

Family is the difference: La familia es la diferencia

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Introduction:

This plan outlines an informational communication campaign that will change the behavior of Latino parents in D.C. by showing them how their culture can be a source of strength for their children in school. The main objective is to decrease the high school dropout rate of Latino youth.

Term Use: Latino, Hispanic, or Country of Origin:

For the purpose of this communication plan, “Latino” and “Hispanic” will be used interchangeably. These words will be used to represent peoples with heritage from over 20 countries in South and Central America where Spanish is the main language spoken. While referring to the country of origin of each Latino group is preferable, it is not possible for this report because people from more than one country were studied for this campaign and are the target audience. “Hispanic” and “Latino” describe an ethnic group (Olivos 112). Government agencies, the media, civic groups, political leaders, and scholars in this country use both terms, however they are not widely used in Spanish speaking countries (Taylor et al 23). According to a 2009 Pew Hispanic Center report, 94% of Latinos ages 16 to 25 first refer to themselves by their family’s country of origin, 87% use either “Hispanic” or “Latino”, and 67% use “American” (Taylor et al 21). Latinos do not have a strong preference between the terms: 51% say they prefer “Hispanic,” 35% say they have no preference, and 14% say they prefer “Latino” (Taylor et al 23).

Situation:

Why High School Completion Is Important:

Like other young people, Latinos who graduate from high school have more employment opportunities and a higher possibility of earning wages that will allow them to live above the poverty line than those who do not complete high school (Rodríguez Valladares 155). Mayra Rodríguez Valladares takes this a step further by arguing that education beginning with preschool is critical for Latino children to pull themselves out of poverty in her article “From the Beginning... There Needs to Be Light.” Rodríguez Valladares explains that education can help “break the cycle of poverty” that many Latino youth already live in—one third of Latinos under the age of 5 years live below the poverty line (Rodríguez Valladares 155).

An article from 2004 in the *Hispanic Journal of Behavior Sciences* explains, “Students who dropout from high school experience lower income, greater unemployment, are significantly over represented in the adult corrections population, and are more likely to require social services during their lifetimes compared to high school graduates” (Martinez et al 129). Of course this might be a slippery slope argument, many high school dropouts are productive citizens, however opportunities are more limited and the dangers described above exist. Further, a 2009 report by the Pew Hispanic Center reported that young Latino high school dropouts (born in the United States) are twice as likely to have been in a fight within the last year than young Latinos who had completed

high school; this relationship is similar with receiving armed threats and being questioned by the police (Taylor et al 88). Thirty percent of U.S.-born, young, Latino high school dropouts report they were in a fight within the last year (Taylor et al 88). Related to violence, the impact of dropping out of high school on employment lasts even if those dropouts go on to complete a GED. Latinos who complete a GED have a higher unemployment rate than those who completed high school (9% vs. 7%). Further, Latinos with a high school diploma are 5% more likely to be employed year-round—suggesting employment in more stable jobs such as non-agricultural jobs (Fry “Hispanic, High School...” 3).

Dropout Overview:

The number of Latino youth who complete high school has grown since 1970 (Fry “The Changing...” iii). In 2010, 73% of Latino youth completed high school, which was a record rate and a three percent increase from 2009 (Fry “Hispanic College...” 9). Also, the number of Latino high school graduates who continued on to college increased between the same years from 39% in 2009 to 44% in 2010 (Fry “Hispanic College...” 5). Overall, 86% of Latinos youth are in school or working, compared to 93% of white youth (Fry “The Changing...” ii). These increases are encouraging and show a trend of improvement, however the number of Latino youth who dropout of high school remains at an unacceptably high level.

Latinos have the highest high school dropout rate of any ethnic group in the United States. According to estimate from March 2009 made by the Pew Hispanic Center, “some 17.2% of Latino youths had not received a high school diploma and were not enrolled in school, compared with only 8.3% of all youths” (Taylor at el 48). This percentage is especially staggering when compared to youths in other ethnic groups; 8.3% of black youths were not in school and without a diploma, 5.7% of white youths, and 3.7% of Asian youths (Taylor at el 48). In other words, the dropout rate of Latino youth is more than twice that of the ethnic group with next highest dropout rate (Taylor at el 48). According to a Pew Hispanic Center report from May 2010, “In comparison with the 41% of Hispanic adults ages 20 and older who were high school dropouts, 23% of black adults had not attained at least a high school diploma. White adults (14%) and adults of Asian origin (15%) were less likely to be high school dropouts” (Fry “Hispanics, High School...” 6).

Latinos born outside of the United States largely impact the overall high school dropout rate of Latinos. According to a study published in 2007, almost half (44%) of Latinos born outside of the United States do not have high school diplomas compared to 15% of Latinos born in the United States (Schmidt 175). In May 2010, the Pew Hispanic Center reported similar percentages, “Some 52% of foreign-born Latino adults are high school dropouts, compared with 25% of the native born. And among Hispanic dropouts, some 21% of the native born have a GED, compared with just 5% of the foreign born” (Fry “Hispanics, High School...” ii). Second generation Latino and black youth have the same high school dropout rate (9%), which shows more high school completion among Latinos born in the U.S. than those who were born in other countries, however Latinos and blacks are almost twice as likely to drop out of high school than white youth who have dropout rate of 6% and Asian youth (4%) (Taylor at el 10). There is also an age gap;

today's young U.S.-born Latinos are more likely to complete high school than U.S.-born Latinos of the past, "Among native born Hispanic 20- to 29-year olds (who were educated in U.S. schools), 20% were high school dropouts. The dropout rates for 20- to 29-year-old whites (12%), blacks (19%), and Asians or Pacific Islanders (6%) were lower" (Fry "Hispanics, High School..." 7).

Once Latinos dropout of high school it is unlikely they will earn a high school diploma. According to a 2008 report, only 10% of Latino high school dropouts get a General Educational Development (GED) credential, compared to 20% of black high school dropouts and 30% of white high school dropouts (Fry "Hispanic, High School..." 1).

