



News Release

33 Whitney Avenue
New Haven, CT 06510
Voice: 203-498-4240
Fax: 203-498-4242
www.ctvoices.org

JULY 26, 2018

Contact: Roger Senserrich
Communications Director
203-498-4240 x117
rsenserrich@ctvoices.org

Vast Differences in School Experience and Education Outcomes Persist for Connecticut Latino Students

NEW HAVEN – Access to a robust and challenging education allows all Connecticut students to pursue their dreams and live to their full potential. Ensuring a quality education for all children is also essential to have a competitive, well-prepared workforce and shared prosperity. According to a new report by Connecticut Voices for Children, the state’s more than 130,000 Latino students do not have the same access to educational opportunities as their White peers, resulting in widespread and significant disparities.

Latino students are less likely to have teachers of their same ethnicity or to enroll in advanced courses, and they are more likely to be chronically absent from class while facing harsher disciplinary practices than White students for similar behaviors. These disparities translate into education outcomes that have long-term negative impacts on the students themselves and the state’s economic health.

“Whether they are Latino or White, how children experience school is very much impacted by their ethnicity,” says Camara Stokes-Hudson, Associate Policy Fellow at Connecticut Voices for Children and one of the study’s authors. “Latino students face policies and practices that often are biased and puts them at a disadvantage. In addition, some of our Latino students are facing further challenges due to the complexities of learning a new language or navigating the immigration process for themselves or their families.”

According to the report, Latino students are two times more likely to be suspended than their White counterparts. Latino students are less likely to have teachers of their own ethnicity: although 25 percent of Connecticut students are Latino, only 4 percent of teachers are Latino themselves. Chronic absenteeism is also significantly higher; the share of Latino students missing ten percent or more days of the school year is close to three times the rate of their White peers.

These facts have a direct and immediate impact on academic achievement. In 2014 Latino students in Connecticut who missed less than 9 days of school per year had a graduation rate of 86.6 percent, compared to the 38 percent graduation rate for chronically absent students. The graduation rate for Latino students is 76 percent, trailing the 93 percent graduation rates for Whites. White students meet or exceed Smarter Balance Math and English standards at twice the rate of Latino students. Average SAT scores for Latinos are 192 points below White students. The gap is even wider for students who are English Learners (about one in ten Latino students fall in this category), who trail their White peers by 321 points.

“Investing in Connecticut’s schools is an essential component of both ensuring the economic growth of our state and ensuring the positive intellectual, social and emotional development of Connecticut’s future voters, workers, and leaders,” Says Wendy Simmons, Director of Education and Equity at Connecticut Voices for Children. “Breaking down the systemic barriers to opportunity that drive achievement disparities should be one of the state’s priorities.”

The report recommends policies to reduce inequity and support student success, including expanding anti-bias training for all school personnel, increasing the number of Latino teachers, expanding state efforts to support for teachers of color, expanding access to programs and interventions related to chronic absenteeism, and improving data collection regarding school discipline. To ensure that schools have the necessary funding to offer a full range of courses and programs, Connecticut Voices for Children proposes funding reforms, including fully funding PILOT and a statewide property tax for education.

About Connecticut Voices for Children: Connecticut Voices for Children is a research-based child advocacy organization working to ensure that all Connecticut children have an equitable opportunity to achieve their full potential. In furtherance of its mission, Connecticut Voices for Children produces high-quality research and analysis, promotes citizen education, advocates for policy change at the state and local level, and works to develop the next generation of leaders.