



Union City Board of Education

Office of Technology

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Union City, located in northern New Jersey's Hudson County, is situated directly across the Hudson River from Manhattan. Union City is a community of ethnic and cultural diversity with a predominantly immigrant Latino population. One mile long and a quarter mile wide, it is the most densely populated city in the United States (approximately 70,000 residents), with a student population that is 92% Spanish speaking.

Union City has a rich and varied immigrant history. It was originally settled by Germans in 1851 who left Manhattan and moved across the Hudson River in search of affordable land and open space. At the turn of the century, the city became home to many Irish and Italian Immigrants, and Italians were the dominant population until the late 1960's.

In the 1940's Union City attracted the first Cuban immigrants from a small town in central Cuba called Formento. These early Cubans learned of Union City's famed embroidery factories and came in search of work. In the mid-50's Fidel Castro, aware of the Cuban presence in this town, traveled to Union City to recruit fighters and raise money. He held meetings in a downtown bar on Bergenline Avenue, and local legend has it that Castro was arrested one night in a scuffle with supporters of General Fulgencio Batista.

By the time Castro came to power in 1959, 2000 Fomenteros were living in Union City, making the city an attractive port-of-entry for Cubans wishing to immigrate. Union City continues to have the largest concentration of Cuban-Americans outside of Miami, hence its nickname, "Havana on the Hudson."

The Board of Education serves over 11,000 students in 12 schools (three PreK-5, one PreK-4, five K-8, one 7-8, two high schools and various pre-school, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten providers). Approximately 92% of the students are Latino, 75% of whom do not speak English at home. Thirty-four percent of the students are enrolled in the District's bilingual program and over half of the District's teachers are certified ESL or bilingual. The majority of residents are of low or moderate income, and 14% of the District's students have been in the country less than three years.

Web Sites :

Union City Online	http://www.union-city.k12.nj.us
Classlink	http://www.classlink2000.com
Erate	http://www.sl.universalservice.org/
Recent Article	http://www.scholastic.com/administrator/aprilmay03/articles.asp?article=district