Reasons for Dropping Out:

There are many reasons why Latino youth dropout of high school, however the two most common are frustration related to language barriers and the need to get a job (Lopez 6). According to a survey conducted by the Pew Hispanic Center in 2009, 74% of Latinos dropped out of school to earn money for their families (Lopez 1). Another report by the Pew Hispanic Center, showed that about 50% of Latinos say they discontinue school because of difficulties with English while about 20% say that education is not needed for their careers (Taylor et al 10). With regard to language barriers, according to 2010 report, "The relative isolation of new immigrant students (because of linguistic and cultural differences) means fewer opportunities for peers in the school to build a constructive social and educational environment" (Behnke et al 390).

For Latino students whose parents do not speak English or did not attend high school it may be hard to find support from their families to finish school (Behnke et al 389). Melissa Marschell of Rice University suggest:

Extant research consistently finds less involvement among Latino and immigrant parents and documents the many barriers that discourage and reduce their involvement, especially in formal school activities. While longer exposure to schools and neighborhoods where poverty, language barriers, and isolation are pervasive often underlies the low academic achievement and high dropout rates of Latino students evidence suggests that the lack of cooperation among schools, parents, and their communities and the generally lower levels of school involvement among parents in these communities also play an important role. (Marschell 1069)

Parents are limited if they cannot speak English because it prevents them from interacting with teachers and other school personal (Sampson 100). Because many parents have not finished school themselves they may not know how to help their children excel (Sampson 106). For example, one researcher found that few Latino children participate in extra curricular activities and spend a large portion of their time playing and watching TV rather than doing homework and other educational activities (Sampson 100). Further, extra burdens can be passed into Latino students if they are the only ones able to speak English in their families, as explained by William A. Sampson in his book *Poor Latino Families & School Preparation: Are They Doing the Right Thing?*:

Further, how are the children [Latino children with parents who speak only or mostly Spanish] to prepare for a world in which most of the interactions in English and the culture is predominately non-Latino? Many of these children are in a bind, for they must grow up quite fast. They often serve as interpreters for their parents, putting them in a position not only to interpret but also to explain educationally related topics and more adult issues. With that kind of pressure, education and school may often take a backseat. (Sampson 103)

Most of the problems stated above relate to socioeconomic difficulties and when dropout rates are examined by level of socioeconomic status rather than by ethnicity, rates of dropping out among Latinos and other ethnic groups from the same socioeconomic class are similar (Behnke et al 386). In addition to socioeconomic and immigration-related challenges, many Latino students face social challenges. As described in an article from the *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, “Latino youth rank highest in recent reports [2008] of teen depression, suicidal thoughts sexual risk taking, and teen pregnancy” (Behnke et al 388). For young Latino women pregnancy is an important cause of high school dropout. According to a Pew Hispanic Center report from 2009,

Young Hispanic females have the highest rates of teen parenthood of any major racial or ethnic group in the country. According to the Center’s analysis of Census data, about one-in four Hispanic females (26%) becomes a mother by age 19. This compares with a rate of 22% among young black females, 11% among young white females, and 6% among young Asian females. (Taylor et al 9)

One additional social barrier discouraging Latino youths from finishing high school was suggested in a 2004 report: discrimination (Martinez et al 128). According to the report in *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, “Analysis showed that Latino students reported a high frequency if discriminatory experiences and institutional barriers at school, and Latino students and their parents were more likely to experience institutional barriers compared to non-Latinos” (Martinez et al 128). Alejandro Portes and Alejandro Rivas in their article “The Adaption of Migrant Children” describe the discrimination faced by Mexican students—their findings may be applied to many Latino groups. Portes and Rivas explain that Mexican students are assigned racial stigmas by school personal who classify them as “inferior to white and Asian students” (Portes and Rivas 237). Portes and Rivas develop this idea to explain part of the pressures that lead to Latino school dropout, “This treatment [stigmas and racialization] becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, as Mexican-origin youths close ranks to defend themselves against discrimination, abandoning aspirations for high academic achievement and coming to reject members of their own group who retain such aspirations” (Portes and Rivas 237). Further, according to a 2009 Pew Hispanic Report, 40% of Latinos ages 16 to 25 say someone in their family or friend group has experienced racial or ethnic discrimination (Taylor et al 10).

Considering institutional barriers, most Latino students attend large schools that have high student-teacher ratios and serve poor neighborhoods (Fry “The High Schools...” i). Research conducted by the Pew Hispanic Center in 2005 found that 56% of Latino

students attend schools ranked in the top 10% for school size in the United States while only 32% of black students and 26% of white students attend these same schools (Fry “The High Schools...” i). Further, “Nearly 37 percent of Hispanics are educated at public high schools with a student/teacher ratio greater than 22 to 1, in comparison with 14 percent of blacks and 13 percent of whites” (Fry “The High Schools...” i).

College Enrollment Implications

: In 2010, the 1.8 million Latino students enrolled in four-year colleges and universities made them the largest minority group attending four-year institutions (Fry “Hispanics College...” 8). In 2010, only 32% of Latino youth were enrolled in a college or university compared to 38% of blacks, 43% of whites, and 62% of Asian youth (Fry “Hispanics college...” 5). Between 2009 and 2010, Latino enrollment in college increased by 24% (about 350,000 students) (Fry “Hispanics College...” 7). These percentages are particularly interesting when comparing Latino and African American students because while fewer Latino students continue on to college than African American students, Latinos have higher SAT average scores than African American students (Cortés 197).

Despite these positive trends in Latino college participation, Latinos still lag behind other groups in terms of earned degrees. According to an article from the *Education Digest* by Gary Stern, “Only 60% of Latino students who aspire to graduate from a four-year college do so, compared with 77% of African-Americans and 76% of whites” (Stern 46). Further:

Although Hispanic youth have narrowed the gap in college enrollment, Hispanic young adults continue to be the least educated major racial or ethnic group in terms of completion of bachelor’s degree. In 2010, only 13% if Hispanics 25- to 29-years-old had completed at least a bachelor’s degree. In comparison, more than half (53%) of non-Hispanic Asian young adults have at least a bachelor’s degree, and nearly 39% of white young adults completed a four-year degree. Among non-Hispanic blacks 25- to 29-years-old, 19% have at least a bachelor’s degree. The low college completion of Hispanic young adults partly reflects the lower school level of Hispanic immigrants. Among native-born Hispanic 25- to 29-year-olds, 20% had completed a bachelor’s degree. (Fry “Hispanics College...” 5-6)

The number of Latinos who do graduate from high school and continue on to college is low. In 2000, of the 64% of Latino students who graduated high school, only 36% continued on to a four-year college or university (Percy 201).

