

**ed post**

Where stories lead to action.



Hey Shawnta! How Can I  
Ensure My Children's School  
Incorporates Their Latino

# Heritage After Hispanic Heritage Month Ends?

[BY SHAWNITA S. BARNES](#)

October 13, 2022

**Hey Shawnta!**

**How can I ensure my children's school incorporates their Latino heritage after Hispanic Heritage Month ends?**

**Sincerely,**

**Latino 365**

Hi Latino 365,

As a Black woman, I can empathize with your concern. One month is not enough time to cover anyone's culture or experience. When teachers or school leaders confine the history and heritage of a group to one month, it normally lacks depth and substance. I am sure you want depth and substance and not a quick Hispanic Heritage Month fact on the morning announcements. Sometimes educators do not realize how these quick-hit facts impact students and families. You must let them know how you feel.

No group is a monolith. Heritage and history months make richly diverse cultures seem like one big culture. Whether people use the word Latino, Hispanic, Latinx, or Latine, all are individual words meant to represent more than one culture. New variations continue to be added because some people feel left out.

# Tell the School About Your Family's Heritage

First, you must tell the school exactly what your heritage is and where you are from. Let's say your family is from Venezuela. Venezuelan heritage and history are not the same as Mexican heritage and history. There may be some overlapping cultural points, but each place—and its people—has its unique culture and experience.

Teachers should make the effort to include the history and heritage of the students who are in their classroom and not a cookie-cutter generic lesson. However, how will teachers know your children's background if you don't tell them? You certainly don't want your children's teachers looking at them and saying, "Maybe they are Cuban. Let's add some Cuban history to next week's lesson."

You are probably wondering when you can tell the teacher this information. Many teachers send home a student inventory for parents to complete at the beginning of the school year so they can learn about their students. You can add this to that inventory and even write, "I hope you can include some of my children's heritage in lesson plans outside of Hispanic Heritage Month."

Another time to share this information with teachers would be during parent and teacher conferences. Many times parents feel like they are only attending to receive information from the teachers. Instead, you should feel that you can share information and make requests, such as including your children's heritage throughout the year when feasible.

You can also reach out to the school administration. If the principal sends out a

weekly newsletter, he or she will probably mention that September 15 - October 15 is Hispanic Heritage Month. Be bold enough to circle back with the principal to ask how people from various Hispanic/Latino backgrounds are included in the school's various curricula. If you feel comfortable, offer knowledge about your heritage the school can use.

Latino 365, you asked a great question. I would love to learn how it goes after you talk to teachers and/or administrators at your children's school.

Shawnta