inclusive and speaks to the historical contributions of Latino ancestors so that they know and understand their greatness and how they are a major part of the fabric of our United States history and culture today.

Mesoamerican history in general is a great starting point for infusing Latin American history and culture into our Social Studies, Science, Math and English language Arts lessons. Great classroom discussions and projects utilizing technology and curriculum resources from Tulane University's Center for Latin American studies, the Hispanic Heritage History Project Digital Collection, and the library media center in your school, all of which include a plethora of resources on ancient and contemporary Latin American history and culture, and are readily available for use. The Hispanic Heritage History Project's digital collection is especially useful for studying and teaching about local Puerto Rican history and culture, and major historical figures and their work in Buffalo. "This project is a strategy for engaging the community in the collection of historical data and artifacts, current events, and plans for the future. The project is being sponsored by the Hispanic Heritage Council, of Western New York, Inc. in partnership with the University at Buffalo, Buffalo Erie County Public Library and the Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society. This endeavor is designed to tell the story of the past, present, and future of the Hispanic community in Western New York" (Source: Hispanic Heritage Council of WNY, website). <http://omeka.buffalolib.org/>

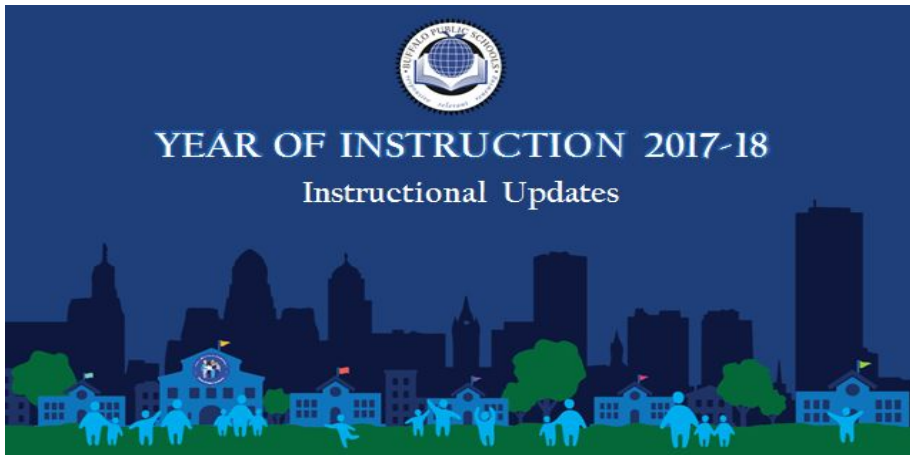


In any study of Latin American history and culture, we must include lessons on those unsung heroes and heroines who have fought for social justice and paved the way for civil liberties and freedoms that we all enjoy today. A few that come to mind and can be highlighted in any classroom are: Gloria Anzaldúa, a feminist and a teacher who fought against racial segregation and wrote one of the first books that placed women of color at the center of the feminist movement; Cesar Chavez who was instrumental in securing union rights for migrant farm workers; author, Sandra Cisneros, whose work explores the lives of the working class and serves as a catalyst around Latino culture and identity, her book *The House on Mango Street*, has sold 6 million copies worldwide; and Joan Baez, who uses her music to create social change, equity, and justice, just to name a few. The listing of famous Latin Americans who have made valuable contributions to American history and culture are countless. These are a few of the Latino community builders whose contributions and fight for social justice demonstrate stories of sacrifice and courage that all students should be exposed to on a frequent basis in our classrooms.

With the recent natural disaster in Puerto Rico, and so many cultural institutions and norms being negatively impacted in this United States territory, we in CAI believe this would be an opportune time to seriously consider how we develop an inclusive curriculum that is culturally relevant to our Latino students who make up approximately 20 percent of our student population. Additionally, students will need opportunities and safe spaces to discuss the aftermath of the hurricane and to develop healthy ways to discuss fears or concerns related to the disaster. This can be done through developing projects and opportunities for helping students to connect with the people in Puerto Rico who have been negatively affected, especially for those students who may have family members or extended family and friends who have been impacted by the disaster. The best way to support students who may have feelings of anxiety is to ensure that students have opportunities to discuss their concerns in a non-threatening, safe environment, with caring and nurturing adults. Students can also be supported by developing opportunities to discuss the issues and to collect needed items to send to Puerto Rico, or create a fund drive to make a monetary donation, or some other community project that will have a direct impact on those affected by the disaster. There are currently many ways to include students in supporting Puerto Rico at this difficult time by partnering with various local relief efforts and organizations. These actions help, and teach valuable lessons of humanity and inclusion.

Thank you,  
Dr. Morrell

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### Here's What's New in Mathematics...

· Pacing Guides to support Administrative APPR visits and to guide teacher pacing. The Pacing Guides were created based on the NYS modules. They identify the APPROXIMATE place at which teachers should be in their instruction. Individual pace MAY VARY based on student data.

<http://www.buffaloschools.org/files/117603/math%u20pacing%20guide%20k-6%202017-18.pdf>

· Curriculum Maps have been created, by the Curriculum Committee, that outline an approximate date range in which each Module is to be taught.

· Renaissance STAR math has been rolled out and is now being implemented in all schools, in grades K through 4.