College enrollment of Latinos by gender has also changed dramatically. According to an article in *Diverse: Issues on Education*, 57% of Latinos in college are female (Oguntoyinbo 14). This is a drastic change for Latino females with regard to schooling. In 1970, only one-third of young female Hispanics were enrolled in school or college; by 2007, nearly half of young female Hispanics were pursuing schooling” (Fry “”The Changing...” i). The fact that there are more female, Latino college students than Latino, male students relates in part to social pressures that hinder Latinos throughout their

educational journey, “Experts say other barriers that derail many Hispanic men from going to college begins as early as elementary school. Even if they excel academically at a young age, peers may tag them as “acting White,” a phenomenon also common among many urban-dwelling African Americans” (Oguntoyinbo 15). Further, Latino families expect their sons to contribute to the family income, especially if the young, Latino male has a child; this expectation that Latino males will work decreases their participation in college (Oguntoyinbo 14).

Educational achievement does not necessarily reflect the goals and values Latinos associate with education. Nearly all Latinos (youth 89% and adults 88%), “agree with the statement that a college degree is important for getting ahead in life” (Taylor et al 10), which demonstrates the strength of the socioeconomic, social, and cultural barriers that prevent Latino youth from completing school. Further, research shows that Latino parents hope that their children will attend college (Oguntoyinbo 47). However, because many Latino parents have not attended college themselves and are not familiar with the processes of applying to college they are unable to provide much help to their children throughout the application and educational process (Oguntoyinbo 47). Paying for college is also a challenge; many colleges are too expensive for Latinos to attend, especially if they have limited access to financial assistance either because of immigration status or lack of knowledge about application processes to apply for financial aid. Finally, young Latinos have close connections to their families and feel responsible for contributing to their families’ economic success; clear evidence of this is that most Latinos students who do attend colleges attend ones within commuting distance from their family’s home and also work (Brown 93).

Successful Practices:

Members of students’ communities, schools, and families all play important roles in helping students graduate from high school (Percey 222). Most research done on Latino dropouts and how to decrease dropout rates has focused on the practices and structures of schools and how those impact Latino students.

In 1999, the federal government sponsored the Hispanic Dropout Project, which went to schools in the U.S. with a large portion of Latino students and recorded practices that aided in their graduation. These included, “setting high expectations, helping students envision a positive future, providing access to a rigorous academic curriculum, providing tutoring and mentoring, valuing students’ language and culture, and involving parents” (Percey 204). Especially relevant to this plan, parent involvement in their educations increases the likelihood that young adults will complete school (Behnke et al 389). Researchers suggest that parents should set high standard but at the same time be supportive of their children (Sampson 98). Further, involved parents help promote self-esteem and positive attitudes toward school (Marschall 1056).

Audience:

Latinos In the United States:

Latinos are the largest minority group in the United States making up 16% of the total U.S. population in 2010 (Passel et al 4). Latinos became the largest ethnic/racial group in the United States in 2006 (Estrada 150). In 2009, Latinos were 15.8% of the U.S. population, whites 65.4%, blacks 12.1%, and Asians (and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders) 4.6% (Taylor et al 13). From 2000 through 2010, Latinos accounted for 56% of the population growth in the United States, growing from 35.5 million people in 2000 to 50.5 million people in 2010 (Passel et al 1). The growth in the Latino population during that time was 43% (Passel et al 1). Latinos are the fastest growing population with an annual growth rate of 3.4% compared to Asians (3.2%), blacks (1.3%), and non-Hispanic whites (0.3%) (Estrada 153). The Latino population in the United States is projected to comprise one in five Americans by 2030 (De Los Santos 91). From these numbers it is clear that the Latinos are an influential and key population in the United States and will only continue to become more important.

The Pew Hispanic Center estimates that 17% of Latinos (22% of Latinos between the ages of 16 and 25) are undocumented immigrants and that about half of Latinos born outside of the United States living in the United States are undocumented (Taylor et al 7). In 2009, the Pew Hispanic Center reported that two-thirds of Hispanics ages 16 to 25 are native-born Americans; 37% of Latinos in this age group are children of immigrants and 29% are at least third generation (Taylor et al 6). In 2006, according to the Migration Policy Institute, 30.7% of all foreign-born persons in the United States were from Mexico (Olivos 112). Further, as of 2008, Latinos of Mexican origin made up 64% of the Latino population in the United States, and the next closest group was Puerto Ricans at 9% of the Latino Population (Olivos 112).

The Pew Hispanic Center reported that in 2010, of the 50.5 million Latinos in the United States, 31.8 million (about 62% of Latinos in the United States) were of Mexican origin; 4.6 million (9.2%) were Puerto Rican; 1.8 million (3.5%) were Cuban; 1.6 million (3.3%) were Salvadoran; and 1.4 million (2.8%) were Dominican (Lopez and Dockterman 3). Between 2000 and 2010 the Guatemalan population grew by 180%, the Salvadorian population in the U.S. grew 152%, the Colombian population grew 93%, the Dominican population grew by 85%, the Cuban population grew by 44%, and the Puerto Rican population grew by 36% (Lopez and Dockterman 2).

Latinos are the youngest major ethnic group in the United States with a median age of 27 years, compared to 31 for blacks, 36 for Asians, and 41 for whites (Taylor et al 13). Latinos comprise a greater portion of the school-age population than other groups in the United States. The Pew Hispanic Center reported in 2009 that, 20% of school-aged children are Latino and 25% of newborns are Latino (Taylor et al 1). Further, according to Melissa Marschell of Rice University, in 2000, Latinos formed 41% of the student body in the ten largest public school districts (Marschell 1053). Finally, by 2030 it is estimated that Latinos will comprise 23% of all U.S. high school students (Percy 201). Most Latino students (84%) were born in the United States (Olivos 112).

According to the Pew Hispanic Center, in 2010, 76% of the Latino population in the United States lived in nine states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, New Mexico, New Jersey, New York, and Texas (Passel et al 2). In addition to these nine states the 2010 U.S. Census found that the Latino population in Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee, South Carolina, Maryland, and South Dakota more than doubled (Passel et al 2).

