



Women of DISTINCTION

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Wanda Ortiz-Rivera

Wanda Ortiz-Rivera is the Superintendent of Schools in the Brentwood Union Free School District.

Ms. Ortiz-Rivera is a dedicated educator, advocate, and the first Latina Superintendent of Brentwood Schools. Born and raised in Bayamón, Puerto Rico, she moved to New York at 16 to pursue higher education, earning a B.A. in Natural Science and Mathematics with a minor in Spanish Literature and an M.B.A. from Dowling College. She later earned an M.Ed. in Bilingual/Bicultural Education from Columbia University's Teachers College.

Her career at Brentwood began in 2001 as a dual language teacher at Southwest Elementary School. Ms. Ortiz-Rivera quickly advanced into leadership roles, serving as Coordinator of Bilingual/ENL Programs, Assistant Superintendent of Bilingual Programs and Student Intake K-12, and later as Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Instruction and Bilingual Education.

In September 2023, she was appointed Interim Superintendent, later earning the permanent position. A passionate advocate for educational equity, Ms. Ortiz-Rivera is committed to ensuring that every child has access to resources and opportunities for success. She spearheaded the K-12 Graduation Plus+ initiative, which prepares students for college, careers, and post-secondary opportunities by offering college credits, industry certifications, and workforce readiness skills.

Under her leadership, Brentwood has also expanded student leadership opportunities, strengthened middle school programs, and enhanced arts and music education.

Beyond her role as Superintendent, Ms. Ortiz-Rivera actively serves on numerous educational and community organizations, advocating for students and families. Her dedication to bilingual education, equity, and student empowerment has earned her recognition from Teachers College, Fundación Ortega y Gasset, the Town of Islip, and the Brentwood Board of Education.

A devoted mother, she often shares, "At an early age, my son quickly realized that he had 18,000 brothers and sisters!" She believes diversity is Brentwood's greatest strength, calling it a "superpower" that should be celebrated. With an unwavering commitment to student achievement, community engagement, and equity, Ms. Ortiz-Rivera continues to lead Brentwood with vision, passion, and dedication.

***Wanda Ortiz-Rivera was selected as a
2025 Women of Distinction honoree by Senator Monica R. Martinez***

