



# **IDRA Education Policy Fellows Program Evaluation Report**

**With Key Themes from Interviews**

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# Contents

Introduction ..... 3

Theme 1: Recruitment, Selection, and Onboarding..... 4

Theme 2: Policy Advocacy Curriculum ..... 6

Theme 3: Focus Areas..... 7

Theme 4: Projects and Products ..... 8

Theme 5: Support, Mentors, and Relationships ..... 9

Theme 6: Outcomes and Connections..... 11

Theme 7: TAMU-Commerce Social Justice through Education Policy Course..... 14

Theme 8: Impacts (personal, career, education)..... 14

Theme 9: Grant Goals and Quality ..... 16

Theme 10: Future of Program ..... 18

Summary and Recommendations ..... 20

Appendix ..... 22

List of Documents Reviewed ..... 23

Guided Interview Questions for Policy Fellows ..... 24

Guided Interview Questions for Directors of Policy Fellows Program ..... 26

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## Introduction

This evaluation examines the inputs, processes, outputs, and the preliminary outcomes of the IDRA Education Policy Fellows Program since its inception in November 2020. The stated goal of the program was as follows.

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- “Increase the presence and contributions of advocates closely connected with communities of color in state-level policymaking through practical training and real-world experience;
  - Influence measurable change in policies and programs that improve college access for students of color and students with limited economic means; and
  - Grow a large, interconnected, and lasting network of education policy influencers who are closely connected with communities of color. Fellows complete a full-time, nine-month fellowship around the Texas state legislature.” (Kresge Foundation, 2021)
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The independent evaluator reviewed key documents (in print and online), interviewed four policy fellows, and interviewed two key project directors. The logic model included in the Appendix served as an overall guide to the interviews. This report discusses the evaluation activities and provides summative and evaluative comments.

The evaluation was conducted from July 2021 through August 2021. Confidential interviews were conducted via Zoom, recorded with the permission of participants, transcribed, and analyzed for key themes. The semi-structured interviews of fellows were approximately 45 minutes to one hour each and consisted of about 40 open-ended questions. The semi-structured interviews with the directors were approximately an hour and consisted of about 30 open-ended questions. Copies of the interview protocols are available in the Appendix.

The evaluator developed and refined the interview questions in conjunction with IDRA project staff using information from the grant application and conversations with staff to understand the rationale and goal of the project before determining the interview questions. The “systemic, cross-sector, or community need” for the IDRA Education Policy Fellows Program was well explained in the narrative of the grant application to the Kresge Foundation and served as helpful background information as quoted below.

“Students of color make up over half of Texas college students. But the policy advocates who work to influence decisions about the state’s postsecondary education system often do not look like the students most impacted by laws and policies. The major need IDRA’s Education Policy Fellows Program seeks to address is representation of all communities in policymaking spaces, specifically among the advocates who present data, research, and policy ideas to policymakers. Communities of color are not adequately represented in the rooms where decisions about the opportunities for students of color are made. Many decision makers miss opportunities to hear from the advocates who have deep and personal ties to communities and whose research and analyses are shaped by the very people impacted by policy decisions. If these perspectives and experiences are not represented, inequitable systems that limit opportunities for historically-marginalized students will persist.

Texas policymakers are currently responding to the impacts of COVID-19 in a Texas Capitol building that will be largely closed to most of the public. Among the invited panelists are usually lobbyists, seasoned activists, and official representatives from Texas colleges. Currently, 70% of university regents in Texas' six largest university systems are white. Most are male. The many students, families, and other impacted communities who are not invited will have more limits than usual to their participation in the state's governing processes.

IDRA's fellows program is important because diverse voices simply make better policy. Now, more than ever, communities of color must have a strong voice in policymaking spaces, ensuring policies address the deeply entrenched inequities exacerbated by the pandemic and do not simply mask the symptoms. An absence of state-level advocate representation for the students of color is inherently damaging to the policymaking process. Advocates of color can offer different policy solutions, developed from their own experiences and the lens through which they view existing research and data. They often maintain important connections to students, families, and community-based advocates who can share their own research, experience, expertise, and policy solutions. Additionally, many advocates of color are able to understand and recognize policies that may have unintended consequences on students" (IDRA submission to Kresge Foundation, January 2021).

This report is organized around 10 recurring themes. The themes are: (1) recruitment, selection, and onboarding; (2) policy advocacy curriculum; (3) focus areas; (4) projects and products; (5) support, mentors, and relationships; (6) outcomes and connections; (7) TAMU-Commerce social justice course; (8) impacts (personal, career, education); (9) grant goals and quality; and (10) future of program (recommendations, sustainability, and involvement). It should be noted that these 10 themes overlap at times; they are not mutually exclusive. Using themes to focus on specific parts of the fellowship process was intentional as an additional lens for understanding the processes of the fellowship. Whenever appropriate, I have integrated comments from both fellows and grant directors within each thematic section. The emphasis, however, is on the comments from the fellows and the perspectives of the fellows compared to the intentions and plan of the grant as outlined in the Kresge Foundation narrative.

