



## Hispanic Heritage Month

### September 15 - October 15, 2018

The Norwalk Board of Education is proud to recognize September 15 to October 15, 2018 as Hispanic Heritage Month.

During Hispanic Heritage Month, we recognize the contributions made and the important presence and impact of Hispanic and Latino Americans in our community and nation. Through strong commitment to family, faith and hard work Latinos have enhanced and shaped our national character with centuries-old traditions that reflect the multiethnic and multicultural customs of their community. Hispanic Heritage Month celebrates these histories, cultures and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Puerto Rico, Mexico, the Caribbean, Central and South America, or other Spanish cultures.

Hispanic Heritage Month begins each year on September 15, the anniversary of 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. The observation started in 1968 under President Lyndon Johnson as Hispanic Heritage Week, and was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a 30-day period.

The Hispanic population of the United States now totals more than 57.5 million people, the second-largest racial or ethnic group in the U.S. In Norwalk, Spanish language and culture are an integral part of family life. In 2017, 45 percent of the Norwalk Public School students were of Hispanic origin. Approximately 86 percent of the 1,850 English Language Learners enrolled in the Norwalk Public Schools program are Spanish speaking.

By declaring this Hispanic Heritage Month, the Board of Education encourages all schools to bring an appreciation and understanding of others' cultures and languages into the lives of our young children, and share in this annual tribute by celebrating the generations of Hispanic Americans who have positively influenced our city and country.