· The Board of Regents approved the proposed revisions to the current Math Standards and as a result we will implement new and improved standards, The New York State Next Generation Mathematics Learning Standards, in the 2020 school year.

<http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/nys-next-generation-mathematics-p-12-standards.pdf>

· June 2017 concluded a three year MSP-Math grant. Some of the teacher created resources are now available on the website for all to use.

<http://www.buffaloschools.org/MathDept.cfm?subpage=130656>

· A new course was added for use at the High School level, Principles of Algebra and Geometry. This course is designed for students who passed the Algebra I course and passed the Algebra I Regents exam, but with a score of less than 80%.

## Important Dates

### **November 1**

BPO Youth Concert series Grade 4  
Kleinhans 10:15am, 1:00  
J. Schwanz

### **November 3**

Literacy Coaches Meeting  
(8:15-3:30@BPDTC) J. Byrnes

### **November 6**

#### Pre-K PD

(8:15-3:30 @ #99) J. Sipes

### **November 8**

#### Elementary Principals Mtg.

(9:30 – 1:30 @ #93)

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BPO Youth Concert series Grade 5

Kleinhans 10:15 am, 1:00

J. Schwanz

\*

#### Fast Forward

(8:15-3:30@ BPDTC) R. Tate

### **November 9**

BPO Youth Concert series Grade 6

Kleinhans 10:15 am, 1:00

J. Schwanz

### **November 13**

Instructional and Math Coaches Mtg.

( 8:15-3:30 @187)

J. Wagstaff

\*

Instructional Technology Coaches Mtg.

( 8:15-3:30 @187)

S. Edwards

\*

### **November 14**

#### Root Cause Team A

(8:15-3:30@ #99)

F. Morrell

### **November 15**

#### Root Cause Team B

(8:15-3:30@#99)

F. Morrell

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### Just as a reminder...

- The NYS Math Modules are the approved district curriculum resource for instruction.
- Finish Line consumable books were again provided in grade one through Algebra I, for use during intervention and enrichment time.
- There are assessment maps attached to each DBA, detailing the information.
- There are suggested parent resources in the Parent tab on the Mathematics website.
- Professional Development artifacts for mathematics are available in Schoology.
- Teacher Roles & Responsibilities documents are available on the Math Department website <http://www.buffaloschools.org/MathDept.cfm?subpage=130656>
- Academic Intervention Teacher (AIS)
- Support Mathematics Teacher (SMT)
- Mathematics Coach (MC)
- Instructional Coach (IC)

### **November 16**

#### **Root Cause Team C**

(8:15-3:30@#99)

F. Morrell

\*

#### **TSLI**

Session Three

(8:30-3:00 @ #99) Cunningham

### **November 17**

#### **Secondary Principals Mtg.**

(8:30 – 12:30 @#187)

S Cimato

\*

#### **Trauma Informed Care 2-3 Group A**

(8:15- 3:30@BPDTC)

N. Bycina

### **November 20**

#### **Pre-K PD**

(8:15-3:30 @ #99) J. Sipes

### **November 21**

#### **Student Leadership Elem.**

(8:15-3:30@BPDTC)

N. Bycina

\*

#### **Lead Evaluator Certification Training**

(Initial) (8:15-3:30@BPDTC)

L Samulski

### **November 27**

#### **RHC Coaches Meeting**

(8:15-3:25@BPDTC)

H. Dickinson

\*

#### **Support Math Teacher Meeting**

(8:15-3:30@#187)

J. Wagstaff

### **November 28**

#### **CLRT 7 & 8 ELA**

(8:15-3:30@BPDTC)

F. Morrell

\*

#### **RHC SE – PD**

(8:15-3:30 @ BPDTC)

H. Dickinson

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#### **Lead Evaluator Certification Training**

#### **(Make-Up)**

(8:15-3:30@BPDTC)

L. Samulski

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### **November 29**

#### **CLRT 7 & 8 ELA**

(8:15-3:30@BPDTC)

F. Morrell

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#### **RHC SE – PD**

(8:15-3:30 @ BPDTC)

H. Dickinson

\*

#### **Reducing the Risk – HS Health Ed**

Teachers (8:15 - 3:30 @ 187)

### **November 30**

#### **CLRT 7 & 8 ELA**

(8:15-3:30@BPDTC)

F. Morrell

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#### **RHC SE – PD**

(8:15-3:30 @ BPDTC)

H. Dickinson

\*

#### **Reducing the Risk – HS Health Ed**

Teachers (8:15 - 3:30 @ 187)

## Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Teaching

by CLRT Coordinator, Mrs. JoAnna Wingo

During the month long celebration of National Hispanic Heritage, September 15 through October 15, we proudly recognized the significant contributions and invaluable influence that Hispanic and Latino Americans made to the United States. This was also an opportunity for us to share and celebrate in the rich customs, heritage, and culture of the Hispanic community. The term Hispanic or Latino refers to peoples of Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish speaking culture or origin regardless of race. Today, 55 million people, or 17% of the American population, are of Hispanic or Latino origin.

Hispanic Heritage Month began in 1968 on September 15, the anniversary of the independence of five Latin American countries- Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Mexico, Chile, and Belize also celebrate their independence days during this period. (<https://www.hispanicheritagemonth.org>).