## **Theme 1: Recruitment, Selection, and Onboarding**

The project directors sought to widely distribute information about applying for the program. They created a flier and links to a web page for further information. IDRA had an existing contact list of more than 8,000 individuals and, in addition, reached out to social media, higher education institutions, non-profits, professional list-servs, etc. The idea was to get a diverse pool, all stages of policy interest, and all kinds of backgrounds. The directors said they wanted "a well-rounded cohort."

Most of the fellows reported that they learned of the fellowship opportunity through social media. One fellow had a mentor reach out and share the information. The comments about the recruitment information were very positive, "This looks like it was actually made for me." One shared that she was so enthusiastic about the fellowship she was sharing it with all her colleagues and friends and then worried that they would get it and not her.

The program directors described the selection process as multi-layered. Applicants submitted an application form, a resume or curriculum vitae, and references. They also wrote a 500-word essay responding to five questions:

1. What is educational equity?
2. How have you worked for educational equity in your personal and/or professional life?

3. What do you hope to gain from this fellowship program?
4. What do you hope to give to this fellowship program?
5. How will you pursue educational equity in your career?

The selection process began with rating the applications, and then there were two rounds of interviews. Interview committees consisted of other IDRA staff members in addition to the program directors and the communication director.

Most of the recipients only knew a little about how they were selected. They knew that they wrote essays, submitted references, and had two rounds of interviews, but the actual reason they were chosen was unclear. The fellows did report that the process seemed “very prompt” and “very professional.” They were all thrilled to be selected.

Onboarding was during the pandemic, and thus it happened all online. The directors were aware that onboarding using Zoom might not be ideal, but that was the only option during the pandemic. IDRA staff were skilled in both electronic communications and Zoom, so they were ready to go. The administrative assistants were able to get all the paperwork and hiring materials done via the computer. Staff planned to provide background on IDRA’s history, introduce the important material before the legislative session, and make the sessions meaningful with a variety of speakers and methods of delivery. IDRA invited many speakers from different aspects of the policy and practice arena to dialogue with the fellows.

The fellows reported that onboarding paperwork was handled efficiently online and that was much appreciated. The most frequent comments were that Zoom sessions all day long became a bit “overwhelming,” and many of the fellows wished that more of the sessions were interactive or that there were more hands-on activities rather than Zoom panels or lectures. They liked meeting legislators and advocates. They wondered if some parts of the curriculum could come later when it was more meaningful to them during the session.

Key comments from the fellows reflect their acknowledgement that although it was an intense onboarding process, they learned a lot and thought the process was important and helped them later.

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- “If I had to choose between an intense and thorough onboarding process or like the opposite of that, I would definitely choose intense and thorough.”
  - “It definitely was a lot of information to take in.”
  - “The Zoom fatigue and being in front of the screen all day, I think made that onboarding process a little bit more difficult. But they really were, I think, considerate and trying; it was just like nine to five.”
  - “It was a lot in those first couple of months, but it did help me feel prepared to do what we needed to do once the legislation started.”
  - “Knowing now how fast paced the legislative session gets, I am not sure it could be done differently.”
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Overall, the grant directors also were pleased with the process of the recruitment, selection, and onboarding. They were particularly pleased that they had selected such an outstanding cohort. They acknowledged that it was a quick turnaround because of the timing of the funding and would have liked more time in the beginning for recruitment and selection, “We were a little bit

limited because of the timing and the pandemic.” Onboarding was also a challenge because of the pandemic. They are looking forward to hearing more from the fellows about how to describe the fellowship and prepare applicants for what it is: “There is a certain amount of preparation that you just can’t do; you need to just jump in and learn things.”

The grant directors were pleased that each fellow “brought a different sort of background that influenced their policy work.” They wanted “a well-rounded cohort,” and it appears they were able to have an amazing group of individuals from varied backgrounds.

## **Theme 2: Policy Advocacy Curriculum**

IDRA staff put a great deal of work into developing a curriculum that would prepare the fellows for the legislative session and introduce them to key players. This is an area that the directors are anxious to gain feedback from the fellows and to spend time reflecting and revising.

The fellows, in turn, were filled with comments about what might have been added or deleted or presented at a different time or in a different manner. Overall, however, the fellows were very pleased with the policy advocacy curriculum. One fellow commented: “I couldn’t have seen it done differently.” The fellows reported that during the legislative session they often went back to their notes and materials from the early sessions. One example given was about the concept of point of order: “They would explain to us what the point of order was in like November during the onboarding or December. And then we wouldn’t get to a point of order until maybe like March.” All the fellows were glad for “the initial exposure” to topics even though they did not fully grasp how important the topic was going to become.

Even though the curriculum seemed comprehensive and, at times, overwhelming, there were also several suggestions for material that could be added.

