



GRADUATION FOR ALL

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Family Engagement • www.idra.org • June 2010

Four decades of research, plus common sense, show that family engagement in schools matters. What can school principals do to pave the way to stronger partnerships with families? How are families going beyond involvement to take up leadership and partnership to improve schools? This issue of *Graduation for All* offers examples, food for thought and actions you can take to strengthen family engagement.

We want to hear from you! Have a story of family-school partnership that's making a difference? Drop us a line! Your stories, thoughts and suggestions are always welcome at gradforall@idra.org.

[¡Usted puede recibir esta edición de Graduation for All en español!](#)

Schools and Communities in Action

The Family Friendly Principal. A majority of teachers and principals, surveyed by Civic Enterprises as part of its "On the Front Lines of Schools" study, feel that improving parent outreach would do a great deal to reduce dropout rates. Visit "The Family Friendly Principal" (an IDRA Classnotes podcast) to hear how Rogelio López del Bosque, Ed.D. created a family friendly school during his recent five-year term as a high school principal, bringing families into the conversation of creating a school that achieved success for all students. Visit: [The Family Friendly Principal podcast](#)



To learn more, visit these companion resources:
[Creating Culturally Responsive Parent Engagement](#)
[What Parents Should Know about Their Schools](#)

Parents as Leaders in Education. IDRA's annual La Semana del Niño Parent Institute has become a premier gathering place for innovation in family leadership and engagement. Through the institute, families, educators and community leaders come together to examine school data and explore new ways to partner to improve teaching and learning. But it is a conference with a twist: the majority of presentations are by parents.

To learn more about how parents are taking action, visit [Parents as Leaders in Education](#), an IDRA Classnotes podcast conversation with Frances Guzmán, M.Ed.

Also visit: "[ARISE South Tower PTA Comunitario - A New Model of Parent Engagement](#)," (article) by Aurelio Montemayor, M.Ed. to find out how families in South Texas colonias have formed a new community-based PTA to work with academically challenged schools in the region.

"**One Dream.**" Parents of all backgrounds care about their children's education. Parents are more likely to feel engaged—in joint problem-solving and selecting their children's courses—in high-performing schools than low-performing schools. These are some of the findings described in [One Dream, Two Realities](#), a survey of parents by Civic Enterprises, available online.

Toolbox

Decades of research show that family involvement is key to student success, but policy and practice lag behind. So find the authors of "Reframing Family Involvement in Education," when they argue that "resources for and commitments to promoting meaningful family involvement

have been few, weak, and inconsistent.”

To learn more about new research on family engagement and how you can turn things around, visit:

[Reframing Family Involvement in Education](#)

[Seeing is Believing: Promising Practices for How School Districts Promote Family Engagement](#)

You may also want to visit the [April edition of IDRA's Newsletter Plus](#), which focuses on family leadership and strengthening schools.

Youth Voices

"Abel was the most difficult [student] in the group. He got off task a lot, daydreamed, and seemed like he kept to himself...It was scary... because this 10-year old boy that I only knew for maybe a month or two, was acting the exact way I acted when I was his age. He was my 'mini-me.' No one understood him. No one ever sat down and asked him how he was doing...Everyone thought he was just a problem child, but I didn't. I understood how he felt alone because he was new and talked differently than most of the kids here. I understood that he settled for ordinary instead of taking the extra step toward extraordinary because no one believed in him, so he didn't believe in himself " - Andre Merritt, tutor, Fuller Performance Learning Center in North Carolina and national essay contest winner.



To see Andre Merritt's full essay and essays by other contest winners, [visit the IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program essay contest online.](#)

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

Let us hear from you! Have a story of school-community partnership that's raising graduation rates? We welcome your comments, questions and suggestions at gradforall@idra.org. Forward to a Friend! Feel free to [share Grad4All](#) with anyone who shares your passion for every student's success.

Thanks for reading!

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