

A FUTURE BUILT TOGETHER

Advancing Latino youth through education, equity, and comunidad.

2025

18 MONTH
PROGRESS
REPORT



Latinx Education Collaborative
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**“You can’t build power
without community. And
you can’t build community
without love.”**



Gracias

Querida comunidad,

As I reflect on everything we've accomplished between January 2024 and June 2025, one word rises to the top: gratitude. This season has been one of bold ideas, meaningful connections, and a powerful movement in our mission to create the necessary conditions for the advancement of Latino youth.

We've expanded our reach and deepened our impact, supporting Latino educators through recruitment, professional development, storytelling, and community. From growing the Futuros initiative to investing in digital equity through EducaTec, every step has been grounded in the belief that educators and caregivers matter and that when they thrive, so do our students.

This work is both personal and collective. It's rooted in the voices of our teachers, the dreams of our youth, and the power of a community that refuses to be overlooked. We're building something that lasts, something transformational.

Thank you for standing with us, dreaming with us, and building alongside us. This report captures just a fraction of the work we've done together and the possibilities ahead.



Con todo el corazón,

Edgar J. Palacios
Founder & CEO

Latinx Education Collaborative



Mission & Highlights

MISSION

The LEC works to create the necessary conditions for the advancement of Latino youth.

This mission reflects our commitment to transforming educational ecosystems, ensuring that Latino students are not only seen and supported but are prepared to thrive, lead, and shape the future.

VISION

We envision a future where every Latino student has access to an excellent, culturally affirming education, the opportunity to improve their quality of life, and the power to become a leader in their community and beyond.

WHAT DRIVES US

Representation matters, but so does retention, community, and transformation.

At LEC, we believe in:

- Elevating Latino educators as change agents and role models.
- Empowering students through culturally responsive systems.
- Engaging parents and families as essential partners in educational success.
- Building coalitions that center equity and drive systemic change.



Our Theory of Change

When we invest in Latinx educators, empower students, engage families, and build allies, we transform education for Latino youth, creating lasting, systemic change.

What We Believe

If we...	Then we will...
Recruit and retain more Latino educators	Reflect student identities in the classroom and improve academic outcomes
Partner with families to engage with schools	Strengthen student support and build trust across systems
Support students in owning their educational journey	Increase confidence, access, and long-term opportunity
Equip allies and elevate community voices	Advance inclusive, culturally responsive systems



2024 IN ACTION:

Advancing Our Strategic Goals

At the LEC, our work in 2024 reflected the boldness of our mission. Through powerful programs, authentic community moments, and intentional partnerships, we continued transforming education across Kansas City and beyond.

1. Increasing Representation & Retention of Latinx Educators

We believe Latino educators are central to thriving schools and affirming student experiences. In 2024, we deepened our investment in both new and current educators:

- Our Futuro Program welcomed 5 new educators into our growing pipeline, supported through events like our Pinning Ceremony, Family Meet-Up, and holiday gatherings.
- The Latinx Educator Awards celebrated 10 outstanding educators across the country, shining a light on their leadership and commitment in roles ranging from counselor to support staff to future educator.
- Through the 3rd Cohort of the Expresión Storytelling Fellowship, we supported 9 Latinx educators in crafting and sharing their stories at public showcases and community events. These narratives built healing-centered, culturally responsive education spaces across the Midwest.



"This was more than professional development. It was a safe space to uplift your voice and the voice and stories of other Latine educators."

– Eva Orbe Benitez, Expresión Fellow



2024 IN ACTION:

Advancing Our Strategic Goals

At the LEC, our work in 2024 reflected the boldness of our mission. Through powerful programs, authentic community moments, and intentional partnerships, we continued transforming education across Kansas City and beyond.

2. Strengthening Family & School Partnerships

Families are our students' first and most important teachers. This year, LEC expanded our family engagement efforts through culturally rooted programming and celebration:

- EducaTec, our Spanish-language digital skills program, graduated 150 parents and caregivers. Participants increased their tech confidence and reported feeling more independent when navigating their children's schools and daily life.
- Our first-ever EducaTec Celebration brought families, graduates, instructors, and community leaders together to celebrate their achievements.
- Feedback showed that parents progressed from beginner to intermediate tech users—and requested future classes on Excel, citizenship, and English learning.



***"They never imagined I would be in a class.
Thank you for the program and support
to the Latino community."***

– Magaly Hernández, EducaTec Graduate



2024 IN ACTION:

Advancing Our Strategic Goals

3. Uplifting Latino Students as Future Leaders

This year, we continued to inspire students to see themselves as future educators and changemakers:

- At Guadalupe Centers High School, we hosted a college and career panel for 9th grade students, sharing personal stories and guidance from Latino professionals.
- At the Evolución Latino Education Conference, youth joined the conversation as speakers and storytellers, further blurring the lines between student and leader.

4. Building Allyship & Advocacy for Systemic Change

Transformative work requires collective movement. In 2024, we brought people together across sectors to reimagine what's possible:

- Our Seventh Annual Evolución Conference brought together 120+ educators, parents, students, and advocates, featuring live storytelling, 20+ speakers, and powerful moments of cultural celebration and healing.
- The Evolución Entrepreneur Mixer lifted up 12 Latinx small business owners as education allies, connecting economics, identity, and opportunity in one space.
- The Back to School Twilight Market served as a joyful kickoff to the school year, providing school supplies for 20 educators, voter registration, and family resources, all set to music and community energy.





