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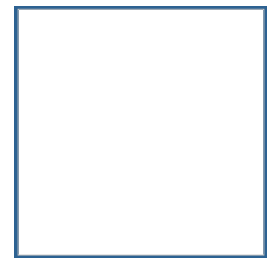
“We must ensure that any...funding plan provides equitable access to excellent education (to high quality curricula, good teaching, support services and facilities) for all students in all school districts. There can be no doubt: we need an excellent education for all our children. And where there is no equity, there can be no excellence.”

– María “Cuca” Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., IDRA executive director, from *Fair Funding for the Common Good: Making Good on Our Promise to Children*

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Schools and Communities in Action

Study highlights five urban “high schools for equity” in California. In California, a “majority minority state,” only [57 percent of African American students and 60 percent of Latino students graduate on time](#) with a diploma. Justice Matters, a non-profit dedicated to bringing about racially-just schools rooted in community vision, has teamed up with Linda Darling-Hammond and the School Redesign Network at Stanford University to study schools that are bucking this trend. They selected five high schools from San Francisco to San Diego that predominantly serve low-income, minority students and send 80 percent to 100 percent of their students to college. In these “High Schools for Equity,” they found these three common qualities:



1) Personalization (students are well known) – schools connected with students through continuous, long-term relationships; counseling and academic connections and built-in partnerships with families.

2) Rigorous, Relevant Instruction (schoolwork is challenging, meaningful)– schools held high expectations for every student, provided rigorous coursework, provided extra academic support as needed, enriched teaching with culture and language, and connected students to community and their futures through internships and partnerships.

3) Professional Learning and Collaboration (teachers partner, plan and problem solve) – schools budget time for teachers to collaborate and co-design, get coaching and mentoring.

To learn more about these high schools for equity, visit the [full report](#) or the [policy brief](#).

Leading a Diverse Campus to Success. Schools across the country are adapting to changing populations. One such school in southern Louisiana once served primarily English-speaking and Spanish-speaking students. Now, after Hurricane Katrina it now serves students who speak Urdu, Vietnamese, Korean, Arabic, Spanish and English. In the midst of this change, the school has ranked in the top three Jefferson Parish campuses for three years in a row. Listen in to [“Leading a Diverse Campus to Success”](#), an IDRA Classnotes podcast (www.idra.org/Podcasts/) as elementary principal, Sandy Dolan, shares how she has transformed her campus to succeed during a time of dramatic population changes. Sandy is interviewed by Hector Bojorquez, IDRA’s technology specialist.

Adopt Six Goals of Equity. Does every child in your district, of any background, have the chance to excel? Are all students on track to graduate, prepared for college? To help schools and communities look together at this question and create a plan of action, the [IDRA South Central Collaborative for Equity \(SCCE\)](#) outlined [Six Goals of Educational Equity](#) (#1: Comparably high academic achievement and other student outcomes, #2: Equitable access and inclusion, #3: Equitable treatment, #4: Equitable opportunity to learn, #5: Equitable resources, #6: Accountability). You can use these as a yardstick to measure your progress or as a lightening rod to galvanize change.

Youth Voices. “My high school is the most diverse in the city, but still certain classes are less diverse and integrated than others... Why are English classes less integrated and diverse than others?...Yes, there is no longer any segregation throughout our school, but I believe that there are still problems involving integration and diversity throughout classes.”
- 11th grade student/photographer, IDRA Brown Mendez [Community Blueprint Dialogues, Albuquerque](#)

Toolbox

Funding Equity Matters. Time and again in the fight for school finance equity in Texas, José A. Cárdenas, Ed.D., IDRA founder and director emeritus, heard “there was no need for an equitable system since ‘money does not make a difference.’” His rejoinder? [“If money does not make a difference, why are the rich districts fighting so hard to retain it?”](#)



How does your state or school district compare to others in terms of per-pupil spending, student poverty, achievement and school finance equity? You can find out more quickly and easily now through the [Federal Education Budget Project](#), a new online database developed by the New America Foundation.

Listen In! to [“The Watch on Racism Cannot Stop.”](#) Conversations about diversity in schools and in society typically put people in categories based on race, gender and so on. As a result, the duality that minority girls and minority women live in often is overlooked. IDRA Classnotes Podcast “The Watch on Racism Cannot Stop” records a keynote speech delivered by Dr. Shirley Nash Weber, former chair of the Department of Africana Studies and Professor of Africana Studies at San Diego State University on the challenge African American women in particular face in balancing gender and equity. The keynote was presented during the [Association for Gender Equity Leadership in Education’s \(AGELE’s\)](#) annual meeting, which was co-sponsored by the [IDRA South Central Collaborative for Equity](#).

[We want to hear from you!](#) You received this e-letter either because you’ve expressed interest in the topic or somebody who likes you forwarded it to you. Have a story of school-community partnership that’s raising graduation rates? - Let us hear from you. To submit question or comment, send e-mail to gradforall@idra.org. [Tell a Friend](#). Feel free to forward Grad4All to people who share a passion for every student’s success.

The [Intercultural Development Research Association](#) is an independent, private non-profit organization whose mission is to create schools that work for all children.

Thanks for reading!

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