Latinos In Washington D.C. Area:

According to information from 2010, there are 55 thousand Latinos in Washington, D.C., and they make up 9.15% of the population (Passel et al 6). Also, there are 12 thousand Latino children in the Washington, D.C. (Passel et al 7). Of the Hispanics in D.C. 33.7% are Salvadoran, 13.3% are Mexican, 7.8 are Puerto Rican, and 7.4% are Guatemalan (Lopez, and Dockterman 4). The population of Latinos in D.C. continues to grow; between 1980 and 2000 the Latino population grew 153% and between 2000 and 2008 it grew 14% (Comey et al 5). Latinos have historically lived in Wards 1, 2, and 3, however in recent years many have moved to Ward 4 and out of Wards 2 and 3 (Comey et al 8-9). (See Appendix I and Appendix II)

Latinos in D.C. have lower levels of education than other groups according to the Urban Institute, "In 2005-2007, 44 percent of District Latinos 25 years and older had no high school diploma, while 32 percent have less than a 9th grade education" (Comey et al 38). In comparison, 22% of blacks and 2% of whites in the same age group did not have high diplomas (Comey et al 38). Thirty-one percent of Latinos in D.C. have bachelor's degrees compared to 21% of blacks and 85% of whites (Comey et al 38). Related to education, between 2005 and 2007, 56% of Latinos in D.C. spoke English very well, 15% well, and 29% not well or not at all (Comey et al 40). (See Appendix III)

Use of Technology:

According to Pew Hispanic Center report, reflecting 2010 data, Latino adults are less likely to own a phone or use the Internet at home than both blacks and whites (Livingston "Latinos and Digital..." 4). In 2010, 76% of Latinos owned cell phones compared to 85% of whites and 79% of blacks (Livingston "Latinos and Digital..." 4). In 2010, 65% of Latino adults went online, while 66% of black adults and 77% of white adults went online (Livingston "Latinos and Digital..." 4). Fourteen percent fewer Latinos use the Internet than non-Latinos (Livingston "The Latino Digital..." 7). Latinos ages 16 to 25 use cell phones frequently to communicate with friends, 50% text their friends daily while 45% call their friends daily (Lopez and Livingston i).

Young Latinos are more active on the Internet, "While, 85% of Latinos ages 18 to 29 use the Internet, this share drops incrementally for each subsequent age group. Some 69% of Latinos ages 30 to 44 are online, as are 58% of those ages 45 to 59 and 29% of those ages 60 and older" (Livingston "Latinos and Digital..." 9).

Reports from 2010 indicate that English dominant Latinos use technology more than Spanish dominant Latinos:

Media	English Dominant (%)	Spanish Dominant (%)
Own a Cell Phone	86%	68%
Use the Internet	81%	47%
Have a Home Internet Connection	77%	37%

(Livingston “Latinos and Digital...” 7)

Language Use:

In her article, “Mexicana/Latina Mothers and Schools: Changing the Way We View Parent Involvement” Esperanza De La Vega found that Latino mothers believe English is important for their children’s success (De La Vega 177). The mothers included in De La Vega’s research also expressed concern that their lack of English prevented them from helping with homework (De La Vega 177).

Research shows that, “Young Latinos are more likely than older Latinos to say their parents socialized them more with a Hispanic focus than an American focus. Six-in-ten (60%) of young Latinos say their parents often encouraged them to speak Spanish, compared with less than half (47%) of older Latinos who say that” (Taylor et al 25). Among first generation Latinos, 72 percent speak primarily Spanish, 24 percent are bilingual, and only 4 percent are English dominate (Levine 64). However, 93% of second-generation Latinos are bilingual or English dominant and only 7% are Spanish dominant. By the third-generation, 78% of Latinos only speak English and none are Spanish dominant (Levine 64). According to the 2006 U.S. Census, almost 13% of U.S. households speak Spanish at home; this means more than 32 million people ages 5 and older speak Spanish at home (Olivos 112). In general, for Latino immigrants, the longer they are in the United States the better their English becomes (Pachon 61).

Income and Employment:

The poverty rate of Latinos declines from 29% in the first generation to 19% in the second generation (climbing to 21% in the third generation or higher) (Taylor et al 11). A family of four with an income of less than \$21,834 was considered below the poverty line in 2008, 23% of Latino youths lived in families below the poverty line compared to 28% of blacks, 18% of Asians, and 13% of whites (Taylor et al 38). In 2008, 53% of Latino youths lived in households that earned less than \$50,000, and 15% lived in households that earned at least \$100,000 (Taylor et al 38). In 2009, “over 20% of Hispanics lived in households earning more than the median household income of white non-Hispanics [\$65,108]” (Pachon 60).

More Latinos born outside of the United States, between the ages of 16 and 25, are looking for work or are employed than U.S.-born Latinos (Taylor et al 11). Sixty-four percent of immigrant Latinos compared to 56% percent of U.S.-born Latinos are working or seeking work (Taylor et al 11). Fifty-two percent of immigrant Latino youth compared to 27% of U.S.-born Latino youths work in low-skill jobs such as construction and

restaurants (Taylor et al 11). In 2007, only 1% of Hispanics were in the armed forces (down from 5% in 1970) (Olivos iv).

Women:

By 2007, 54% of Latinas in the U.S. were working, a 14% increase from 1970 (Fry “The Changing...” ii). The same year, 20% of Latinas were not in school and were not employed (Fry “The Changing...” ii). Latinas, as reported in 2005, have the highest Total Fertility Rate, which makes Latinos the only ethnic/racial group that has a positive Total Fertility Rate in the United States—2.1 is what is required to maintain populations at their current levels (Estrada 151). In 2005, the Total Fertility Rate for Latinas was 2.9, for black it was 2.0, for whites it was 1.8, and for Asians it was 1.7 (Estrada 151). Finally, as of 2007, 21% of Latinos were mothers (Fry “The Changing...” iv).

Daily Lives:

The three main motives for young Latino immigrants to come to the United States are to improve their lives, improve the lives of their children, and to help their families in their home countries (Taylor et al 28). Both Latino parents and their children agree that children should learn from previous generations’ mistakes and rise above their current levels of living (Percy 214). However, different rates of acculturation between parents and their children do to language, immigration status, and experience can create conflict between the generations in terms of communication and values (Dennis 119).

