



# IDRA Education Policy Fellows

Building on a Powerful Legacy of Education Policy



## Jonathan Peraza Campos, M.S.

**IDRA Education Policy Fellow – Georgia Emergent Bilingual & Immigrant Student Education**

IDRA’s ground-breaking program is changing policy advocacy because policymakers can make stronger education policy decisions by working with advocates who are connected to impacted communities. Our Education Policy Fellows work with coalitions, students and families to craft a community-centered education policy agenda and join a network of advocates and policy influencers focused on improving racial equity in education policymaking spaces. The program’s second cycle in Georgia and Texas operated from November 2022 through July 2023.

### About Jonathan

Jonathan Peraza Campos (he/him/él) received his undergraduate degree in 2018 from Emory University. He completed his master’s degree in social foundations of education at Georgia State University in 2021.

Jonathan studies and organizes around the links between racism, imperialism, immigration, militarism, incarceration, policing and education, especially in the U.S. South and the Central American diaspora. He has been involved in campaigns for racial, immigrant, and educational justice and abolitionist causes in metro-Atlanta and beyond. As an educational consultant and an abolitionist educator-organizer, much of his work has focused on creating curriculum and infrastructure for Latino studies and abolitionist teaching. He is invested in teaching Latino and immigrant youth about their histories, writers, thinkers, knowledge and movements through an asset-based Latinx Studies and ethnic studies approach. Culturally sustaining, bilingual/multilingual and liberatory education are at the heart of the work he does.

### Fellowship Products

#### Classnotes Podcast

- A Bright Future in Education Advocacy – #238
- Advocates of Color and Community Power – #236
- Learning from Latino and Multilingual Youth – #235
- The Good, Bad and Ugly of Legislative Advocacy – #234

**After the fellowship, Jonathan will continue his work as a teacher in Georgia schools.**

#### Media Interviews

- Georgia Professional Standards Commission removes DEI terms from teacher preparation guidelines, by Elizabeth Rymarev, Atlanta Civic Circle, June 9, 2023
- Major teacher training program change removes diversity, equity and inclusion from training rules, by Courtney Francisco, WSB-TV, June 8, 2023 (Also ran in Yahoo! News, June 8, 2023)
- Georgia dropping ‘woke’ words from teacher preparation rules, by Dave Williams Capitol Beat News Service, June 8, 2023 (also appeared in Marietta Daily Journal, June 8, 2023; Calhoun Times, June 10, 2023; Yahoo News!, June 9, 2023; The Augusta Press, June 8, 2023; Henry Herald, June 8, 2023) (Jonathan)
- Groups highlight ‘good’ and ‘bad’ education bills in Georgia, Asia Ashley, CNHI News (Alabama), February 28, 2023 (also published in Allied News, February 28, 2023; Dalton Daily Citizen, March 1, 2023; Valdosta Daily Times, March 6, 2023)

#### Community Engagement

- Facilitated meetings for the Georgia Coalition for Education Justice and helped lead a coalition teach-in.

#### IDRA Newsletter Article

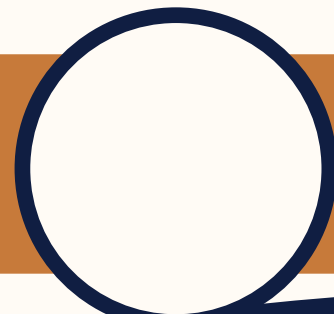
- Georgia Students Deserve a 21st Century Education for the Multicultural and Multilingual Future, February 2023

#### Analysis

- Creating a Multilingual Georgia: Emergent Bilingual and Multilingual Learner (EBML) Education in Georgia

#### Testimony

- IDRA Testimony Against the Removal of DEI Standards from Teacher Certification Standards – Submitted to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, June 7, 2023





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## Steve Kengang

**IDRA Education Policy Fellow – Texas College Access and Success**

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### About Steve

Steve Kengang is a graduate of Baylor University in Waco, Texas, where he earned a bachelor of arts degree in French with a minor in educational psychology. He served in several leadership positions on campus and in the surrounding community where he developed a passion for advancing educational equity and health care access throughout his service with various organizations, such as Communities in Schools and Habitat for Humanity.

After undergrad, Kengang taught English to underserved and low-income minority students in the East Austin community. As an educator, he established a space for his students to analyze identity through the readings of Chicano/Latino and Black literature in order to assist them in linking literature and their own experiences in crafting their personal narratives. Subsequently, he earned a bachelor of science degree in human biology at Northwestern Health Sciences University and completed a research fellowship in the emergency department of the Hennepin County Medical Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Throughout his term, he assisted several underserved and marginalized patients from the surrounding communities navigate their healthcare journeys. He has been serving as a lead advisor at Breakthrough in Austin, where he has been instrumental in working with students who will be first-generation college graduates. His research interests lie at the intersection of education and health equity.