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- “I would add a couple of things I did once the session ended and we went into special session. I knew very little about what to expect. So, I felt like the onboarding and all the training got us prepared for session, which was our focus, but we didn’t know if that would be a special session. I think we were told it was possible. But the curriculum didn’t go into what that would be like.”
  - “Another thing that I felt that there was a gap in is getting familiar with the education code. We spent a lot of time getting to know the Texas Legislature Online (TLO) website. And we practiced it and we did a scavenger hunt, and we did quizzes relating to TLO because they told us that we would be using it a lot when session started, and they were correct. But what they didn’t tell us, I think they told us where to find the Education Code, but we didn’t do anything in-depth with it. So, I didn’t know how to use it when it was time for me to use.”
  - “Another thing that we needed more help on was writing bill proposals in hopes of getting a legislator to sponsor one. And we didn’t practice that at all during the training, our development stage. I would love to have had some time to focus on what it means to write a bill. How do you go about it? And I felt like when it was time for me to do so, I knew what I wanted to write about. I knew the process for contacting legislators and trying to get them on board. But the actual nuts and bolts of writing a bill proposal. We know what we want to say, but there’s a certain language form that you absolutely must have in order to get it read appropriately. And if you look back at the schedule, you’ll notice that there’s not a section devoted to that at all. And that, to me was a major oversight.”
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There were several suggestions about the time of the fellowship. Most would have preferred that the fellowship last longer than nine months. Some wanted it to be for two years. Others wanted the fellowship to start earlier so they would have more time to learn about IDRA's rich history, to meet coalition and advocacy groups, and to practice legislative skills. One fellow said: "I feel maybe if there was an extension in general to the fellowship in terms of it being longer than nine months, it might feel more helpful." Another emphasized: "I really do think this would be a fellowship that could be well served by being a two-year fellowship or even like a year and a half kind of fellowship. I know that's less common, but a two-year fellowship where, like in the first year, you are not in session since Texas meets every other year. Yes, because the first year then you would have time to build more meaningful relationships."

In addition to the suggestions for changes, the fellows mentioned several sessions that stood out as outstanding for them such as those listed below.

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- "One was a session with university professors and scholars about how to better inform our academic research with policy recommendations so that we could bridge the gap between academia and advocacy."
  - "A session I really found most helpful was the digital equity session."
  - "I felt like they did a great job hand selecting the people we were able to meet during that time frame, maybe just more introductions to coalition partners."
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One comment that concisely sums up the overall reaction of the fellows to the policy advocacy curriculum was: "It was overwhelming, it was, but it was also needed and very well done."

The grant directors recognized the "immersive nature" of the curriculum. They understood that Zoom was not always the best way to introduce content because some of the curriculum needs to be "more personal" and "more interactive." Both quickly mentioned how much they were looking forward to specific feedback. They do not want to start another round of fellows "without getting extensive feedback from the fellows." They shared that there were some parts of the curriculum, such as legislative procedures, that they might want to spend more time on. They also were considering using fewer panels for presentations. But, before making any revisions, they were eagerly awaiting the feedback from the fellows. They truly wanted the curriculum revisions to be driven by feedback from the fellows.

### **Theme 3: Focus Areas**

Each of the fellows had at least one focus area, sometimes overlapping with another fellow's area. All liked their focus areas and were pleased with how their work progressed over the fellowship. In fact, quotes from the fellows show how passionate they became about their focus areas.

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- "I actually really loved my area of focus."
  - "My policy area was kind of broad, and I wasn't sure about it when I was assigned this policy area. I became a little more excited thinking about all the research opportunities that came with it. And because it's such a large overarching policy area, I was really able to pick where I wanted to take it."
  - "It was really the best of both worlds kind of scenario."

- “I’m excited about that. I really want to take that head on. And at first I think it was just some growing pains and kind of challenges trying to find my foot or like where I was at because everyone else seemed to have a very concreted policy area.”
- 

The fellows were not completely clear about how they were assigned a focus area. They did report that they had an opportunity for input on the application and through the interview process. The question on the application form was as follows.

Indicate your areas of interest, by ranking the following (1 = most interested, 4 = least interested):

- Preparation and Access to College
- Racial Justice and the School-to-Prison Pipeline
- An Equitable Response to COVID-19 in Schools (including school finance and budgeting)
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

The grant directors described the process of assigning focus areas as matching the fellows to work that IDRA wanted to focus on in the legislative session and part was also their conversations with funders about the funders’ interest to fund certain policy areas. It was “almost like puzzle pieces about where we thought the cohort would work best.”

## **Theme 4: Projects and Products**

The fellows enjoyed talking about their many projects and products. Each fellow seemed to have a long list of their own projects, their joint projects, and their colleagues’ projects. I don’t think the brief interviews were long enough to capture the full extent of the massive number of projects and products completed. Because of time constraints, I tried to ask the fellows to narrow down the discussion to the “most significant ones that you remember.” My feeling is that the abbreviated list below is only a small sample of the extensive projects and products that were accomplished during the fellowship.