Seven percent more foreign-born young Latinos say they attend church weekly (40%) than second generation young Latinos (Taylor et al 63). Overall, 37% of Latinos in the U.S. say they attend church weekly, which is equal to the overall U.S. population (Taylor et al 63). Sixty percent of Latinos consider themselves Catholic, however only 49% of third generation young Latinos say they are Catholic (Taylor et al 64).

While, Latinos are relatively active with their churches they participate in civic life at low levels (Jacoby 47). In 2004, 10% fewer Latinos registered and voted than blacks and 20% fewer than whites (Jacoby 47). While first generation Latino immigrants marry within their ethnic group, by the third generation about 30% of Latinos marry outside of their ethnic group (Pachon 62) – about three times the rate of whites and blacks (Jacoby 50).

Values:

Education:

In an opinion poll conducted by the Pew Hispanic Center among Latinos in 2004, Latinos ranked education as the most important issue when considering how to cast their presidential vote (Fraga et al 54). Education was ranked highest by 54% of participants in the poll; both economy/jobs and healthcare/Medicaid were ranked most important by 51% of participants, and the Iraq war by 40% (Fraga et al 54). In *Latino Live in America: Making It Home*, the authors explain that Latino families seriously consider the quality of schools when picking a place to live (Fraga et al 60).

In 2009, the Pew Hispanic Center reported that 77% of Latinos (16 to 25 years-old) said their parents “think college is the most important thing to do after high school” (Lopez 3).

Among young Latinos, 89% of Latinos between the ages of 16 and 25 “say a college degree is important for getting ahead in life,” and 88% Latinos 26 years-old and older say the same (Lopez 3). More Latinos (88%) agree that college is important than the general U.S. population (74%) (Lopez 3). Related to this, 86% of Latinos agree that, “most people can get ahead in life if they work hard” (Taylor et al 10). National surveys reveal that Latinos are three times as likely to think education and spending on education are key issues than other groups (Jacoby 53).

Family/Familismo:

Latinos are group oriented and the family structure plays an important role in their lives (Rinderle 147). They tend to think of things in terms of helping their families as a whole rather than simply achieving individual success (Gilroy 20). Related to this, Latinos tend to have close-knit families, that include extended families and close friends, and seek to maintain harmonious relationships even when it requires thinking collectively rather than focusing on individual desires (Chong and Baez 36). Collectivism and familismo describe the role Latino families have in each individual’s life (Chong and Baez 36). Familismo is a social values structure within Latino families that regulates family relationships (Calzada 168). Attitudes associated with familismo include loyalty and solidarity (Calzada 168). In more detail, “attitudinal familismo has four components: (a) belief that family comes before the individual; (b) familial interconnectedness; (c) belief in family reciprocity; and (d) belief in familial honor” (Calzada 168). In summary, Latino families are close, large, and members are obligated to support each other (Roll and Irwin).

Gender Roles:

Historically Latino males and fathers have been expected to earn money for the family and have a limited role in the raising of children (Sampson 104). Further, Latino culture is known for its paternalism (Taylor et al 60). However, paternalism has been diminishing with time. A 2009 Pew Hispanic Center report shows that many Latinos do not see men as the key decisions makers of the family anymore (Taylor et al 60). When asked whether “the husband should generally have the final say in family matters” 43% of Latinos agreed and 56% disagreed (Taylor et al 60). Further among younger Latinos there was large disparity in responses between the genders; young Latino males are twice as likely to agree with the statement than young Latino females (Taylor et al 60). In general, sons are expected to respect women and their elders but are permitted to experiment sexually and enjoy many activities away from the home (Roll and Irwin). Daughters are expected to learn how to become good mothers and be caretakers for their brothers and father; young Latino women traditionally learn the social codes governing their dress and interaction with others, attend church, are pious, respect elders and engage in most family events (Roll and Irwin). Mothers are considered the center of the family both spiritually and socially (Roll and Irwin). In summary, mothers care for their children, children attend school, and fathers make money (Sampson 101). While these roles are changing, they still have historical significance in Latino culture.

Children:

As stated above, mothers in Latino families tend to be the main caretakers of children, implying that they have the greatest day-to-day influence on their children. Latino

mothers tend to emphasize respect, responsibility, and cultural awareness when raising their children (Arcia et al 334). One of the common ways that mothers pass on information about correct behavior and how to make decisions is through “dichos” and “consejos” which are short stories and anecdotes that convey key messages about respect and proper actions (De La Vega 172). Ester Calzada found in his research that respect and obedience tend to be higher valued among Latinos parents than among other groups in America who value independence and autonomy (Calzada 167). Despite a historically strong religious sediment in most Latino cultures, religion and spirituality are considered less important in child raising than socializing children correctly—mainly teaching respect and proper social behavior (Fischer et al 300). Related to upbringing, Latino parents have been found to place a great deal of importance on education (Marschall 1056).

Respecto:

Social interactions and proper conduct within those interactions are important in Latino culture. Related the emphasis of Latino mothers place on teaching respect and proper conduct to their children, is the value called “respecto”. Esperanza De La Vega in her article, “Mexicana/Latina Mothers and Schools: Changing the Way We View Parent Involvement,” defines respecto as, “literally respect for all people regardless of difference: meaning respect for elders and youngsters and people of all races,” in summary, it is the idea that all people have value and honor (De La Vega 170). Respecto is also important because harmony within the family is expected and respecto helps maintain it (Calzada 169). Also, respecto relates to proper behavior (Fischer et al 297).

Strategy:

This campaign seeks to foster parenting practice among Latino parents in D.C. that will aid in their children’s education and ultimately reduce the high school dropout rate among Latinos. The focus of this campaign is not to change Latino parents or ignore their culture, but rather to look at their culture a source of support for students. The title “Family is the Difference,” reflects the close family structure that most Latino families have, and suggests that even if parents are not fluent in English and can not help with homework they can help their children complete school by providing support (as in encouraging their children not take jobs or take jobs that will allow them to study) and structure so that their children can dedicate time to study.

The campaign will focus on the value of family and the idea of pride. The message is not that parents need to change but that families have to dig deep to support their children so that the family as a whole can achieve new levels. The idea is that the investment in school, while it may prevent young adults from beginning work right away, will in the long-run secure a higher wage and therefore improve the family’s livelihood more dramatically.

