

ROBERT COTTO, JR., Ph.D.

Education

- August 2022 **Ph.D.**, Learning, Leadership, and Education Policy, Dean's Doctoral Scholar (2016-2020)
University of Connecticut, Neag School of Education, Storrs, CT
Dissertation: *Latinx and Black Parent Response to School Closure in Redeveloping Hartford, Connecticut*. Committee Co-chairs: Preston Green III, Ed.D., J.D. & Sarah L. Woulfin, Ph.D.
- May 2014 **M.A.**, American Studies, Trinity College, Hartford, CT
Thesis: *Challenging Americanization: Puerto Rican Teachers in the 1904 Summer School at Harvard & Cornell*, Advisor: Eugene E. Leach, Ph.D.
- June 2004 **Ed.M.**, Teaching & Learning, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA; CT Professional Educator Certification, History & Social Studies, Grade 7-12
- June 2003 **A.B.**, Sociology, Minor: Human Development & Teaching, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH

Professional Experience

- 2022 – present **Director**, DEI Campus and Community Engagement, Trinity College, Hartford, CT
Led engagement between DEI Office, campus, and community groups
- 2019 – 2022 **Director**, Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy (HMTCA) Partnership
Managed early college program in Center for Hartford Engagement & Research
- 2014 – 2019 **Director**, Urban Educational Initiatives, Office of Dean of Faculty
Directed community partnerships between Trinity College, schools, and organizations.
- 2016 – 2020 **Graduate Assistant**, Neag School of Education, UCONN, Storrs, CT
Assistant with Dr. Green and Center for Education Policy Analysis (CEPA).
- 2011 – 2014 **Senior Policy Fellow**, K-12 Ed., CT Voices for Children, New Haven, CT
Lead researcher on K-12 education policy reports, briefs, blog, essays, & letters.
- 2004 – 2011 **History & Social Studies Teacher**, Metropolitan Learning Center, Bloomfield, CT
Taught 9th gr. Global Studies, 10th gr. Emerging Civil Society, 12th gr. Sociology.
Led 9th grade team, initiated Early Intervention Program, and mentored new teachers.

Teaching Experience

- 2015 – 2016 **Lecturer**, Educational Studies, Trinity College, Hartford, CT
ED350: Teaching & Learning; ED310: Testing From IQ to Common Core; ED200: Analyzing Schools (community-engaged learning placement coordinator)
- 2014 **Lecturer**, Central Connecticut State University (CCSU), New Britain, CT
EDF 500: Contemporary Educational Issues
- 2005-2008 **Instructor**, Saint Joseph University (formerly College), West Hartford, CT
INTD 102: Contemporary Global Issues, CREC Institute for International Studies

Peer-Reviewed Publications

Cotto, Jr., R., & Woulfin, S. (2021). [Choice With\(out\) Equity? Family Decisions on Return to Urban Schools During COVID-19](#). *Journal of Family Diversity in Education*, 4(1), 42-63.

Baker, B. D., Srikanth, A., Green III, P. C., & Cotto, R. (2020). [School funding disparities and the plight of Latinx children](#). *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 28(135).

Cotto, Jr., R. (2016). [Moving Children, Distorting Data: Changes in Testing of Students With Disabilities in Connecticut from 2000–2013](#). *Teachers College Record (Yearbook)*, 118(4), 1–30.

Research Publications

Baker, B., & Cotto, R. (2020). [The under-funding of Latinx-serving school districts](#). *Phi Delta Kappan*, 101(6), 40–46.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2019). [Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy & Trinity College Partnership Evaluation: Executive Summary and Full Report](#). Center for Hartford Engagement and Research, Trinity College, Hartford, CT.

Cotto, R., & Dougherty, J. (2017). [Review of the book Why Busing Failed: Race, Media, and the National Resistance to School Desegregation](#), by M. F. Delmont. *History of Education Quarterly*, 57(1), 133–135.

Cotto, Jr., R., & Feder, K. (2014). [Choice Watch: Diversity and Access in Connecticut's School Choice Programs](#). Connecticut Voices for Children.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2007). The Coqui's Call. In A. Garrod, C. Gómez, & R. Kilkenny (Eds.), [Mi Voz, Mi Vida: Latino College Students Tell Their Stories](#) (pp. 148–166). Cornell University Press.

Academic Presentations

“Claiming Our Space and Building Belonging at Trinity College: QRC, WGRAC, OMA” (2023, November 14). (organizer and moderator) [Bicentennial Fall Symposium: Memory, Presence, and Possibility](#). Trinity College, Hartford, CT.