Here are a few of the many highlights from the fellow’s comments:

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- “Developed testimony that we were able to share during the legislature”
- “Developed and wrote issue briefs”
- “Lots of reflections, opinions, and some tools for the community”
- “A research report and issue brief on student engagement”
- “The digital video advocacy campaign”
- “Op-eds”
- “Infographics”
- “Media campaigns”
- “Getting the state to transition to asset-based terminology, i.e., ‘emergent bi-lingual’”
- “Keeping the Top Ten Percent Plan for high school admissions rule”



- “Preparing testimony about TEKS (Texas Education Knowledge and Skills)”
  - “Analyzing HB3979 (social studies curriculum, critical race theory)”
  - “Getting the broadband bill added as an amendment to HB 5”
  - “Getting students organized”
  - “Helping train and prepare families to give testimony to the legislature”
  - “Getting critical conversations started”
  - “Gathering data to support bills”
  - “Doing research”
  - “Presentations”
  - “Newsletter articles”
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When I spoke to the directors, they explained that the grant proposal listed specific tasks to be accomplished by each fellow. There was a listing of expectations (included in the Appendix) that describes specific tasks. These tasks (projects and products) were appropriately adapted based on the legislative session, community needs, and fellow needs. The directors had extremely positive things to say about all the fellows and all their individual products and projects. They knew they had expected a lot of work from the fellows and were pleased that the fellows not only rose to the challenge but also exceeded their expectations with their projects and products. This discussion could have taken several hours so we refocused the conversation to talk about the most significant accomplishments, and still the list was long.

Interestingly, one comment from the directors stands out from all the positive affirmations of this amazing set of projects and products.

“I think that first and foremost, they changed us as an organization. They pushed us intellectually; they pushed us. And in our spirit of activism, they pushed us even further. We had created this program because we had a goal of ensuring that policy was made with and by people who were most impacted by that so I think they pushed us even further than we thought we could go. Building off the legacy that we have as an organization, they really pushed us to do more than we were already doing with students. We had already done some work with participatory action, research with students, and some student organizing. We have had student leadership programs in the organization, but I think they pushed us to do more. The list is long, but I would say first and foremost... how much as an organization, how much they helped us grow. And I think we will always be grateful for that.”

In sum, IDRA grant directors recognized that many projects and products had been accomplished. But, more than that, they recognized that the whole organization had been pushed to challenge itself to reflect and do more.

## **Theme 5: Support, Mentors, and Relationships**

All the fellows had extremely positive things to say about support, mentorship, and relationships. They particularly sang the praises of the grant directors, but they also had many positive things to say about other IDRA staff, mentors (both internal and external), and their fellow colleagues.

I could try to summarize what I heard, but, for this section, I think the fellows' own words say it best below.

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- “Would say very high. Morgan, our direct supervisor, was incredible, was an incredible mentor, and she always offered ways to support where we wanted to take our work, always gave us capacity and the flexibility to pursue those interests.”
  - “And, of course, the other IDRA staff just the same, very excited about our work and where we wanted to take it. And always solution driven. It was, if you had an idea, how can we help actualize it, and what resources can we connect you to so that you can get that done?”
  - “I always felt supported, always felt supported in any area I wanted to take my energy.”
  - “I had so many opportunities for cross collaboration across teams. Definitely always available.”
  - So, I would like to say that like everyone on our team, including my peers, us fellows all mentored me in capacity. And that's just, I think, a gift.”
  - “I was able to meet with Celina Moreno, who's the CEO and president, have office visits, and she shared with me. I also worked with two other lawyers, Morgan and Terrence, and they're modeling for me right now about how to leverage their legal education in ways that serve our community and are needed.”
  - “I'm first generation, and well, for me, that [mentorship] was very critical.”
  - “And it didn't matter that I'm far away. I always feel like either Ana, Morgan and Chloe (before her parental leave) were just a text message or email or a call away. I never felt like I was left out here floundering because they were available to answer questions and to provide insight, even just to listen to ideas. They were always available.”
  - “To be paired with her as a mentor was just like it was not even something I would have dreamed for myself that I would get to know Angela Valenzuela behind the articles I read, you know, and one of the reasons that I think our relationship has been so impactful is because in my regular work, she and I do the same things.”
  - “It was supporting all the time from the fellows, from the other ones.”
  - “Yes, I love the fellows. My fellow fellows. They really, I think, made this fellowship experience unique.”
  - “And everyone here on the team had been so intentional in crafting what each part of our fellowship experience would look like, how we would interact as a cohort, what responsibilities we would have, and clear and continuous and constructive feedback.”
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These lengthy quotes above were probably the most positive comments this evaluator has ever heard about support and relationships. Every fellow was positive, more than positive; every fellow said superlative things about other fellows, about IDRA staff, their mentors, and the grant directors.

The grant directors also reported positive relationships as evidenced by their comments below.

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- “And I think they fit so beautifully into our organization. They’re all closer to the university setting, either as students or instructors. I remember when I was in college, you’re in constant exchange of ideas around the latest and best thinking. And so, I think any time you have either young people just that are around the university setting or just people around the university setting in general, and then young people separate and apart from the university setting, they automatically infuse some of the newest thinking, push us and our language. “
  - “They all love each other, which is really cute. Like they all really, really love each other. If they had problems with each other, they didn’t share it with me. And they just seem very loving; they just are.”
  - “They were just like all lovely people, not a single problem with any of them, like in an interpersonal way during the entire fellowship.”
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Although the directors knew the relationships were positive and truly valued each of the fellows, I don’t think the directors had any idea how strongly the fellows appreciated the positive relationships and support at IDRA. The directors wondered about how different perspectives with some of the staff or perhaps intergenerational perspectives might influence the fellows’ perspectives. They explained that they would be very interested in the confidential summary of what the fellows really thought about support and relationships. The directors hoped that it had been as positive experience for the fellows as it had been for them.