I am proud to say this celebration is not lost in Buffalo. Several organizations and community members came together to join and support the Hispanic Heritage Council third annual, month long kick off at the Erie County Library located in downtown Buffalo on September 15<sup>th</sup>. The Division of CAI was honored to celebrate Hispanic Heritage month with members of the Hispanic Heritage Council of Western New York at the Buffalo Central Library, to honor and pay tribute to our rich Latino cultural heritage and contributions. Featured in the photo to the left is Mr. Casimiro Rodriguez, President of the Hispanic Heritage

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Council, Dr. David Mauricio, Chief of Innovation and Alignment, Councilman Ulysees O. Wingo, and our very own Art Supervisor, Michele Agosto, who is a Director at the Hispanic Heritage Council and a host of the "Sin Fronteras" radio show which is a media platform for acculturated Hispanics in WNY & Buffalo's Community.

It is important to remember as we continue to educate our scholars in the "My Brother's Keeper" and "Our Story" programs that we must recognize and appreciate the shoulders we stand on, work together to build our community, and embrace diversity.

Through the Our Story and My Brother's Keeper after school programs, we aim to focus on the heritage of Hispanic and Latino culture beginning with the Taino linguistic and agricultural influences to current civil rights and social justice contributions- not only in the month of October, but throughout the entire school year.

If you are ever on Niagara Street near Jersey Street, check out the beautiful artwork displayed on our front page illustration above. With the assistance of the Hispanic Heritage Council, Albright- Knox Art Gallery's Public Art Initiative, and community leaders/volunteers, the beautiful tapestry known as Avenida San Juan honors The City's Hispanic heritage. The mural was created by Betsy Casanas which highlights the positive aspects of Latino culture, heritage, and the neighborhood's Latino identity.

## Math Department

by: JaDawn Wagstaff, Director and Dalpne Bell, Supervisor

In recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, and in alignment with our district's initiative to infuse culturally responsive practices whenever possible, we would like to highlight:

**Concha Gómez:**

**A Math Guru for Women and Minorities**



Before finishing her Ph.D. in math at the University of California, Berkeley (UCB), **Concha Gómez** (pictured left) envisioned her dream job: "I would be in a large research university and teach math and be around mathematicians. But my job would be to focus on students of color in science." Five years later, that's precisely her role at the University of Wisconsin, Madison (UWM). Gómez is not only

## Early Childhood & Elementary Ed. Department

By: Jessica Sipes, Supervisor and Nicole Bailey, Project Administrator

As Early Childhood and Elementary Education providers, we are responsible for the implementation and fidelity to a curriculum that is culturally competent. Providing a foundational understanding, training, and ongoing support is essential to those who are carrying out our culturally and linguistically responsive curriculum on a daily basis.

In this month's newsletter, we spotlight our Pre-Kindergarten reading curriculum, *Big Day for Pre-K*. *Big Day for Pre-K* is a comprehensive curriculum in which all students are exposed to high quality Latino stories and characters. Favorites books of our Pre-Kindergarten students from the *Big Day for Pre-K* series include the books; *Too Many Tamales* by Gary Soto and *Carlo Likes Counting* by Jessica Spanyol. Additionally, *Big Day for Pre-K* directly supports

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a math teacher, she supports and helps retain underrepresented minority students in science, math, and engineering as director of the [Wisconsin Emerging Scholars](#) (WES) program. As a Latina mathematician, Gómez is, without question, a rare find, but one who is committed to helping others follow in her footsteps.

Francisco, Edna. (2005, May 13). *Concha Gómez: A Math Guru for Women and Minorities*.

Retrieved from

<http://www.sciencemag.org/careers/2005/05/concha-gomez-math-guru-women-and-minorities>

In addition, here are a few resources to support your infusion of Hispanic culture and history into your classroom and possibly into your instruction:

\* Latinos and Mathematics by Dr. Luis Ortiz-Franco

<http://www.pps.k12.or.us/depts-c/mc-me/be-hi-ma.pdf>

\* Latin@s and Hispanics in Mathematical Sciences <http://lathisms.org/>

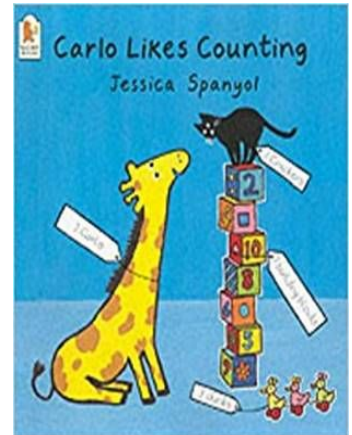
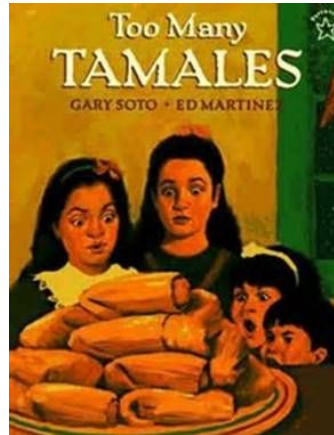
\* Famous Hispanic Mathematicians by lusi altan

