



RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

M.Ed. In TESL Program Country Informational Reports

Produced by Graduate Students in the M.Ed. In TESL Program
In the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development

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Puerto Rico

A glimpse into Education

<http://www.map-puerto-rico.com/image-files/puerto-rico-flag-map.jpg>

COMMONWEALTH STATUS

- Became Under U.S. Sovereignty in 1898.
- U.S. Citizens in 1917.
- In July of 1950 U.S. enacted a Public Law 600 which provided that existing laws which defined political, economic and fiscal relationship between P.R. and U.S. remained in full force.
- This law also authorized for Puerto Ricans to draft their own constitution which took effect in July of 1952.
- Puerto Rico's relationship to the United States is recognized as a commonwealth.

PUERTO RICO STATEHOOD IN 2012?

“ATTITUDES TOWARD U.S.

- In the November election of 2012 Puerto Rico will decide whether they want to become statehood, stay as a commonwealth and/or independent.
- Currently Puerto Rico's official language is Spanish and English. If Puerto Rico becomes part of the United States in order for them to integrate with Americans politicians state that Puerto Rico should change their official Language to English.
- However Governor Fortuno states that the Constitution does not denotes any required language for statehood. Puerto Ricans are proud of their heritage and proud of being a bilingual Government. Language should not be politicized.
- Puerto Ricans have demonstrated enough integration with the United States seeing as how Puerto Rico has had more men and women act on the “War on Terror” than any other state except one.

BILINGUAL EDUCATION

- Mission- Puerto Rico is to improve their knowledge of English. Luis Fortuno who is the Governor of Puerto Rico states that his promise is to provide more funds, to achieve the goal of Bilingual Education.
- New Bilingual Generation Program is established so that in 10 years all children of the Caribbean Island will be able to express themselves both in English and Spanish
- During an Interview Luis Fortuno stated, “English should not be a privilege to those who attend public schools, nor should Puerto Rican children have their opportunities limited in life by a poor grasp of that language.
- Currently only 12 schools offer an English Curriculum. Currently 35 schools offer English courses

“SPANISH EXPERT SEES SNAGS FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN PUERTO RICO”

- Luis Fortuno was interviewed May 11, 2012 by Francisco Moreno- Academic Director of Spain's Cervantes Institute. He promotes the Spanish language and Iber-American Culture.
- There are Problems in establishing public bilingual education in Puerto Rico where Spanish is the mother tongue of the vast majority.
- The author of the article questions that why doesn't Puerto Rico put aside political connections with U.S.

Concerns from the officials:

- What level of ability should be the goal in Puerto Rico?
- What do we do in terms of Finding Teachers trained well enough to achieve this goal?

Currently this topic is a debate because many Puerto Ricans do not want to give up their mother tongue. As many will say this will be identity loss. Others may argue that being bilingual is an asset to the population.