

# ROBERT COTTO, JR., Ph.D.

## CURRICULUM VITAE

### Education

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- August 2022 **Ph.D.**, Learning, Leadership, and Education Policy  
University of Connecticut, Neag School of Education, Storrs, CT  
Dean's Doctoral Scholarship (2016-2020)  
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, Cambridge, MA  
History and Social Studies teacher, CT professional educator certification (026)
- June 2003 **A.B.**, Sociology, Minor: Human Development & Teaching, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH

### Professional Experience

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- 2022 – present **Director**, DEI Campus and Community Engagement, Trinity College, Hartford, CT  
Led engagement between DEI Office, campus, and community groups  
*Digital Scholarship Faculty Fellow*, '21-22 – *Digital Scholarship Office*  
*C.L.R. James Faculty Fellow*, '22 – *Trinity Social Justice Initiative & Smart Cities Lab*
- 2019 – 2022 **Director**, Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy (HMTCA) Partnership  
Managed HMTCA partnership, Center for Hartford Engagement & Research (CHER)
- 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  
Research assistant with Prof. Green and program assistant with Morgaen Donaldson at the UCONN Neag School Center for Education Policy Analysis (CEPA).  
Assisted in managing the CEPA website, academic events, and policy briefs.
- 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 9<sup>th</sup> gr. Global Studies, 10<sup>th</sup> gr. Emerging Civil Society, 12<sup>th</sup> gr. Sociology.  
Mentored History & Social Studies New Teacher Interns & BEST portfolio.

### Higher Education Teaching

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- 2024 & 2025 **Urban Studies & Planning, American Studies**, Trinity College, Hartford, CT  
URST 359/859, AMST 858: Latinx Urban Activism Since 1900
- 2015 – 2016 **Lecturer, Educational Studies**, Trinity College, Hartford, CT  
ED350: Teaching and Learning; ED310: Testing - From IQ to Common Core;  
ED200: Analyzing Schools (community learning placement coordinator)

- 2014                    **Lecturer**, Central Connecticut State University (CCSU), New Britain, CT  
EDF 500: Contemporary Educational Issues
- 2005-2008           **Instructor**, Saint Joseph University, West Hartford, CT  
INTD 102: Contemporary Global Issues, CREC Institute for International Studies

### Featured Publications

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- Cotto, Jr., R. (2024). [Framing of Black and Latinx School Closure in Redeveloping Hartford, Connecticut](#). *Berkeley Review of Education*, 13(1).
- Cotto, Jr., R., Vacca Cristostomo, M., Markoysan, M., & Ahmed, S. (2024, July 18). [Bilingual Education in Hartford—Stories Over Time](#). Public Humanities Collaborative, Trinity College, Hartford, CT. [StoryMap].
- Cotto, Jr., R., Rao, N., Djebli, M. (2023, July 25). [Brief History of Cultural Houses at Trinity College](#). Public Humanities Collaborative, Trinity College, Hartford, CT. [StoryMap].
- 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*.
- 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. (2019). [Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy & Trinity College Partnership Evaluation: Executive Summary and Full Report](#) (p. 28). 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. (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.
- 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

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- Cotto, Jr., R. (2023, March 3). “Defending Education from Inside and Outside Academia: Lessons from a Response to Latinx School Closure.” Education Must Be Defended, Trinity Social Justice Initiative & Smart Cities Lab, Trinity College, Hartford, CT.
- Cotto, Jr., R. (2021, October 2). [In-Person or Remote Schooling? Family Decisions in American Cities During the Pandemic](#). 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* (participant & brief presentation), 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. *AOCC 2011: 'We Make the Road by Walking.'* Alumni of Color Conference, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA.

## Policy Reports

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Cotto, Jr., R. (2023). [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](#). Connecticut Voices for Children.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2012). [Providing Educational Opportunity for Every Child](#). Connecticut Voices for Children.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2012). [Making Sense of the Vertical Scales: An Alternative View of the Connecticut Mastery Test Results](#). Connecticut Voices for Children.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2012). [\*Understanding Connecticut's Application for a Waiver from the No Child Left Behind Act\*](#). Connecticut Voices for Children.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2012). [\*The Limits of Data on Free and Reduced Price Meal Eligibility in Connecticut\*](#). Connecticut Voices for Children.

Cotto, Jr., R., & Staff. (2012). [\*The Governor's Proposed Fiscal Year 2013 Budget: The Impact on Children\*](#). Connecticut Voices for Children.