“Defending Education from Inside and Outside Academia: Lessons from a Response to Latinx School Closure,” (2023, March 2). Education Must Be Defended, Trinity Social Justice Initiative & Smart Cities Lab, Trinity College, Hartford, CT.

“In-Person or Remote Schooling? Family Decisions in American Cities During the Pandemic,” (2023, October 2). Global Vantage Point Series, Center for Urban and Global Studies (CUGS), Trinity College, Hartford, CT,

Cotto, Jr., R. (2020, September 25). “A Batch Worth Keeping: Frame Analysis of Responses to Latinx School Closure in Hartford, CT.” [Latinx Politics: Resistance, Disruption, and Power, Virtual Conference](#), The Latinx Project at New York University (NYU), New York, NY.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2020, February 29). “Stories of Latinx Resistance to School Closure.” New England Humanities Consortium, *Race and Identity Matters Symposium*, Storrs, CT.

Wong, S., & Cotto, Jr., R. (2020, February 21). “Does College Preparation Work For All? Reinforcing Racism and Meritocracy at an Urban Magnet School.” The 41st Annual Ethnography in Education Research Forum, Philadelphia, PA.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2018, November). “Edythe Gaines and the Plan for Quality Integrated Education in Hartford, CT: 1975-1980.” Presented at History of Education Society Conference, Albuquerque, NM.

Cotto, Jr., R., & Woulfin, S. L. (2018, April 17). “Charms to Regulate Charters? Applying Organizational Theory to Charter Regulation by State Departments of Education.” 2018 AERA Annual Meeting, New York, NY.

Cotto, Jr., R., Debs, M., Dougherty, J., & Spirou, S. (2015, April). “Investigating Public School Choice in Connecticut at State, City, and School Levels.” *Roundtable Session*. Annual Conference, Chicago, Illinois.

Cotto, Jr., R., Debs, M., Dougherty, J., & Spirou, S. (2014, May). Cotto, R., Debs, M., Dougherty, J., Spirou, S. (2014, May). “Who Chooses Magnet Schools and How? Findings from Three Studies in Hartford, Connecticut.” Magnet Schools of America Annual Conference, Hartford, CT.

Cotto, R., & Turcios-Cotto, V. (2011, March 4). “Inclusion and Exclusion of Data: Impact on Student Achievement.” Alumni of Color Conference, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA.

Invited Presentations

“Swiftly (En)Closing Urban Space? Community Responses to School Displacement and Redevelopment.” (2023, November 2). (Invited guest for class discussion with Professor Christina Heatherston). Race, Gender, and Global Security, Trinity College, Hartford, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2021, December 8). [Education Equity After Sheff | What is the Way Forward?](#) (panelist). CT Public Radio, Hartford, CT (online).

Cotto, Jr., R. (2019, February 2). Discussion on *Backpack Full of Cash* film on school privatization (panelist). Greater Hartford NAACP Youth Council, Hartford Public Library, Hartford, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2016, April 29). “Examining the Role of Institutions of Higher Education” (panelist). Transition: High School to College, Embracing Success, Confronting Challenges. University of Hartford, West Hartford, CT.

“American Promise.” (2013, December 15). Film discussion (panelist), Real Art Ways, Hartford, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2013, November 8). *Brown v. Board of Education for a New Generation: Educators, Parents, Activists and Civil Rights Lawyers Closing the Opportunity Gap in Greater Hartford* (panelist). Where Integration Meets Innovation: Creating, Sustaining, and Improving Dynamic & Diverse Public Schools for the 21st Century Conference, Hartford, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2013, November 8). *Harnessing Diversity’s Potential: Employing Student-Centered Learning and Technology to Achieve Equity and to Build 21st Century Skills* (Moderator). Where Integration Meets Innovation: Creating, Sustaining, and Improving Dynamic & Diverse Public Schools for the 21st Century Conference, Hartford, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2013, October 24). “*School Reform in Hartford, CT.*” (post-talk panelist). School Reform (?) with Anthony Cody, Connecticut College, New London, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2013, October 23). *Ideas Worth Spreading About Education, Democracy, and Progress* (presenter). TedX @ CCSU, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2013, April 13). *Creating a Dual-Language Magnet School for the Hartford Region* (presenter). Trinity College, Hartford, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2013, February 28). *Implications of the Proposed State Budget for the City of Hartford* (presenter). Connecticut General Assembly – Hartford delegation, Hartford, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R., Esty, S, Feder, K. (2013, January 18). *Social Justice Teach-In Workshop on Policy-Driven Advocacy* (presenter). High School in the Community, New Haven, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2012, June 16). *Understanding Connecticut’s Waiver to Parts of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (presenter). Sheff Coalition, Hartford, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2012, March 7). “*Addition Through Subtraction: Are rising test scores in Connecticut school districts related to the exclusion of students with disabilities?*” (presenter). A Call to Action to Eliminate a Preventable Contributor to the Achievement Gap: Childhood Lead Poisoning, Foundation for Educational Advancement, Legislative Office Building, Hartford, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2012, April 14). *The Demographics of School Choice* (presenter). A People’s Forum: Alternative Solutions for School Reform in Connecticut, New Britain, CT.