The fellows, on the other hand, unanimously reported being superbly happy with everyone they worked with, even with those they sometimes disagreed with. There was no doubt that the fellows felt the support, mentors, and relationships were outstanding. The fellows felt truly respected and appreciated. They valued the ability to ask questions and to sometimes challenge status quo. All reported being not just pleased with the support and mentorship received during the fellowship but extremely grateful and appreciative.

The only small area in this category of support, mentors, and relationships that a few requested more of was feedback on individual performance during the fellowship. All reported receiving highly valued, helpful, timely, and appropriate feedback on their products, presentations, and writing. What a couple of fellows (but not all fellows) suggested might be helpful was to receive more feedback about their personal performance at varying points during the fellowship. “My favorite feedback is the sandwich method where you let me know something good and then you give me an area for improvement, but we finish it out with something good again. And they have given me that feedback, really stayed true to that. I know that not all the fellows appreciate that same kind of mechanism for receiving feedback.” Feedback (how to give it and when to give it) might be a topic for more reflection in the future.

## **Theme 6: Outcomes and Connections**

The fellows enjoyed talking about the amazing outcomes and the connections they made with the fellowship. At times it was a little hard to get them to talk about their own work because they felt like it might be bragging, so I often had to reframe this question to a general question about

the accomplishments of the whole fellowship group. I was able to ascertain that major progress was made in areas such as family engagement, the digital divide and digital equity, student mental health and wellness, college access, community connections, and much more. They were pleased that they had been part of some very direct outcomes such as the broadband bill, the emergent bilingual bills, and protecting the Top Ten Percent Plan.

They recognized that their work also had a huge impact on connections for IDRA, for the community, and for themselves. They realized that before them there had been few voices of color in advocacy roles at the Legislature. They felt like their work had an impact on “connecting students, families to the issues and helping to kind of position them in such a way that their voices are uplifted and really heard by policymakers.” They gave examples of their work on a new student engagement model for IDRA, which they think will outlast their tenure. Their experiences also led to more families being trained in advocacy and being able to testify at the hearing. They reported some amazing experiences with coalitions and the increased use of social media that they thought were both helpful to IDRA’s future and communities of color.

Some of the key comments follow.

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- “I might answer this question differently down the line, because I think sometimes it takes time to see the consequences or the results of policy work.”
  - “I was able to inform and educate and teach people about these issues who might not have been aware of what’s going on down in Austin.”
  - “I was able to offer testimony against a bill that would negatively impact immigrant students who were undocumented.”
  - “I felt like if it weren’t for this fellowship, there wouldn’t have been any voices of color. If it weren’t for our voices, no one would be here, especially in the middle of the night when they held some of those hearings.”
  - “I switched really to the digital communications model and worked with our coalition with strategic messaging graphics and consistently came up with doing all the social media for fellows’ activities. I switched into that gear completely with digital communications and working with coalitions and other folks.”
  - “Working with the media helped IDRA get connected to the community.”
  - “The Texas Student Advocacy Convening was a major success. It is where we reached out to a bunch of student groups to hear about their thoughts on how they were doing, how COVID-19 is affecting the classroom, their thoughts on curriculum, their thoughts on the digital divide and how that’s affecting them and student mental health and wellness.”
  - “I formed so many new networks and relationships with advocacy partners.”
  - “I felt truly connected to my community members.”
  - “I wish we had more connections with Black community organizations and Black families. So that is one area of progress I see moving forward for IDRA, which I know is going to be part of their strategic planning in the next two months, but I definitely feel the organization can build better relationships with our Black families.”

- “And I was able to bring in, you know, my mom’s *comadres* and friends and family friends to those conversations, to those workshops, to those advocacy nights, I’d like to be able to do so in a way that’s respectful and I think really meaningful.”
  - “I think we are policy fellows of color, and we are representative and parts of the communities that we are representing. And I don’t think that should ever change for this program because I think it is what makes it so powerful and meaningful both for us and the communities that we’re engaging with.”
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In addition to the long listing of results, there were some key learning concepts that emerged as the real outcomes. One was the realization from all four fellows that both micro and macro practice was important. The other was that the voices of advocates of color are essential to making good legislative policy. Still another outcome can best be described as the link between theory, practice, and policy.

Most of the fellows had only worked with individuals and small groups before. One had some national policy experience but no state-level policy experience. All four mentioned that they now recognize the importance of working with both individuals and the larger system. One could not work without the other: “We learned that macro is good, and micro is good; working with individuals, working with community or policy level are both good, but the best is when you get them working together. One just doesn’t do everything. You can work with all the individuals you want, but unless you change some system level, things like in policy, you don’t make the real difference. And you can’t do that policy work unless you really understand and work with the individuals.”

