



**New Jersey Consortium
for Immigrant Children**



For Immediate Release

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Stakeholders Collaborate to Address Education Inequities Facing Latinx Students

Roundtable Report [The LatinX Experience in Schools: A Policy and Action Agenda](#) released by the New Jersey Consortium for Immigrant Children and the Latino Action Network Foundation

09/29/2023– On January 14, 2023, the Latino Action Network Foundation (LANF) and the New Jersey Consortium for Immigrant Children (NJCIC) hosted an education roundtable to identify concerns affecting Latinx students in New Jersey Schools. Participants represented a cross-section of educational stakeholders including educators, students, and community leaders..

The extensive discussion revealed an urgent need for improved access to resources, more equitable support systems, and comprehensive changes to address systemic barriers for Latinx students, including immigrant students and English learners/Multilingual learners. The top concerns identified were accessibility and resource gaps for families and students, data disaggregation, funding, and lack of transparency in educational processes. The roundtable discussion resulted in recommendations for addressing these barriers. These recommendations underscore a commitment to fostering greater equity, access to resources, and inclusivity in schools across the state. Key recommendations include:

- Create an Office of Educational Equity within the existing Division of Civil Rights under the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General.
- Enable students, parents, guardians, and others to directly submit complaints regarding education equity or civil rights concerns to this specialized office.

- Raise awareness and provide resources to enhance clarity about education rights in a range of languages that mirror the diversity of New Jersey’s student population.
- Encourage schools to establish partnerships and opportunities for community members and organizations to engage with schools to foster increased community representation within the school environment.

“A lot of the discussions around underrepresentation in schools resonated with our prior work on segregation in New Jersey schools. We are ready to work with stakeholders to transform these recommendations into tangible solutions. Together, we can build a more equitable educational landscape for all,” said Jesselly De La Cruz, Executive Director at the Latino Action Network Foundation.

Participant David A. Matos, Jr. stated, “Many school districts ignore the plight of Latino students because they don’t hear from the parents.” Reflecting on the final report, Matos said it “offers several recommendations to empower parents, students and community leaders to become more effective advocates for the attention and services to which Latino students are entitled.”

Raven Diaz, another participant, reflected on her own experiences as a Latinx student while she attended a public school, “In sixth grade, two English Limited proficient students joined our math class. They faced language barriers and, one day, our teacher aggressively insisted they speak English, using condescending gestures and tone. This incident left them shocked and upset, highlighting how intolerance can come from unexpected sources like educators. It was impactful for my younger self to witness. This report offers recommendations that can be a recourse for students and families facing similar experiences.”.

NJCIC and LANF call on the New Jersey State Legislature, and Governor Murphy’s administration to review the recommendations cited in the report and to direct funds towards the creation of an Office of Educational Equity..

“The roundtable discussion makes clear that we have a lot of work ahead to create an inclusive and equitable educational system in New Jersey for all children, including immigrant children,” said Lady Jimenez Torres, Policy Director at the New Jersey Consortium for Immigrant Children. “Specifically, the lack of accountability and transparency about student rights was a common theme among the participants. These recommendations highlight the need for greater collaboration between schools, the community and state agencies to ensure that immigrant students and their families receive the support and resources they need to thrive.”

About the NJ Consortium for Immigrant Children

NJCIC works with New Jersey's young immigrants and their allies to advance their full, fearless participation in our society. We seek lawful status for immigrant children and youth and advocate for systemic change in how they access legal and social services.

For more information or to join our efforts visit our website at <https://njcic.org/>

About the Latino Action Network Foundation

Established in 2010, the Latino Action Network Foundation (LANF) is a 501c3. LANF was established as a charitable organization with the goal of uniting New Jersey's diverse Latino communities. We are deeply committed to a just society for everyone and oppose all forms of discrimination including those based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, class, disability, or sexual orientation.

For more information or to join our efforts visit our website at <https://www.lanfoundation.org/>