<https://prezi.com/mptbwyiqmrm4/famous-hispanic-mathematicians/>

***It is our expectation that every teacher of mathematics accept the challenge of Jaime Escalante***, where

“One teacher” in “one class proved to America that if given the opportunity anybody can..... Stand and Deliver”

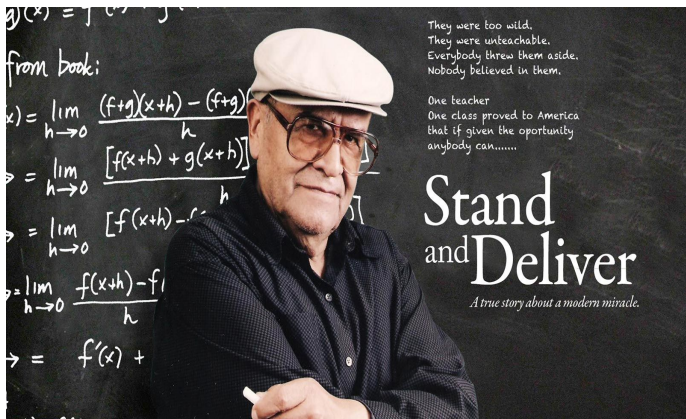
the education of our Latino students by providing access to the entire curriculum, including all stories, family letters, and wall hangings, in Spanish.



In conjunction with the My Brother's Keeper Grant, we prepare parenting courses geared towards pregnant and parenting Latino teens within BPS. We acknowledge the need to be sensitive to the nature of diversity which resides greatly in our communities and we are supportive and receptive to the needs of our students. For example, we infuse traditional Latino practices; such as highlighting family interdependence.

For more information or to experience one of our classes, please visit!

<http://www.buffaloschools.org/files/124425/catalog%2010-22.pdf>



## English Language Arts

by: Director Julie Romain

### Infusing Latino History and Culture

There are many ways English teachers can infuse Latino History and Culture into the classroom. The most obvious strategy is to provide rich text from a variety of Latino authors. Students in grades 7 through 12 are often struggling with their own identity and providing novels that have characters that mirror their own challenges can help them navigate difficult times in their lives.

Below are novels with strong Latino/Latina protagonists:

- **The Book of Broken Hearts** by Sarah Ockler
- **It's Not About the Accent** by Caridad Ferrer
- **Sammy & Juliana in Hollywood** by Benjamin Alire Saenz
- **Mexican Whiteboy** by Matt de la Pena
- **Red Glass** by Laura Resau
- **Yaqui Delgado Wants to Kick Your Ass** by Meg Medina

English Teachers may also take advantage of technology in the classroom through the use of a virtual museum. The link below is to The Smithsonian Latino Virtual Museum. Teachers can use the toolkit provided to offer students an opportunity to explore a Latino exhibit presented by The Smithsonian Museum from the comfort of their classrooms in Buffalo.

## Reading Department

by: Barbara Shea, Director & Jane Byrnes, Supervisor

### Infusing Latino Culture and History into Literacy Instruction

Teaching Latino culture and history serves to promote academic success for our Latino-American students. First, it can be important to the self-esteem of Latino-American students. Studies suggest that positive ethnic affiliation among Latino-Americans (and other groups) greatly influences individual development in many ways, including: lifestyle choices, values, opinions, attitudes, and approaches to learning (Gollnick & Chinn, 1990). Yet, it is not enough for Latino-American students--or any student--to learn only about their own cultural heritage and history. They must learn to appreciate and respect other cultural groups. This leads to the second purpose of integrating Latino-American history and culture into the classroom: To develop "ethnic literacy" in ALL students. Ethnic literacy, as defined by Banks and Banks (1989), is a knowledge of the role and function that ethnicity plays in our daily lives, in our society, and in our transactions locally, regionally, and transnationally. Ethnic literacy allows all students to understand their uniqueness, to understand the complexities of ethnicity and culture, and to take pride in who they are as people.

There are many materials currently available to teach about Latino culture and history. But, as Banks and Banks (1989) have noted, many of these materials limit their presentation of the Latino-American experience to the discussion of isolated holidays and events. Educators should look for curriculum materials that present a more considered view of the Latino experience and history. Materials should include not only heroes and victims, but "regular people,"



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<http://latino.si.edu/LVM/TeacherToolkit>

Teachers can also use the themes present in the curriculum to identify Latino/Latina pieces that would pair with the text students are reading in class. For example, teachers of English I during the first quarter of study may integrate *Something to Declare* by Julia Alvarez and allow students the opportunity to view *West Side Story*. There are many opportunities for teachers to bring different cultures to life through character and storytelling. The above examples are simple ways to begin.

as well. Such a perspective depicts diversity. There is not a single Latino-American culture, just as there is not a single American culture. Equally importantly, is the notion that cultures change over time. Effective instructional materials include ideas related to the contemporary, as well as the historical experience, of Latino-Americans.

Finding appropriate materials that both address common core standards and align to the curriculum can often be a challenge. However, there are District supported resources that can provide appropriate materials for use to infuse Latino culture and history into instruction. Using Think Central (HMH *Journeys* online resource) and accessing the *Literacy and Language Guide*, you can search for trade books that are written by or about Latino culture, history, experience using the history, poetry, informational text, and or biographies, icons and headings. Trade book titles are found in the back of the LLG in the section titled "Literature Discussion: Suggested Trade Book Titles".