Another key learning concept was that there needed to be more voices of color at the advocacy table and that these voices can make significant differences in the dialogue and outcome of the legislative session. Intellectually and theoretically, all the fellows and the staff believed in the importance of more policy advocates of color, but this fellowship program proved that policy advocates of color can change the outcomes of the session. It was empowering for both the fellows and IDRA staff to see it working so well, especially during the pandemic time period when there were so many unknowns about how to communicate. The next legislative session will build on all the contributions from this fellowship program.

The link between theory, practice, and policy was expressed by all four fellows at different times and using different language during the interviews. One called it “the three P’s: philosophy, practice, and policy.” Another referred to it as “the intersection of research and practice.” Another mentioned the importance of “using data to influence policy.” All were clear that it was important for policy to be developed from the ground up by those most effected, informed by data, and then debated more in the policy arena of the legislature with testimony from both the communities effected and experts.

There was a recognition that, although IDRA’s mission reflected diversity and inclusion, there was always more to do: “I think right now many organizations are having these diversity, equity and inclusion reckonings within their staff. IDRA was way ahead of many organizations, but there are still ways to improve.”

The grant directors echoed similar comments about the outcomes and connections that occurred as a result of the IDRA Education Policy Fellows Program. They were very pleased how the fellows were able “to open up the discussion and advocacy space.” They even started regular “virtual office hours” during the legislative session to train people on how to engage in policy issues. “They pushed us to think differently about our outreach through the Texas

Legislative Education Equity Coalition.” The fellows helped “everything just come together with this energy, new questions.”

## **Theme 7: TAMU-Commerce Social Justice through Education Policy Course**

Another part of the Kresge Foundation grant was a Social Justice through Education Policy course taught at Texas A&M University-Commerce by the grant directors. The course was designed for doctoral students and was taught at a time to coincide with the legislative session. The fellows were able to integrate some of their work with the class. The fellows had extremely positive experiences by interacting with the members of the class. The fellows presented their proposed bills and ideas to the class for feedback. Sometimes they attended even when they were not presenting.

Key comments included the following.

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- “We were able to go into the class and share our work and kind of invite students to connect with us and offer their expertise. It was a good experience. I was able to get some great feedback from professionals, from educators who really were in the middle of some of these issues, who had great solutions. So, I appreciate having that space to engage in conversations with those folks and from reading their responses to some of the assignments.”
  - “It seemed like the course in general was a really awesome introduction to the advocacy space for many of them. For many who are already connected, it seemed like a really great avenue to offer policy recommendations and try to help uplift what solutions teachers and other educators have for the issues that we developed.”
  - “And here I am in this fellowship, so young to be getting to see mentors of mine just breaking down that wall, getting into academia and really reaching, again, people who need to hear that most of the students in their classroom and their courses and their course that they taught were administrators, teachers like people who are actually already all the time engaging with students.”
  - “If we’re being honest, we need to reach them (teachers, administrators) as much as we need to reach legislators. I am so glad we had the chance to interact with the class.”
  - “I enjoy interfacing with the other students, students that are very uniquely former superintendents and from educators.”
  - “And so that was fun to do and be able to get their thoughts in like they’re the people that should be there, the people that should be helping us write the policies. They are the people that need to be there.”
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The whole experience with the integration of the TAMU-Commerce course and the fellows seemed to have been an incredible opportunity and experience from both the fellows’ perspectives and the grant directors’ reflections on the process. It seems to have worked well.

## **Theme 8: Impacts (personal, career, education)**

I think the best way to describe the tremendous impact that the IDRA Education Policy Fellows Program had on the fellows is to use their own words. The snapshot below only begins to convey

the passionate, enthusiastic responses I received. The comments below illustrate some of the breadth and depth of this impact.

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- “Looking back at where I started before the fellowship program, I was not a focused scholar. I wasn’t an informed community member. An advocate. Yes. And now I am devoting my whole professional career to this.”
  - “What is sure for me is that I’ll continue to be in public interest work, that I’ll continue to do the dynamic community work that I’ve been doing. And that idea has helped me sort of build more knowledge and experience around what is unclear for me.”
  - “It’s women of color and that is going to show up in how we do our work, who is at the center of our work. There’s much more. We are leaps and bounds ahead of many other nonprofit organizations and organizations in general, because it has always been our stance. It has always and continues to be the center of why we do this work. So, I’m blessed and a little I think I’m going to be a little spoiled going forward.”
  - “It exceeded my expectations and then I learned so much more about policy than I thought I would learn. I developed so much courage and boldness to speak out around the issues that matter to me, and I don’t think I was ever really like super shy about it, but what it did was, it gave me the skills so that once I was skilled, my confidence was stronger.”
  - Personally, I feel much more equipped and competent to have conversations around policy issues to encourage friends and family to get involved with the legislative process. I do that. I have these conversations all the time. I’m giving a talk in two hours to a community who want to know more about critical race theory and why it’s being opposed so vehemently. So, I feel like it has given me those opportunities.”
  - “Being brave enough to have antiracist conversations. And so personally, it has opened up those kinds of opportunities and I say opportunities, I mean opportunities for me to impact the communities I care about. Professionally, I will be better equipped to help my teacher education majors. Like, can you imagine what I’m going to bring to the classroom this fall as a result of this fellowship? Can you just imagine how much more knowledge I will have to offer my students? As a result of just nine months and so much more to write about now to I mean, the answer is yes, I have been impacted in both my personal and professional career.”
  - “After the fellowship ends, I’m going to start thinking about what kind of public education opportunities might be available to me now that the fellowship is over. Like, how can I now move this into some public scholarship? Something beyond the op-eds and the written testimony.”
  - “It exceeded my expectations. And any time I do something like this, I think it’s transformative, but it’s truly been probably the most transformative program I have been a part of, not only personally have I grown so much within the last nine months, but professionally, they have just set us up with a wonderful crash course on the Texas legislature and Texas education policy in general. The history behind it as well just got us really plugged in with a lot of other folks and set us up to do some of the work that I don’t think anyone else I’ve been ever so trained so well.”
  - “And they not only opened up worlds for me of like what even what careers out there I could even pursue or what a career in public service as a lawyer or with a law degree