The campaign focuses on parents because they are the heads of households and set the tone for their children. The cultural values of respect for parents and other elders as well as close family create close relationships between Latino youth and their parents. This

gives parents the ability to be a source of inspiration and a key in the educational success of their children. Further, students are subject to an array of information at school encouraging them to stay in school, but without their family's support that is difficult. Studies have shown that Spanish-speaking parents have a hard time navigating schools that do not provide Spanish translators. These parents become isolated from the school, may face discrimination, and may become frustrated because they cannot help their children complete homework or navigate their school's bureaucracy. There are efforts to change schools so that they better serve Latino populations, and there are efforts to teach adult Latinos English. However, both of these processes are slow and ongoing. This campaign intends to illustrate the strengths of Latino culture to Latinos and show Latinos how they can apply their values to achieving success in the American school system now.

Objectives:

- Increase awareness of how the school system in the United States operates among Latino parents, how Latinos parents in D.C. can help their children complete school, and why it is important that children complete school.
- Provide information about the importance of school in the United States to Latino families in D.C. to help families decide if completing school is more beneficial than having sons and daughters begin working right away.
- Partner with local business in D.C. Wards 1, 2, 3, and 4.
- Recruit five Latino community-focused organizations to take part in the campaign by helping to spread the message and providing promotional materials at their locations for community members to take.
- Cover 25% of bus and metro stop within D.C. Wards 1, 2, 3, and 4 with informational ads so that a traveler in these target areas will be exposed to the campaign.
- Gain online, print, radio, and TV coverage.
- Run PSAs on two of the most listened to radios stations by Latinos in D.C.
- Foster a dialogue between schools, parents, students, and communities about Latino youth in school

Tactics:

- Place PSA on Spanish language TV and radio stations
- Place ads on D.C. bus and metro stops within the four Wards of D.C. where the most Latinos live that lead to a website and the addresses of community organizations that have printed materials produced by the campaign.
- Partner with local organizations for sponsorship and dissemination

- Have posters and literature at local Latino business
- Kick-Off the campaign with a concert the first day of Hispanic Heritage Month
- Have ads throughout the bus and metro systems during Hispanic Heritage month
- Have a booth at the Latino Festival in Colombia Heights
- Take part in other activities that are part of Hispanic Heritage Month
- Host informational sessions at community centers and invite parents to attend (recruit community members to lead the information session). These sessions will focus on providing an overview of how American schools operate, the practices that have been proven to help young people finish school, and why school will help each family.

Messaging:

“La familia es la diferencia” or “Family is the Difference” reflects the idea that Latino parents can be key to helping their children complete high school. “La familia es la diferencia” provides information on how Latino parents can support their children through school, and focuses on support that does not require knowledge of English. The campaign emphasizes the strengths that already exist in Latino culture, such as close families, respect, and pride to help children finish school rather than encouraging families to change. While it is ideal that American schools would have staff that speak Spanish and can interact with parents who do not speak English well, most schools do not have teachers and staff who can communicate in Spanish. “La familia es la diferencia” shares information and highlights cultural strengths in attempt to foster environments at home that aid academic achievement.

Sample slogans:

La familia ayuda cuando su hijo está enfermo y durante la boda de su hija, los estudios son los mismos—la familia es la diferencia.

Family helps when you son is sick and during your daughter’s wedding, studies are the same—family is the difference.

Para graduarse cada joven necesita la ayuda de toda la familia—la familia es la diferencia.

In order to graduate each teenager needs support from the whole family—family makes the difference.

Da tiempo hoy a los hijos para los estudios, y la familia será más fuerte mañana—la familia es la diferencia.

Give your children time today for their studies, and your family will be stronger tomorrow—family is the difference.

Nadie puede navegar el mundo solo, necesita los consejos y la ayuda—la familia es la diferencia.

No one can navigate the world alone, he/she needs advice and support—family is the difference.

Si no los puede ayudar con las tareas de la escuela, todavía puede ser la fuente de la fuerza para los hijos —la familia es la diferencia.

If you can't help them with their homework, you can always be source of strength for your children—family is the difference.

La escuela es más que una tarea, abra la puerta a nuevas oportunidades—la familia es la diferencia.

School is more than homework, it opens the door to new opportunities—family is the difference.

Organization Outreach:

- Ayuda, Inc
- Carlos Rosario International Career Center, Inc.
- Casa de Maryland
- Central American Resource Center
- CentroNía
- La Clínica del Pueblo, Inc.
- Latin American Montessori Bilingual (LAMB) Public Charter School
- Latin American Youth Center
- Latino Economic Development Corporation
- Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Care
- Multicultural Career Intern Program
- Multicultural Community Service
- National Latino Behavioral Health Association
- Spanish Catholic Center, Inc.
- Spanish Education Development Center

Media Outreach:

Spanish language media in Washington, D.C. is the target media for this campaign.

TV:

- *Univision* (<http://tv.univision.com/>)
- *Telemundo* (<http://msnlatino.telemundo.com/>)
- *Telefutura* (<http://tv.univision.com/telefutura/>)

Print/Online:

- Los Tiempos (<http://www.lostiempos.com/>)
- Wall Street Journal Spanish Edition (http://online.wsj.com/public/page/espanol-inicio.html?mod=WSJ_footer)
- El pregonero (<http://www.elpreg.org/>)
- Las Americas (<http://www.lasamericasnews.com>)
- El Comercio (<http://www.elcomercionewspaper.com/>)
- Washington Hispanic (<http://www.washingtonhispanic.com/>)
- El Tiempo Latino (<http://eltiempolatino.com/>)
- holaciudad.com (<http://washington.holaciudad.com/contenidos/home.html>)
- impre.com (<http://www.impre.com/home.php>)

- Univision (<http://www.univision.com/>)

Radio:

- El Zol 107.9 FM/99.1 FM (<http://elzolradio.radio.com/>)
- Romántica 900 AM
(<http://washington.holaciudad.com/contenidos/romantica900.html>)
- Radio América (WACA) 97.1 FM/1540 AM (<http://www.radioamerica.net/>)
- WLXE 1600 AM (no website/ owned by Multicultural Radio Broadcasting Licensee)
- La Ley WKDV 1460 AM (<http://www.somoslaley.com/>)
- La jefa 700 AM (<http://www.radiolajefa.com/index2.html>)
- Vida 950 AM (<http://www.vida950am.com/default.html>)
- Poder (WWGB) 1030 AM (<http://wwgb.com/>)
- LA Mera Mera 1050 AM (<http://www.lameramera1050.com/>)
- Radio Fiesta 1480 AM (no website, English or Spanish?)