Another resource to utilize is myON. As you know, you can search for specific topics that will populate your library with related titles. For example a quick "Latino" search provided the following titles of books available to our students at their fingertips to include titles such as *Latino Legends of Baseball*; *Cesar Chavez*; *Ellen Ochoa*; *Hector P. Garcia*; *John "Danny" Olivas*; *Jose Antonio Novarro*; and *Sonia Sotomayor*.

Integrating the Latino history and culture into instruction is a worthy and important goal for all classrooms. Effective integration requires the use of accurate materials that represent the diversity of the Latino-American experience and the broad range of contributions made by Latino-Americans.

Resource Escamilla, K. (1992, September). *Integrating Mexican-American History and Culture into the Social Studies Classroom*. Retrieved from <https://www.ericdigest.org/1992-2/mexican.htm>

## Library Services

by: Michael Cambria

### STATE LIBRARY LAUNCHES NEW SPANISH VERSION OF DAYBYDAYNY FAMILY LITERACY WEBSITE

New York State Librarian, Bernard A. Margolis, recently announced the launch of a new website called *DayByDayNY in Spanish* (<http://www.daybydaynysp.org>). He invites library staff across the State to visit and use the website with parents and caregivers. This new website offers a Spanish version of New York State's popular online virtual family literacy calendar [DayByDayNY.org](http://www.daybydayny.org). The content changes each day, giving families with young children, caregivers, library staff, and teachers numerous daily learning activities and a fun story to read together. Both the English and the Spanish versions of *DayByDayNY* encourage a love of books, learning, and libraries that will last a lifetime and are designed to help parents and caregivers increase a young child's cognitive skills while having fun together at the same time.

While *DayByDayNY in Spanish* is designed for bilingual and Spanish-speaking families with young children, any family interested in learning more about the Spanish language will also enjoy using the new Spanish version of the site.

A fun story is provided each day by *One More Story* (<http://www.onemorestory.com/>), in the form of an eBook that includes original music and sound effects, produced by former Sesame Street Music Director, Robby Merkin. In addition, on the new website, there is a screencast in Spanish that shows how to navigate the different sections of the daily pages, monthly activities, health information, arts and crafts ideas, and where to find the map of New York State museums. This screencast can be found by scrolling to the bottom navigation bar and clicking "Sobre DaybyDayNY".

*DayByDayNY* and *DayByDayNY in Spanish* are important components of *Ready to Read at New York Libraries*, a statewide program from the New York State Library designed to help library staff further enhance and expand library early literacy services and programs.

## Science

by: Kelly Baudo, Director of Science

### " Infusing Latino History and Culture"

Latino culture has historical ties to science. The Aztecs and Mayans are known for their expertise in physics and astrophysics. The Incas were the architects and engineers of the sacred religious site of Machu Picchu in Peru, long considered one of the seven wonders of the modern world, along with the Mayan ruin of Chichén Itza in Mexico.

*"There's an overall awareness in Latino culture related to the importance of protecting the Earth. Dr. Francis Colón, who spent the last 11 years as a science and policy adviser on emerging technologies at the State Department stated "La tierra es parte de quienes somos (The Earth is a part of who we are)," as she pointed out that some of the most active populations in protecting the environment come from Latin America, "It's part of their core, the importance of protecting the Earth," she said."*

The above was quoted by NBS News, April 22, 2017

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/top-latino-scientists-march-science-if-scientists-don-t-speak-n749591>

### The History of Science in Latin America and the Caribbean (HOSLAC)

As part of an NSF Grant and published through AAAS Science NetLinks, [The History of Science in Latin America and the Caribbean \(HOSLAC\)](http://www.hoslac.org) is an NSF Funded project under the supervision of Prof. Julia E. Rodriguez at the University of New Hampshire. Its goal is to introduce scholarly and public audiences to the global phenomenon of science in its distinct Latin American contexts.

Website for HOSLAC: <http://www.hoslac.org>

HOSLAC is an archive that contains a wealth of original source materials, with explication, organized around a robust set of topics. The archive has created a menu in which the topics are organized in a mostly chronological order, but each topic can stand alone and form the basis of a rich unit of study for high school students. The resources can be used with younger students as part of classroom discussions or teacher presentations, and many of the individual resources, such as the maps and the illustrations and photographs of artifacts, can be used in the classroom.

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Nobel Prize winners / Nobel laureates:

- Mario Molina (1943- ), who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his work concerning the depletion of ozone in the stratosphere. He shared the prize with F. Sherwood Rowland, his mentor, who is also a past president of AAAS.
- Baruj Benacerraf (1920- ), who won the Nobel Prize in Medicine or Physiology in 1980 for his discovery of immune response (Ir) genes that determine structures on the cell surface that allow the immune system to distinguish between self and non-self.
- Argentinean chemist and medical doctor Luis Federico Leloir (1906-1987) won the Nobel Prize for chemistry in 1970 for discovering sugar nucleotides that synthesize carbohydrates in mammals.
- Bernardo Alberto Houssay (1887-1971) was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for discovering the role of the anterior hypophysis (or, pituitary gland) in the metabolism of sugar.
- Cesar Milstein (1927-2002), from Argentina, who won the Nobel Prize for physiology or medicine in 1984 for his theories about specificity in the immune system and discovering methods for the unlimited production of monoclonal antibodies.