Claiming space and finding voice in higher education. (2010, April 19). Invited guest for class discussion with Professor Andrea Dyrness. Latinas/os in Education, Trinity College, Hartford, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2007, May). *Excerpts from ‘A Coqui’s Call’ in Mi Voz, Mi Vida* (presenter). La Paloma Sabanera, Hartford, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2006, November). *The Effects of the No Child Left Behind law on Public Schools* (panelist). Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2005, August). *Teaching in public schools* (panelist). Rockefeller Brothers Fund Foundation Summer Workshop, New York, NY.

Policy Reports

Cotto, Jr., R. & Co-authors (2023). INSIGHT Into Diversity Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award Application. Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Trinity College, Hartford, CT

Cotto, Jr., R. (2023, March). [Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Annual Report 2021-22](#). Trinity College, Hartford, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2017). [A Guide to Comparing Charter & Public School Funding and Spending in Connecticut](#). University Of Connecticut, Neag School of Education, Center for Education Policy Analysis.

- Cotto, Jr., R., & Staff. (2013). [*The Governor's Proposed Fiscal Year 2014-15 Budget: The Impact on Children*](#). CT Voices for Children.
- Cotto, Jr., R. (2012). [*Providing Educational Opportunity for Every Child*](#). CT Voices for Children.
- Cotto, Jr., R. (2012). [*Making Sense of the Vertical Scales: An Alternative View of the Connecticut Mastery Test Results*](#). CT Voices for Children.
- Cotto, Jr., R. (2012). [*Understanding Connecticut's Application for a Waiver from the No Child Left Behind Act*](#). CT Voices for Children.
- Cotto, Jr., R. (2012). [*The Limits of Data on Free and Reduced Price Meal Eligibility in Connecticut*](#). CT Voices for Children.
- Cotto, Jr., R., & Staff. (2012). [*The Governor's Proposed Fiscal Year 2013 Budget: The Impact on Children*](#). CT Voices for Children.

Public Scholarship

- Cotto, Jr., R, Djebli, M, Rao, N. (2023, July 25). [*Brief History of Cultural Houses at Trinity College*](#). Public Humanities Collaborative, Trinity College, Hartford, CT.
- Cotto, R. & Mahoney, B. (2020, July 6). [*Unpacking a misplaced response to calls for police abolition in Hartford*](#). *The CT Mirror*.
- Cotto, Jr., R. (2018). [*Parents for Batchelder School: A social justice project*](#). Hartford, CT.
- Cotto, Jr., R. (2015, June 18). [*What's Really Behind Connecticut's Increasing Graduation Rates*](#). *TrendCT.Org*.
- Cotto, Jr., R. (2015, May 20). [*Show Me the \(Charter Management Fee\) Money!*](#) *CTNewsJunkie*.
- Cotto, Jr., R. (2015, January 20). [*Op-Ed: Smart money is on Connecticut's children, not testing*](#). CT Mirror.
- Cotto, Jr., R. (2013, September 26). [*Meet Hartford's Board of Education Candidates, 2013*](#). *Real Hartford*.
- Cotto, Jr., R. (2013, February 4). [*Who is responsible for children's success?*](#) [Connecticut Voices for Children Blog]. *Voices Speaking*.
- Cotto, Jr., R. (2012, April 26). [*Apples and Oranges: Comparing Charters, Magnets, and Towns*](#) [Connecticut Voices for Children Blog]. *Voices Speaking*.
- Cotto, Jr., R. (2012a, April 11). [*Improving the Participation of English Language Learners in Magnet and Charter Schools*](#) [Connecticut Voices for Children Blog]. *Voices Speaking*.
- Cotto, Jr., R. [*More choice, mixed results*](#). (2011, July 10). *The Hartford Courant*.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2011, March 1). [Hartford's Claim of School Success Flawed](#). *The Hartford Courant*.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2009, March 3). [Frustrated Residents Challenge Hartford City Officials on Budget](#). [News Blog]. *Urban Compass*.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2009, January 9). [Crow Roost in Hartford May Be A Result of Urban Sprawl](#) [News Blog]. *Urban Compass*.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2008, December 10). [Civic, Business Leaders in Hartford Urge Speed in Planning Rail](#) [News Blog]. *Urban Compass*.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2008, December 4). [Panel on Preparation of Hartford Students Calls for More Engagement](#) [News Blog]. *Urban Compass*.