Locations of Advertisements:

- Local business and metro and bus stops of the city wards with the highest concentration of Latinos (in order): Wards 1, 4, 2, and 3. (See Appendix II)
- Spanish language radio stations
- Spanish language TV stations
- Spanish language print and online media
- Community business and nonprofits

Kick-Off Event:

This event will take place on September 15 (the first day of Hispanic Heritage Month). It will be a concert and public dance that features local bands and possibly a Latino celebrity. At the concert educational materials will be available for people to take, however the main goal of the concert is to spread awareness of the campaign and inspire Latino pride.

Hispanic Heritage Month:

Throughout Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15-October 15) “Family is the Difference” will partner with the Smithsonian Institution in order to build a presents at the Latino-related events it hosts. This will increase the campaign’s visibility and hopefully reach Latinos in the D.C. area who participate in the events targeted at a Spanish speaking audience.

Information Sessions:

Informational sessions will be held at community centers in the Latino communities around D.C. and be led by community members. Each informational session will comprise of a short lecture and then a question and answer session. The lectures will cover topics ranging from good study habits to how to become involved in the school community.

Latino Festival:

The Latino Festival is held every year in Colombia Heights. “Family is the Different” will have booth at which free materials will be handed out and members of the campaign will be stationed to discuss education with any interested participants in the festival.

Timetable:

January-March: Recruiting partners

March-June: Message creation and testing

July-August: Productions of marketing materials, development of community information session curriculum

July-September 14: Media outreach

August-November: Place ads on bus and metro stops

September-November: PSAs played on radio and TV stations

September 15-October 15: Hispanic Heritage Month

September 15: Campaign Kick-Off: “Education Festival”

September-November: Information sessions about how parents can support their children through school: located in community centers, conducted in Spanish, information packets developed by campaign given out, coaching for parents of students grades 6 through 12.

December: Evaluation

Expenses:

- Developing messaging
 - Slogans
 - Website
 - Photos for brochures, posters (ads)
 - Radio PSA
 - TV PSA
- Labor
 - Campaign managers
 - Creative designers
 - Media Outreach
 - Website Coordinator
 - Community Outreach
 - Community Information Sessions Leader(s)
 - Event Planner
 - Latino Festival booth operators

- Materials:
 - Brochures
 - Flyers
 - Posters
 - Metro Ads
 - Business Cards
- Office Space and Furnishings
- Event (Kick-Off Concert)
 - Personality (musicians)
 - Staff
 - Food
 - Space

Evaluation:

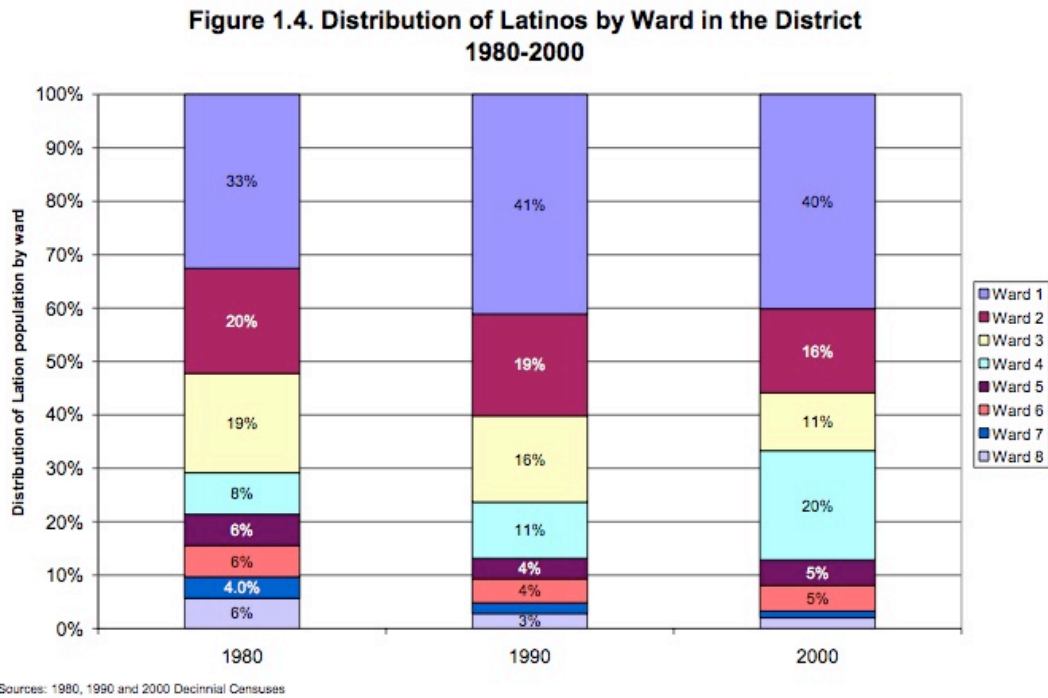
- Provide pre and post surveys to participants in the Information sessions.
- At the booth during the Latino Festival ask those who stop to indicate if they have heard of the campaign before or not, track responses.
- Count the number of people who attend the concert.
- Count the number of people who attend the information sessions.
- Count the number of people who stop at the informational booth during the Latino Festival.
- Keep track of how many fliers and brochures are distributed.
- Tally media impressions based on where the campaign places stories.
- Tally the number of impressions the PSAs and metro/bus ads gain.
- Track website and social media traffic.
- Track how many questions are emailed and sent to “Family is the Difference.”
- Count how many local business and nonprofits supported and took part in the campaign.

Impact:

This campaign seeks not to change the values and culture of Latinos nor the U.S. school system, but rather to enforce Latino values such as close family and pride as tools for Latino students to complete school. The messaging of this campaign is targeted at Latino parents and uses cultural messages to encourage them to support their children through school by allowing time for homework, providing discipline, and permitting children to work part-time so their studies are not affected. The overall objective of the campaign is

to lower the Latino high school dropout rate by showing Latino parents how they use their culture to help their children through school.