## Social Studies

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### **Infusing Latino History and Culture into the Secondary Social Studies Classroom**

The Buffalo Public Schools Social Studies Department takes great care infusing Latino History and Culture into the High School Curriculum. The Grade 9: Global History & Geography course serves as the early foundation of Latino contributions in the study of World History and Culture. We then examine contributions by Latinos again in the Grade 11 United States History & Government course. The Buffalo Public Schools also offers exciting programs and extended learning opportunities for our students with BPS History Day & African American/Latino History Research Project *Our Story: Weaving our History from Past to Present*.

Buffalo Public Schools History Day is a year-long educational program sponsored by the Buffalo Public Schools Department of Social Studies and the Buffalo History Museum. It encourages students to explore local, state, national,

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and world history. After selecting a historical topic that relates to an annual theme, students conduct extensive research by using libraries, archives, museums, and oral history interviews. They analyze and interpret their findings, draw conclusions about their topics' significance in history, and create final projects that present their work. These projects can be entered into a series of competitions, from the local to the national level, where they are evaluated by professional historians and educators.

The African American/Latino History Research Project; "Our Story: Weaving our History from Past to Present" offered after school and on Saturdays at East, Middle Early College/Research Lab and McKinley High School allows our students to explore the following themes in an exciting and creative way:

- The Puerto Rican Diaspora: Examination of previous and current waves of Puerto Ricans moving to New York State. Explores the commonalities and differences between the generations of migrants. This strand explores the origins and evolution of cultural archetypes. Students could engage in a comparative lyrical analysis of modern and traditional song.
- Inter-Latino Discord: This strand will uncover some of the root causes of discord between groups of Latinos and develop action steps towards bridging relationships and fostering unity.
- Campo y El Barrio: The impact on growth and decline of industry and urbanization on life on La Isla Del Encanto.
- The Portrayal of Latinos in Media Over Time and Its Impact on Cultural Identity: Examines the significant power of mass media in defining public perceptions and attitudes towards Latinos.

### **What About Contributions of Ancient Mayans, Aztecs, Tainos, and Incas to Latino Culture?**

The ancient Maya, a diverse group of indigenous people who lived in parts of present-day Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, had one of the most sophisticated and complex civilizations in the Western Hemisphere. Between about 300 and 900 A.D., the Maya were responsible for a number of remarkable scientific achievements—in astronomy, agriculture, engineering, and communications. They used two calendars with one being based on a solar year and one on a sacred almanac. The Maya also developed a three-symbol numerical system for recording numbers into the millions.

The Aztecs Indians were a Mesoamerican people that lived in the area of central Mexico in the 14th, 15<sup>th</sup>, and 16th century. The Aztec history is one of the most famous, enigmatic, and tragic histories in the world. The Aztecs were nomadic, hunter-gatherer tribes and they mixed their culture with civilizations that lived in that area before them. This mixing of cultures was the foundation for Aztec culture as we know it today. The Aztec civilization developed in Mesoamerica beginning in the 1200s. They created a 365-day agricultural calendar and used a sacred calendar as well. They created a writing system that was based on symbols and glyphs. There are Aztec books that remain and that share the rich depictions of Aztec legends. These books also detail the beliefs of the Aztec people and their daily lifestyle.

Some historians estimate the Taíno population may have reached more than three million on Hispaniola alone as the 15th century drew to a close, with smaller settlements elsewhere in the Caribbean. Taíno towns were described by Spanish chroniclers as densely settled, well organized and widely dispersed. The Indians were inventive people who learned to strain cyanide from life-giving yuca, developed pepper gas for warfare, devised an extensive pharmacopeia from nature, built oceangoing canoes large enough for more than 100 paddlers and played games with a ball made of rubber, which fascinated Europeans seeing the material for the first time. The Taíno made exquisite pottery, wove intricate belts from dyed cotton and carved enigmatic images from wood, stone, shell and bone.

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Some of the most significant accomplishments of the Incas included their inventions, such as the flute, drum, and Inca calendar. Culturally, the Incas were also adept in creating pottery and cloth, and politically they are known for integrating imperial policies with ethnic diversity, which was ahead of its time. The Incas were magnificent engineers. They built a system of roads and bridges across the roughest terrains of the Andes. Bridges were built everywhere in the empire. Their suspension bridges were built using natural fibers. Indigenous people still use the same technique in remote areas in the Andes. Through their system of collective labor and the most advanced centralized economy, the Incas were able to secure unlimited manual labor. They built more than 14,000 miles of paved road that connected Cuzco, the capital, to all corners of the empire. These are important historical contributions that has contributed to the rich Latino history and heritage today. We should share these facts and resources with all students on a frequent basis.