### Fellowship Products

#### Media Coverage

- Kengang: Dual Credit Programs Give Students a Fighting Chance to Access and Succeed in College, Rio Grande Guardian, March 1, 2023



**After the fellowship, Steve looks to enroll in a dual degree medicine and education doctoral program.**

#### IDRA Articles

- Major Changes Ahead for Texas Future College Students, IDRA Newsletter, June-July 2023
- It Takes a Village to Change the World, IDRA Knowledge is Power, February 24, 2023
- Dual Credit Programs Give Students a Fighting Chance to Access and Succeed in College, IDRA Newsletter, February 2023

#### Podcast Episodes

- A Bright Future in Education Advocacy – #238
- Advocates of Color and Community Power – #236
- Learning from Latino and Multilingual Youth – #235
- The Good, Bad and Ugly of Legislative Advocacy – #234

#### Testimony

- SB 2539 Establishes a Pathway to Increase Disadvantaged Students' Dual Credit Enrolment and Expand their Access to Opportunities in Higher Education – IDRA Testimony for Senate Bill 2539, submitted to the Texas Senate Committee on Education Subcommittee on Higher Education, March 23, 2023
- HB 8 Establishes a Pathway to Increase Disadvantaged Students' Dual Credit Enrolment and Expand their Access to Opportunities in Higher Education – IDRA Testimony for House Bill 8, submitted to the Texas House Higher Education Committee, March 20, 2023
- Prohibiting College DEI Programs Would Particularly Impact Marginalized K-12 Students – IDRA Testimony Against SB 17, submitted to the Texas House Higher Education Committee, May 8, 2023
- HB 2615 Would Disproportionally Target Marginalized Students to Pursue Vocational Education Pathways – IDRA Testimony against House Bill 2615, submitted to the Texas House Public Education Committee, April 20, 2023



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## Diana Long

### IDRA Education Policy Fellow – Texas Fair Funding for Strong Public Schools

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### About Diana

Diana Long grew up on the West Side of San Antonio and is the daughter of Mexican immigrants. She is a proud Edgewood ISD alumna and first-generation college student. Diana is pursuing a master's degree in educational leadership and policy at the University of Texas at Austin. She earned her bachelor's degree in sociology from Trinity University in San Antonio, where she served in several leadership positions on campus. During her undergraduate career, she was a Ronald E. McNair Scholar and worked alongside well-renowned scholars in the field of education and educational leadership. Her inquisitiveness and general concern for inequitable education motivated her to design and publish a thesis that highlighted the processes in which the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated inequities in education, specifically in low-income districts in San Antonio. Diana was selected as a Summer 2022 Graduate Archer Fellow, where she served as a research intern at Excelencia in Education, a national not-for-profit organization based in Washington, D.C., working to accelerate higher education success for Latino students. In this role, she completed a comprehensive data verification project to craft recommendations that utilize data to inform practices that intentionally serve Latino students in institutions of higher education. Diana's personal background and research experiences in the areas of Latino education and school finance motivated her to pursue a career in education policy.

### Fellowship Products

#### Public Speaking

- Orgullosamente Bilingue Conference: Guest Speaker at Edgewood ISD, May 24, 2023
- De Colores Ceremony Closing Remarks Speaker at Trinity University, May 12, 2023
- Panelist at the Rodriguez vs. San Antonio 50th Anniversary Commemoration – The Fight for School Finance Equity: Past, Present and Future. Panel: A Call to Community Action for Equitable and Adequate Funding, March 22, 2023

#### Media Interview

- ¿Qué está sucediendo en la Legislatura de Texas en este momento y qué necesita saber la gente?, Despierta Austin, May 26, 2023

After the fellowship, Diana will begin her work as a Student Associate at the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation.

#### IDRA Newsletter Articles

- Lawmakers Refuse to Adopt School Vouchers, For Now, June-July 2023
- What to Expect from Bids to Take Public Money Out of Public Schools, February 2023

#### Testimony

- Greater Investments and Targeted Supports Make Texas Public Schools Better for All Students – IDRA Testimony on HB 100, submitted to the Texas House Public Education Committee, April 4, 2023
- HB 100 Poses a Threat to Students' Civil Rights with Devastating, Discriminatory Impacts on Vulnerable Students – TLEEC Testimony Against HB 100, submitted to the Texas Senate Education Committee, May 22, 2023
- Education Savings Accounts (ESAs) Subsidize Discrimination Against Students – TLEEC Testimony Against HB 4340, submitted to the Texas House Public Education Committee, April 11, 2023
- SB 8 Poses a Threat to Students' Civil Rights with Devastating, Discriminatory Impacts on Vulnerable Students – TLEEC Testimony Against SB 8, submitted to the Texas Senate Education Committee, March 22, 2023
- SB 8 Poses a Threat to Students' Civil Rights with Devastating, Discriminatory Impacts on Vulnerable Students – TLEEC Testimony Against SB 8, submitted to the Texas Senate Education Committee, March 22, 2023