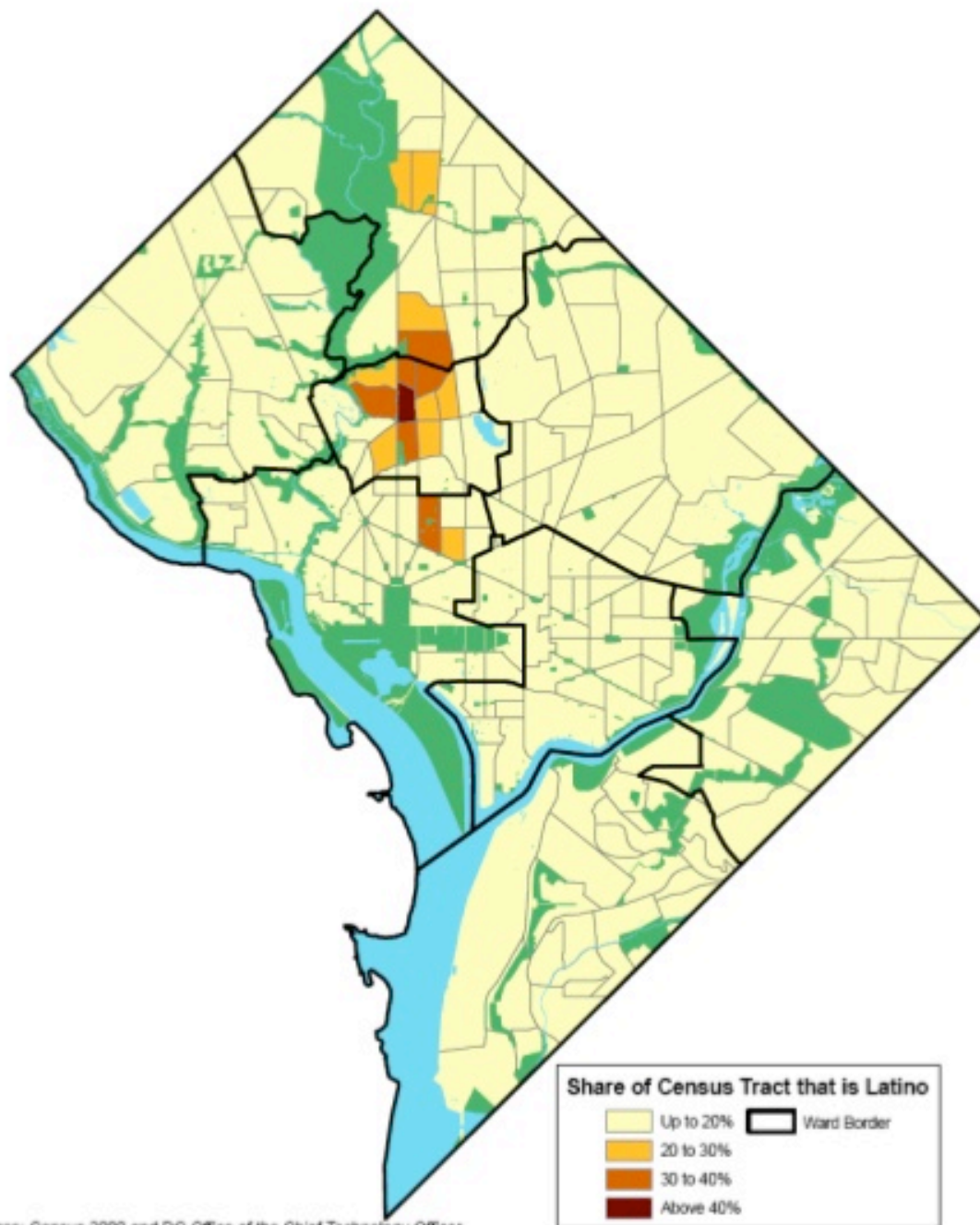
Appendix I:



(Corney et al 9)

Appendix II:

Map 2.1. The District's Latino Neighborhoods
by Census Tract, 2000

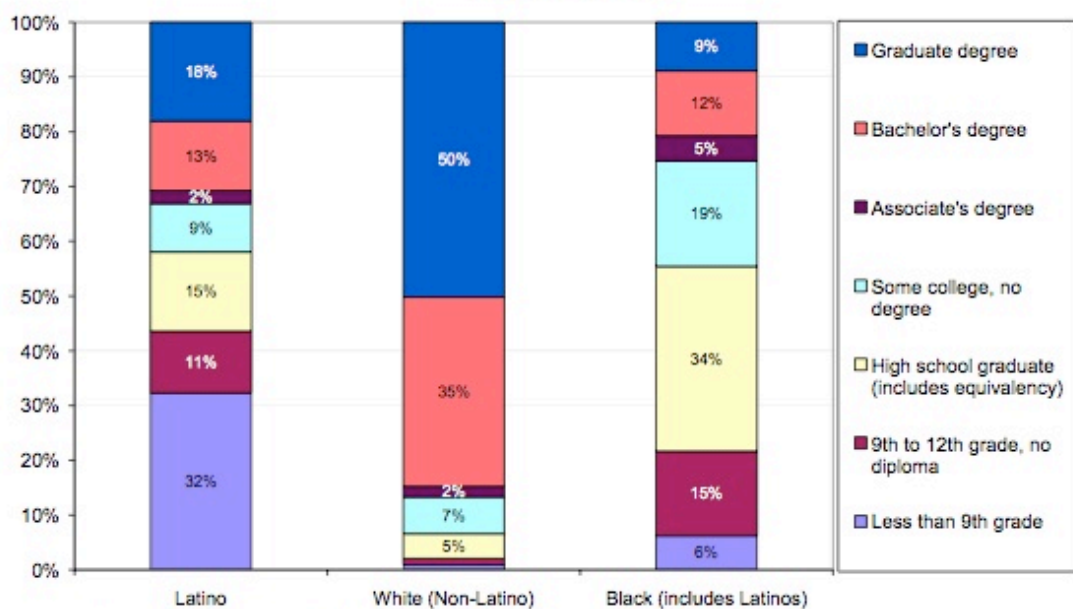


Sources: Census 2000 and DC Office of the Chief Technology Officer

(Comey et al 19)

Appendix III:

Figure 3.4. Educational Attainment for District Residents Age 25 and Older, 2005-2007



Source: American Community Survey 2005-2007

(Comey et al 39)

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