## Public Scholarship

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

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

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. (2015e, June 18). [What's Really Behind Connecticut's Increasing Graduation Rates](#). *TrendCT.Org*.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2015d, May 20). [Show Me the \(Charter Management Fee\) Money!](#) *CTNewsJunkie*.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2015c, March). [Connecticut Schools Excelling Without Testing?](#) *Cities, Suburbs, and Schools Project*.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2015b, February 21). [Charter School Renewal in CT: The Accountability Is Flexible](#). *Cities, Suburbs & Schools Project at Trinity College*.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2015a, January 20). [Op-Ed: Smart money is on Connecticut's children, not testing](#). *CT Mirror*.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2014, October). [Visualizing Diversity in Connecticut School Choice Programs](#). *Cities, Suburbs, and Schools Project*.

"American Promise." (2013, December 15). *Community Forum*. Special event movie discussion, Real Art Ways, Hartford, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2013c, 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) [Panel]. Where Integration Meets Innovation: Creating, Sustaining, and Improving Dynamic & Diverse Public Schools for the 21st Century Conference, Hartford, CT.

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

Cotto, Jr., R. (2013b, October 24). "School Reform in Hartford, CT." Invited panelist for post-lecture discussion. School Reform (?) - A Talk By Anthony Cody, Connecticut College, New London, CT.

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

Cotto, Jr., R. (2013, September 26). [Meet Hartford's Board of Education Candidates, 2013](#). *Real Hartford*.

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

Cotto, Jr., R. (2013a, February 28). *Implications of the Proposed State Budget for the City of Hartford*. Invited presentation for the Hartford legislators at the Connecticut General Assembly, Hartford, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2013, February 4). [Who is responsible for children's success?](#) [Connecticut Voices for Children Blog]. *Voices Speaking*.

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

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

Cotto, Jr., R. (2012d, April 26). [Apples and Oranges: Comparing Charters, Magnets, and Towns](#) [Connecticut Voices for Children Blog]. *Voices Speaking*.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2012a, March 7). "Addition Through Subtraction: Are rising test scores in Connecticut school districts related to the exclusion of students with disabilities?" [Invited presentation]. 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. (2012c, April 14). *The Demographics of School Choice* [Invited Presentation]. A People's Forum: Alternative Solutions for School Reform in Connecticut, New Britain, CT.

Cotto, Jr., R. (2012b, 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*.

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

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

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

Cotto, Jr., R. (2007, May). *Excerpts from 'A Coqui's Call' in Mi Voz, Mi Vida.* [Invited speaker].

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

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

### **Legislative Analysis**

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*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)

### Other Professional Service

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2023 –	<b>Advisory Board</b> , Commission on Racial Equity in Public Health, State of Connecticut
2021	<b>Search Committee Member</b> , (Dean), UCONN Neag School of Education
2018	<b>Search Committee Member</b> , (TT Faculty), Trinity College, Hartford, CT
2014 – 2017	<b>Steering Committee Member</b> , CT Parent Power.
2013 – 2014	<b>Co-Chair, Superintendent Search Committee</b> , Hartford Board of Education
2010 – 2017	<b>Elected Member, Secretary</b> (2013), Hartford Board of Education Co-wrote and revised policies on NEASC accreditation, finance, student uniforms, school choice procedures, and school governance councils.
2009 – 2011	<b>Ninth Grade Team Leader</b> , Metropolitan Learning Center Facilitated the ninth-grade team administrative tasks, disciplinary measures, student Early Intervention Program, & developed a 9 <sup>th</sup> grade academy program. Mentored student teachers and new educator program (BEST)
2009	<b>Committee Member</b> , Hartford Landfill Post-Closure Community Advisory Committee

### Awards & Grants: Academic, Research, And Professional Development

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2023	<b>Community Learning Research Program</b> , Faculty Sponsor for Student Fellow, Fall Bilingual Education Ethnographic Research, Student Project
2023	<b>Public Humanities Collaborative</b> , Faculty Fellow, Summer “Brief History of Cultural Houses at Trinity College”, Faculty and Student Project
2023	<b>Faculty Completion Grant</b> , Trinity College, NVivo Software License
2022	<b>Trinity Social Justice Initiative &amp; Smart Cities Lab</b> , C.L.R James Justice Fellow
2021	<b>Summer Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship</b> , UCONN Graduate School
2016 – 2020	<b>Dean’s Doctoral Scholar</b> , Neag School of Education, UCONN, Storrs, CT
2015 – 2020	<b>National Science Foundation</b> , 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)
2015	<b>Hartford Consortium for Higher Education</b> , Hartford, CT Presentation on Latina/o/x achievement from K-12 to higher education.
2012 – 2014	<b>William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund</b> , 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)**, Washington, D.C.  
Magna Carta human rights workshop, Grantham & London, UK. (all expenses)
- 2002 – 2006           **Rockefeller Brothers Fund Fellowship for Aspiring Teachers of Color**  
National award to fund master's degree towards teacher certification and career.

**Additional Languages**

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**Spanish/English** (proficient spoken, proficient written)

**Professional Affiliations**

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