#### Classnotes Podcast

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## Alisha "Tuff" Tuff

### IDRA Education Policy Fellow – Texas Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline

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### About Tuff

Alisha Tuff is from the southside of Chicago. She attended Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Missouri, where she earned a bachelor's degree in criminology with a minor in psychology. She is a second-year master's student in the educational policy and planning program at the University of Texas at Austin. During her time at UT, Tuff mentored at Project MALES (Mentoring to Achieve Latino Educational Success) where she worked with young men at the Austin Alternative Learning Center. She has interned for the Children's Defense Fund Texas where she taught youth how to advocate for themselves and prepared testimony promoting an honest social studies education that represents all students.

Tuff is interested in the school-to-prison pipeline, pushout of Black and Latino students in school, and ensuring every student feels welcome in the classroom. She wishes to change the narrative that Black and Latino students are "at risk." She believes there is value in every student and that to have a good learning environment we must embrace the backgrounds of all students and have respect for their community.

Her main hope in education advocacy is to uplift those who have been left behind and who have only been seen with a deficit mindset.



After the fellowship, Tuff will begin her doctoral program at the University of Texas at Austin's College of Education.

### Fellowship Products

#### IDRA Articles

- Texas Prioritizes Hardening Measures Over Preventative Practices, IDRA Newsletter, June-July 2023
- Traditional School Discipline is Harmful for All, IDRA Newsletter, February 2023
- Owning Our History – Henrietta Wood's Story, IDRA Knowledge is Power February 7, 2023
- The Power of Music – A Reflection for Black History Month, IDRA Knowledge is Power, February 16, 2023

#### Testimony

- Texas' Crown Act Opens Doors for a Better Texas – IDRA Testimony for House Bill 567, submitted to the Texas Senate State Affairs Committee, May 8, 2023
- Understanding Discipline Policies and Practices is Key to Strengthening School Safety and Student Success – IDRA Testimony for HB 4449, submitted to the Texas House Committee on Youth Health and Safety, April 17, 2023
- Transparency of School Discipline Data and Policies Benefits Students and Families – IDRA Testimony for House Bill 2126, submitted to the Texas House Youth Health and Safety Committee, April 3, 2023
- Texas' CROWN Act Gives Every Texan a Fair Chance to Succeed Without Identity-Based Hair Discrimination – IDRA Testimony for House Bill 567, submitted to the Texas House Committee of State Affairs, March 22, 2023

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## Ruth Youn

### IDRA Education Policy Fellow – Georgia Culturally-Sustaining Schools

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### About Ruth

Ruth M. Youn is a native Texan, second-generation Chinese-Taiwanese American, writer and activist in Atlanta. She earned her bachelor’s degree in international affairs at Florida State University. Ruth’s previous studies in French, Spanish and Arabic led her to pursue a five-year stint as an educator in South Korea. During her time there, she experienced the significant impact of simultaneously feeling a sense of belonging (as a person who visibly appears East Asian) and of isolation (as a non-Korean and an emergent Korean-language learner) in a new country. Ruth’s experiences compelled her to deeply reflect upon her own journey in the U.S. public school system as a daughter of immigrants.

Her years abroad also heightened her awareness of the struggles and inequities that present-day students encounter within public education. In response, Youn became a founding member of the grassroots organization, Asian American Voices for Education (AAVED), which advocates for comprehensive U.S. history to be standardized in Georgia K-12 schools. Upon entering IDRA’s fellowship, looked forward to expanding her knowledge and experience to state-level work.

After the fellowship, Ruth continues to serve as a board member for Asian Americans Voices for Education.

### Fellowship Products

#### IDRA Article

- Remove Obstacles to Ethnic Studies for Georgia Students, IDRA Newsletter, February 2023

#### Testimony

- Acceptable Use Policies Must Include Protections for LGBTQ+ Material and Student Data Privacy – IDRA Testimony Against House Bill 338 submitted to the Georgia Senate Education and Youth Committee, March 21, 2023
- Senate Bill 88 Discriminates Against LGBTQ+ Students, who Deserve Supportive Schools that Affirm their Identity, IDRA Testimony Against Senate Bill 88, submitted to the Georgia Senate Education and Youth Committee, March 1, 2023

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