2025 HIGHLIGHTS

Deepening Impact Through Connection & Community

As we entered 2025, the LEC continued our commitment to creating conditions where Latino youth and the educators, families, and communities around them can thrive. The first half of the year saw expansion across programming, deeper community relationships, and a recommitment to healing, digital equity, and narrative power.

With over 1,396 participants reached and 72 events hosted, our work in 2025, thus far, reinforced the importance of showing up consistently, listening deeply, and building together.

1. Increasing Representation & Retention of Latinx Educators

This year, we continued supporting Latino educators through consistent programming, reflection, and leadership opportunities:

- Our 2025 Expresión Storytelling Fellowship launched with a new cohort and included a community-wide Showcase and Summer Reunion. Fellows developed their craft and shared stories on identity, resilience, and purpose, reclaiming the narrative on what it means to be an educator.
- The Futuro Educators Program hosted monthly virtual support meetings, strengthened recruitment efforts, and provided one-on-one mentorship to aspiring teachers from across the region.
- We continued to provide wellness spaces through an Educator Wellness Series and Mental Health First Aid certification, addressing educator burnout and creating tools for community care.



"This has been something I've been looking for since I started this work in education but could never find."

– Expresión Fellow



2025 HIGHLIGHTS

Deepening Impact Through Connection & Community

2. Strengthening Family & School Partnerships

2025 has emphasized the importance of meeting families where they are with tools, language access, and meaningful opportunities to connect:

- EducaTec graduated its 300th participant across 9 partner sites, increasing confidence in digital tools like Gmail, Google Sheets, and Canva. Participants reported gains of 35%+ in digital literacy from pre- to post-assessments.
- Families also engaged through FAFSA Frenzy events, storytelling circles, and community tabling, ensuring access to information and opportunities.
- Relaunch of “Familias Presentes” created new openings for parent voice and involvement in education systems.



“I learned how to open email, complete assignments, and make appointments, especially at my children’s school.”

– EducaTec Graduate



2025 HIGHLIGHTS

Deepening Impact Through Connection & Community

3. Uplifting Latino Students as Future Leaders

Throughout Q1, students remained at the center of our mission:

- At the Acción Summit, hosted in partnership with Revolución Educativa, 9 youth and 30 educators gathered to learn, advocate, and share stories. Student panels served as powerful reminders of why we fight for educational equity.
- Postsecondary planning took center stage through a Spring Virtual Career Fair, livestreams, and college visits to institutions like University of Central Missouri, William Jewell College, and University of Missouri - Columbia.

4. Building Allyship & Advocacy for Systemic Change

Q1 was a season of visibility, voice, and vision:

- We hosted livestream fireside chats and virtual book clubs with educator-authors, elevating the stories and scholarship of Latinx thought leaders.
- Through partnerships and storytelling, we began laying the groundwork for Familias Empoderadas, a major fall event to celebrate and activate family leadership.



“Jeni’s story showed how one parent can advocate not just for her child, but for an entire classroom.”

– Summit Participant



Latinx Education Collaborative

MEETING AN URGENT AND IMMEDIATE NEED

Launched in February 2025, the Adelante Fund is LEC's community care initiative designed to provide direct financial assistance to Latino individuals and families facing urgent needs. Rooted in our values of solidarity and equity, the fund was created to fill critical gaps in housing, legal support, food access, and emergency relief because advancing Latino youth means supporting the entire ecosystem around them.

Since its inception, the Adelante Fund has distributed \$18,130 in aid to 50 individuals, helping families navigate difficult moments with dignity, care, and the assurance that they are not alone.

This is more than charity, it's a movement grounded in mutual aid, trust, and the belief that when we invest in our people, we all move forward.

Partners

Anonymous
City Fund
City of Kansas City, Missouri
Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
Francis Family Foundation
Google Fiber
Greater Kansas City Community Foundation
Hall Family Foundation
Health Forward Foundation
Hispanic Federation / Hispanic Development Fund
KC Digital Inclusion Fund
The Mind Trust
Missouri E.C.L.I.P.S.E Fund
Proteus Fund
SchoolSmart KC
Schusterman Family Philanthropies
Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth
Sporting Kansas City
Turn The Page KC



2024 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

LEC ended 2024 in a strong financial position, reflecting responsible stewardship, strategic growth, and continued community investment. As of December 31, 2024:

- Cash on Hand totaled \$998,733, providing over 550 days of operating reserves, well above our 90-day target and ensuring organizational stability.
- Total Revenue for 2024 reached \$831,273, driven primarily by foundation and trust grants totaling over \$784,000.
- Total Expenses amounted to \$678,210, with 70% of the budget allocated to programming and mission-aligned efforts.

Our net income for the year was \$176,984, reinforcing our commitment to sustainable growth while continuing to scale impact across educator support, student leadership, digital literacy, and family engagement. We remain grateful to our donors, partners, and funders whose trust allows us to advance educational equity for Latino youth.



Looking Ahead

As we look toward the remainder of 2025 and beyond, the Latinx Education Collaborative remains focused on building a future where Latino youth are thriving in every classroom, supported by educators, families, and communities that see and celebrate them.

We are expanding our pipeline of future educators, scaling storytelling as a leadership tool, investing in wellness and digital access, and deepening our connection to families through culturally rooted programming. With each step, we are not only responding to community needs—we are co-creating solutions that are bold, sustainable, and rooted in love.

In the year ahead, we will continue strengthening our infrastructure, evaluating our impact, and growing the Adelante Fund to meet urgent needs. We will show up with consistency, care, and clarity—because our young people deserve nothing less.

The path forward is clear, and we're moving together—**adelante**.



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