Legislative Analysis

Testimony Regarding the Release of New Charter School Applications, Connecticut State Board of Education, Regular Meeting (2013, May).

Testimony Regarding Student Assessment, Hearing on H.B. 6623, Connecticut General Assembly, Regular Session (2013).

Testimony Regarding Community Schools, Hearing on S.B. 1002, Connecticut General Assembly, Regular Session (2013).

Testimony Regarding the Proposed Budget for the Department of Education and the Educational Cost Sharing Grant, Hearing on H.B. 6350, Connecticut General Assembly, Regular Session (2013).

Testimony in Response to the Achievement Gap Task Force Call for High-Leverage Strategies to Address the Opportunity Gap in Connecticut, Connecticut General Assembly (2012)

Testimony Regarding S.B. 24: An Act Concerning Educational Competitiveness (Teacher Evaluation Provisions), Hearing on S.B. 24, Connecticut General Assembly, Regular Session (2012).

Testimony Regarding S.B. 24: An Act Concerning Educational Competitiveness (District Management, Alternative Schools, and School-Based Health Centers), Hearing on S.B. 24, Connecticut General Assembly, Regular Session (2012).

Recommendations to Task Force on English Language Learners. Task Force on English Language Learners, Connecticut General Assembly (2012).

Letter to the Achievement Gap Task Force Summarizing Key Findings of Vertical Scales Report, Connecticut General Assembly, (2012)

Awards & Grants: Academic, Research, And Professional Development

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| 2023 | Identity, Power, & Equity Course Creation Grant , Trinity College, Hartford, CT. |
| 2023 | Faculty Fellowship , Public Humanities Collaborative, Trinity College, Hartford, CT. |

- 2023 **Faculty Completion Grant**, Trinity College, Hartford, CT.
- 2022 **C.L.R. James Justice Fellowship**, Trinity Social Justice Initiative & Smart Cities Lab
- 2021 **Summer Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship**, UCONN Graduate School
- 2016 – 2020 **Dean’s Doctoral Scholarship**, Neag School of Education, UCONN, Storrs, CT
Full tuition covered and graduate assistantship provided for four years.
- 2015 – 2020 **National Science Foundation (NSF) Grant**, Washington, D.C.
Co-writer and staff for grant to fund a five-year program of STEM Teaching Experiences for Undergraduates in liberal arts colleges. (\$2.1 million)
- 2012 – 2014 **William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund**, Hamden, CT
Awarded grant for “Choice Watch” research project at CT Voices for Children to analyze school choice data and prepare a series of reports. (\$20,000)
- 2008 **National Education Association (NEA) Fellowship**, Washington, D.C.
Magna Carta human rights workshop, Grantham & London, UK. (all expenses)
- 2002 – 2006 **Rockefeller Brothers Fund Fellowship**, New York, NY
National award to fund master’s degree for aspiring teachers of color.

Other Professional Service

- 2023 **Advisory Board**, Commission on Racial Equity in Public Health (State of CT)
- 2021 **Search Committee Member**, (Dean), UCONN Neag School of Education
- 2019 **Committee Member**, Ned Lamont Education Policy Transition Committee
- 2018 **Search Committee Member**, (TT Faculty), Trinity College, Hartford, CT
- 2014 – 2017 **Steering Committee Member**, CT Parent Power, Hartford, CT
- 2010 – 2017 **Elected Member**, Secretary (2013), Hartford Board of Education
Co-wrote and revised policies on NEASC accreditation, finance, uniforms, school choice, and governance councils. Co-chaired Superintendent Search Committee (2014).
- 2009 **Committee Member**, Hartford Landfill Post-Closure Community Advisory Committee

Professional Affiliations

American Educational Research Association
History of Education Society
Connecticut Education Association (2006 – 2011)
Connecticut Council for the Social Studies (2006 – 2008)