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This issue's focus: School Holding Power



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School Holding Power

Texas Higher Education Law Aims to Improve Outcomes for Students in Developmental Education

by Bricio Vasquez, Ph.D.

College-level placement in Texas community colleges relies heavily on a single college readiness placement test, the TSIA, unless exempt. A reported 58% of first-year community college students were placed in remedial education in English, reading or mathematics.

In 2017, Texas set new policy requiring community colleges to change developmental education to improve student success, but the state's weakened graduation requirements set in 2013 could be a stumbling block.



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Three Guiding Principles for Removing College Readiness Barriers in School Policies and Practices

by Nilka Avilés, Ed.D., and Hector Bojorquez

Future earnings and life choices leave little doubt that schools need to provide rigorous courses and other supports to prepare students for college and career. But school leaders may struggle with making this a reality.



Dr. Avilés and Mr. Bojorquez describe how educators can explore their school's college-going culture by considering three key principles.



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Texas Public School Attrition Study Highlights, 2018-19 -

Attrition Rate Down to 21%, But Texas High Schools Lost Over 88,000 Students Last Year

by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.

The latest attrition rate data for Texas public schools shows continued gradual improvement but also persistent disparities among racial and ethnic student groups. IDRA's attrition study found that 21% of the freshman class of 2015-16 left school prior to graduating in the 2018-19 school year. IDRA's analysis of rates by race and ethnicity shows continuing disparities.

This article provides a preview of IDRA's attrition study that will be released in January.



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Valued Youth Partnership Tutor on the Importance of Being Able to Ask Questions in School

by Emaje' Williams, Odessa High School, Ector County ISD, Texas

Emaje' Williams shares how her time as a tutor in the IDRA Valued Youth Partnership program gave her the chance to use her own experience to help her tutees feel comfortable enough to ask questions in class. "Feeling you are not smart enough can change and ruin the way a child learns." She now feels empowered in her own learning and in helping other kids feel that they are good enough.

Emaje' received the third place award among high school Valued Youth tutors in IDRA's nationwide essay contest. She was then a junior at Odessa High School in Ector County ISD, Texas.



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As a community, we have made a promise to our children - a big promise to provide a quality public education so all children may find their fullest future and fulfill it.

IDRA's new publication, *Keeping the Promise - Putting Children First*, features seven case studies that illustrate how IDRA promotes leading-edge research, policies and practices that secure real solutions to school inequity and achieves results for students. The stories show our work in:

- Providing actionable knowledge with community action data dashboards;
- Building a structure for family engagement across Arkansas;
- Addressing bias in STEM access in Nashville, Tennessee;
- Sparking a network of Education CAFEs;
- Preparing a new generation of teachers for today's classrooms;
- Examining curriculum policy for college readiness; and
- Sustaining a generation of valued youth.



In many cases, intergenerational leadership - asset-based partnership with families, students, and communities - leads the way. As a result, this work has powerfully affected millions of students' lives by dramatically raising educational opportunities for all children.

Let us continue to send forth leadership and action that makes educational equity a reality for each and every child!

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The Intercultural Development Research Association is an independent private non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring educational opportunity for every child. IDRA strengthens and transforms public education by providing dynamic training; useful research, evaluation, and frameworks for action; timely policy analyses; and innovative materials and programs.

IDRA works hand-in-hand with hundreds of thousands of educators and families each year in communities and classrooms around the country. All our work rests on an

unwavering commitment to creating self-renewing schools that value and promote the success of students of all backgrounds.