could look like, but also just as women, as women of color. Morgan, as a mother, I shared with you, opened up the space for me to share things like I also want to be a mother one day and like, what is that like for someone with a policy career.”

- “They were very upfront about many of the more harrowing and personal experiences that happened. I was like a woman of color where like the things that we are advocating for at the state legislature, it’s not just that rigorous debate for us. It’s people’s lives and the lives of people who we know and love and our own lives that are on the line when we’re advocating. So, it’s not the same as advocates who are not in that position and what that does to you, to your body, to your mental health and well-being, and how, most importantly, how you overcome that, how you deal with that, the balance and how you balance it.”
- “This fellowship showed me that being a person of color is also our strength because when we’re advocating on behalf of the people who we love and we’re going to do it much more fiercely and from a place of like deep, deep, like even embodied knowledge.”

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I should also note that questions relating to the program’s impact on their personal lives, career, and education were located near the end of the guided interview, but all four fellows spontaneously (without any prompt or question) started talking about the impacts of the fellowship within the first few minutes of each interview. They could not wait to share how important this fellowship had been to them.

The reactions of the grant directors were similar. They wanted to begin the interview by telling me how much the fellows had meant not only to IDRA but to them personally: “They made me a better person personally and professionally... I tell them all the time that I hope we gave as much to them as they have given to us.”

In my 40 years of conducting evaluation interviews, I have never interviewed a more eloquent, passionate group who were so eager to share the tremendous impact that this fellowship had on their personal lives, their careers, and their educational goals. To say that they were exuberant and excited to share the transformative impacts of this fellowship still seems like an understatement. This was a singular experience that highlights how much the fellows valued their experiences and the support they received in this program.

## **Theme 9: Grant Goals and Quality**

All the fellows were familiar with the grant goals and IDRA’s mission. All thought the goals of the grant were at the forefront of their work and good progress had been made on achieving these goals.

I wanted to dig a little deeper on the subject of grant goals, so I focused on more specific sub-goals. The Kresge Foundation grant narrative (2021) gave an example of activities and goals relating to how the curriculum and experiences would focus on expanding college access for historically marginalized communities. The narrative also mentioned increasing critical dialogues by expanding the network of policy advocates, and thus I asked about these specific activities.

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- “I think the college access goal was primarily the policy area that one of my colleagues was leading, she was very, very involved in very many issues under her policy umbrella. My colleague helped write many bills. She helped write amendments to many bills, and she produced a lot of information and community tools for that particular policy area.”



- “The use of social media played a really key part of this whole legislative session. And one policy fellow in our cohort led that social media work. And had he not been part of the fellowship, I think a lot of community organizing and a lot of coalition building would not have happened except because of his work. It not only happened but was a major success. And so that was vital in kind of connecting coalition spaces, but also bringing to the forefront issues that would have probably not had a flood light on. Now IDRA is using social media all the time for this purpose.”
- “We all worked on issues related to college access, but I think there was one fellow who has most focused on this. You know, she basically single-handedly (I don’t want to exaggerate), but I think it’s fine to say this because nobody else was there really to testify besides IDRA and saving the Top Ten Percent Plan in Texas. Legislators were trying to basically not repeal it but make it so that it is watered down. They were basically trying to get rid of it. And we know that this has been hugely beneficial for racially marginalized and low-income students to have access to college. And our IDRA fellow was one of the only people there. I think the huge part of this is just generally we were able to monitor and be alert to playing both defense and offense.”
- “The legislation that I helped pass regarding emerging bilingual students, that’s huge. And if these politicians lamented how they’re meant to be, that will increase the number of students who are emerging bilinguals and deemed ready for college graduation by TEA. Right now, it’s I think the statistic is three in 10 are deemed ready for college graduation. Only, we do know why. It’s not a mystery why. And we are working the legislation that we’ve that we worked to pass aims to remedy many of those reasons students are not achieving college.”
- “And so those are just two concrete examples (Top Ten Percent Plan and emergent bilingual terminology) that I can think of off the top of my head that really wouldn’t have passed had we not had the fellows’ program to support those initiatives.”
- “I think IDRA knows and is working also on increased community engagement, but one of the things that we also have to work on is what our community engagement looks like with Black communities, I think IDRA has been understood to be like a Hispanic or Latino focused organization. And so, we and they wanted to expand beyond that. But it also means we need to create more intentional partnerships with black organizations and Black communities.”
- “As far as emerging bilingual students go, I also think we realized that there are other emerging bilingual languages in Texas. And I would also like to see us engage more with communities who speak those languages, so I do think that the organization’s sphere of influence has definitely grown.”
- “I think before not many people knew about IDRA or the work that they did, but with everything that happened, especially with HB 3937, they know about IDRA now. IDRA really led the charge on that bill, and they saw their coalition swell up against that bill to over 70 organizations in Texas.”