Sources ( BPS Website, WNY HistoryDay.Com, NYS Frameworks for the Standards, History Channel)

## Art Education

by: Michele Agosto, Supervisor

**Puerto Rico and Hurricane Maria:  
Demonstrating the Power of the Arts  
as a Platform for Student Voice When Addressing  
Social Justice Issues and Current Events**



*Mural by Abey Charrón (Juan Cristobal Zulueta/Flickr)*

As the recovery from Hurricane Maria begins, it will be the arts that will allow for artists of all levels, ages and backgrounds to express their deepest compassion for all those impacted. And for some who were in the eye of this terrible storm, the arts will lend itself to their healing, reflection... and a voice. The devastation to life, property, livelihood, and cultural heritage has been monumental. We all know at least one person that has been directly or indirectly affected by this (if you are reading this, I am one of those people). More than likely you will learn that many

## Music Education

by: James Schwanz, Supervisor

**Beyond A Newsletter, It Needs to be Experienced  
Latin Music USA**



For many, when asked to discuss their knowledge of influential Latin Musicians in the USA, the list may include many mainstream artists like Enrique Iglesias, Selena, Shakira, Ricky Martin, Marc Anthony, Jennifer Lopez and Pitbull. What they may not realize is that, beyond the popularity of the large ensemble of significant, popular musicians, there is a rich history of traditional and classical musicians who have had a substantial influence on American musical styles.

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of your Puerto Rican students are deeply affected- some are confused, angry, scared, or saddened. Add to that the newest of our Puerto Rican students leaving what they know, to come to a city they didn't expect to be in. **It is the arts that can help guide these emotions and help students answer their own complex questions through inquiry, critique, reflection and creative application. Using examples of artists that students know can help with self-discovery, understanding...and possibly help make a difference for those in need with their art work.**

A great example is **Lin-Manuel Miranda**, famous for his development and production of *In the Heights* and *Hamilton*, became overrun with anxiety from not hearing from his Puerto Rico family for days. After constant obsessing over the extent of Hurricane Maria's devastation, Miranda decided to gather his artist friends and create a musical tribute to his beloved island. The result is the single, ***Almost Like Praying***. Lin-Manuel Miranda told NBC News that, "The response of the artists I contacted for the relief effort, to a person, were yes, even if they hadn't heard the song. They just said yes because they wanted to find a way to help." All proceeds from the song go to the [Hispanic Federation](#), an organization started by his father that is giving aid to victims of the island.

And now it is the national and international arts organizations that realize the importance of their support of the artists in Puerto Rico. **The Andy Warhol Foundation**, and the **Robert Rauschenberg Foundation** joined forces with Lin-Manuel Miranda and The Hispanic Federation, announcing they will each provide \$100,000 in emergency grants to a hurricane relief fund run by San Juan-based arts organization **Beta-Local** aimed at both immediate recovery and long-term rebuilding of shared community/art spaces.

It is these types of motivating stories that will inspire great art works that are meaningful and relevant in their lives.

[Latino Rebels: Artists respond to the cruelest storm](#)

[Lin-Manuel Miranda brings Latino musicians in response to Puerto Rico with a song of hope after Hurricane Maria](#)

[Warhol and Rauschenberg Foundations Ask Lin-Manuel Miranda to Join Its Hurricane Maria Relief Effort](#)



With its development more than 400 years old and its roots in Mexico, Central and South America and even across the Atlantic in Spain and Portugal, the foundations of

Latin Music are more expansive than can be adequately expressed in one news article.

In 2009, PBS, in conjunction with the BBC created a four-part series aimed at raising awareness and popularity about Latin culture, titled "Latin Music USA." Each hour-long segment focuses on celebrating various heritage and cultural influences of Latin Music in the USA and how it has been integral to shaping popular music in the U.S.

The links to each hour-long segment may be accessed directly through the attached website addresses below or the shared, YouTube links.

**Home page -**

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/latinmusicusa/home/>

**Latin Music USA - Hour 1: Bridges -**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3x9Cdpo4-4>

**Hour 2: The Salsa Revolution -**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9xQVpci0\\_E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9xQVpci0_E)

**Latin Music USA – Hour 3: Borderlands -**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbc7Kdca3qo>

**Latin Music USA – Hour 4: Divas and Superstars -**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6OR2LcdWYYI&t=17s>

**Multimedia Resources -**

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/latinmusicusa/watch/>

**Meet the legends of Latin American Music -**

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/latinmusicusa/legends/>

**Explore the Music -**

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/latinmusicusa/music/>

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Please access these links to make the contributions of Latino musicians and their music accessible to all of our students on an ongoing basis in music class.

# World Languages Department By: Pietro Mendola, Supervisor

The newsletter theme for the Department of Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction's November Newsletter is "Infusing Latino History and Culture into Lessons." The notion of infusing culture into lessons is nothing new to teachers of World Languages. In this article, I will share with you the aspects of culture that should be taught or infused and some strategies for doing so for any language.

The following are aspects of culture that should be taught: cultural products, cultural practices, and perspectives.

- *Cultural products* - can be tangible or intangible creations of a particular culture, reflecting the perspectives of that culture. Examples of tangible and intangible creations are: art (pottery, paintings), music (songs, instruments), jokes, and societal contributions.

- *Cultural practices* - can be patterns of social interactions and behaviors. Examples of these can be uses of space and gestures, religious practices, festivals and celebrations, turn taking (conversations, games), and shopping behaviors.

- *Perspectives* - are meanings, values, beliefs, views and ideas of a particular culture, underlining their products and practices. Examples of these can be attitudes about roles within the family, the importance of family, and ideas about health, school, etc.

When planning and engaging students in cultural activities, teachers should carefully organize and incorporate these activities into lessons to enrich and inform the teaching content. The following items can be useful when infusing culture into lessons: authentic materials, proverbs, role play, culture capsules, students as cultural resources, ethnographic studies, literature, and film.

A product of Latino culture that can be infused into a lesson would be a "Pepito" joke. Using a joke, would be aligning an authentic source to an aspect of culture. The concept of the diminutive (ito, ita, itos, itas) can be extracted out of the authentic document below (Lupita, animalitos, Juanito, and Pepito) and taught to students both as a grammatical and cultural point.

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Coincidentally, the Mexican holiday, El Día de los Muertos (The Day of the Dead) begins on October 31<sup>st</sup> and ends on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. In short, El Día de los Muertos is a celebration where deceased members of one's family are remembered and honored. Sharing information and infusing activities such as making Calaveras (sugar skulls) would align with teaching Latino cultural practices. The central idea of El Día de los Muertos which is family, also connects to the Latino perspective of the importance of family.

The following links will take you to articles about El Día de los Muertos:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Day\\_of\\_the\\_Dead](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Day_of_the_Dead) and

<http://people.com/human-interest/dia-de-los-muertos-not-mexican-halloween-but-so-much-more/>.



It is also very important to infuse Latino History into lessons as well. The National Education Association (NEA) has a great website with lessons about Latino History that can be used as a resource. This website offers a variety of lesson plans mostly grades 9 – 12. Lesson plans touch on topics such as Puerto Rico's relationship with the United States, the farmworker movement, and the history of Latino participation in the voting process. The following link will take you to this resource:

<http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/hispanic-heritage-month-9-12.html>.

A local connection to an organization that prides itself to the preservation of Latino history is the Raíces Theatre Company. This passionate group of artists' goal is to preserve the Latino experience and roots through their works. The following link will take you to the Raíces Theatre Company website:

<https://raicestheatrecompany.com/about-us/>. You are invited to use this website as a resource to learn about this



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organization, their theatrical works and their connection to Latino history.

The infusion of culture into lessons should be everyday whether it be something small or a broad topic. The culture of a particular group of people should be introduced in a way that is nonjudgmental and does not place value or judgement on differences between student's own culture and that of the language being learned.

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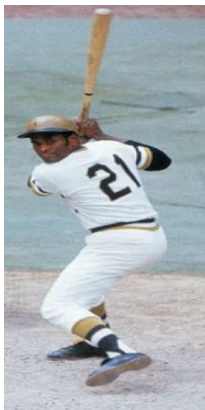
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## Physical Education

by: [Andrea Norton, Supervisor](#)

Infusing Latino History and Culture into lessons should occur frequently for students to gain greater understanding of both the sport and the diversity of participants. This can be integrated when teaching about the history and successful athletes that have contributed to sports and recreational activities. A few examples are below.

One sport that Latinos have developed a long tradition of participation and athletic achievement is baseball. 55 million Latinos make up 17 percent of the current U.S. population. In Major League Baseball on Opening Day 2016, Latino players made up the largest minority group representing upwards of 28.5 percent. Latinos have been part of baseball since the game's 19<sup>th</sup> century origins as Cuban students in the US introduced the game when returning home. It soon spread to other Latin American countries as U.S. sailors, miners, railroad workers, and missionaries staged exhibition games with local teams. Latinos occupy a unique place in baseball's racial history, not fully excluded like African Americans and not fully accepted like Euro-Americans; rather they were racially in-between. Before the integration of baseball, there were over fifty light-skinned Latin American players who joined the Major Leagues, mostly from Cuba.



A champion of hispanic and black rights who began his career before the end of segregation, **Roberto Clement** was the first Latino in professional baseball to reach 3,000 hits. He won 12 Golden Glove awards, played in two World Series winning MVP in 1971. Clemente stated, "My greatest satisfaction comes from helping to erase the old opinion about Latin Americans and blacks." While delivering supplies after an earthquake in Nicaragua he died in a plane crash in 1972. The trailblazing Puerto Rican-born ballplayer not only had a hall of fame career, but was a politically conscious representative of the Latino community at a time when professional sports included few Latinos.

In golf, many Latinos could only gain entry into the sport by becoming a caddy. This is how the two most well-known Latino golfers got their start. Mexican American golfer **Lee Trevino** and Puerto Rican golfer **Juan "Chi Chi" Rodriguez** learned the game by caddying and jumping fences to play

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golf. In 1978, **Nancy Lopez** was the first Latina to become a professional golfer. Lopez went on to a remarkable career in the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) tour, becoming one of the best all-time women golfers and inspiring young Latinas to play the sport. Mexico native **Lorena Ochoa** and Mexican American Lizette Salas represent a new generation of Latina golfers who are making an impact on the LPGA tour.

Latino athletic success has led to more educational opportunities and ultimately to successful professional careers in business, education, and politics. Many Latino and Latina athletes have also acted on their social conscience to defend and advance the interests of their communities.

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