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In addition to the grant meeting its overall goals and its specific goals around expanding college access for historically marginalized communities and expanding community networks, all the fellows rated the program’s quality from 4.5 to 5.0 with the caveat for those ratings slightly below 5.0 that they thought every program could make improvement, and thus they never gave perfect scores. Most of the suggestions for improvement had to do with the need for more time before

the legislative session “to get their footing,” which was also discussed in the sections regarding onboarding and the curriculum.

Another idea for improvement that was repeated was the need for more connections with families of color and organizations of Black families. Combining the idea of both more time and the importance of more connections was the following quote: “I think, with the communities that we’re hoping to serve, what we were able to in just a nine-month fellowship, create really robust and dynamic relationships, was amazing. I can only imagine that those would be strengthened and even better relationships if it were a two-year program. But I’ll also qualify that response to the fact that we were not able to do in-person community building. So, who knows, maybe one year with in-person community building is enough, but it’s difficult to know. But I do think that this fellowship, I think, would benefit from being a little bit longer.”

The final comment seems to be the universal sentiment of the group. “It has been amazing, just really nothing short of that, I’ve worked with other nonprofits in the past and this has been one of my favorite experiences. The thoughtfulness with which this program and fellowship was crafted and the thoughtfulness behind how the fellows were chosen to really work together as a cohort was just amazing.”

## **Theme 10: Future of Program**

All the fellows wanted to be involved in future fellowship program cycles. They were very pleased that the directors had offered these opportunities to them. They were confident that they could help mentor and add support for new fellows. They wanted the program to be sustained and saw the need for funding, constant curriculum revision, and expanding networks as ways to enhance the future of the program.

Some of their key comments follow.

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- “And they’re just so forward-looking with the fellows program. They have already offered pathways for the fellows to remain engaged with IDRA.”
  - “I would think just the internal feedback that fellows can provide for subsequent cohorts is really important. So definitely continuing that feedback mechanism.”
  - “Also, the mentorship network that will come out of new fellows coming in.”
  - “I think that’s really important to sustain the program.”
  - “Constantly reevaluating the curricula is going to be very important. Of course, policy areas will always be shifting. And so constantly thinking about how past work will inform the new work, but what new expertise and what new skills will be needed to then address certain policy areas that will be on the horizon.”
  - “I am very grateful for the opportunity, and I hope that it continues to forge new opportunities for fellows who have gone through this program to stay connected to the work. It’s just an organization that I just see increasing its footprints in Texas and hopefully really expanding nationally.”
  - “I think the fellows’ presence for our communities of color at the legislature is just the star part of the program. But how can we continue building from this program and expanding that network like we mentioned earlier?”

- “I really am excited about this program’s future. I have no doubt that it’s going to lead to so many policy leaders of tomorrow or not even a very different tomorrow here in Texas.”
- “I think funding definitely is needed. I think having the appropriate staff in place, who’s going to be committed to it because they had to give us a lot of their time.”
- “It wouldn’t work without the support of the permanent staff, like they were the ones training us and teaching us. I didn’t know how to write testimony, so staff had to be available to help me learn, to write testimony, to review my testimony, to give me feedback on my testimony. All of it. The fact that they do have to give so much away in order to get they really have committed staff that needs to be in the concept.”
- “I think we should continue to do is bring in more centered people who look like the communities they serve and who have a passion for it, because you can teach people the skills. That’s going to come.”
- “What I would not like to see this fellowship go to is just a lot of smart, political, politically aware people that are super involved in the process, which, again, can be good. And of course, that’s great. But there’s something really authentic about this first group.”
- “I think for the sustainability of the program they need to bring in authentic people who care. I say that they should just capture the people with passion and then they can be taught, not necessarily people who already have skills. People can be taught the skills and then use them to enrich their communities.”
- “You need to bring in and arrange a really diverse group of people to be able to really continue to make it sustainable, because it’s hard. It’s hard.”
- “I think any other things that I would have brought up are not necessarily fellowship, but they are related to it... the emotional labor of this. There needs to be a guide or a session or a very, very talked about, way more about how hard this work is. It is very difficult, especially when you are a person of color, seeing just the awful things going across humanity in general to wake up every day. It’s a privilege to fight for equality every day.”
- “I love to do this work, but it’s also extremely, extremely emotional, mostly laborious. And self-care and mental health techniques need to be at the forefront of a lot of this because that’s important, because it can become stressful and it’s a lot of work to do.”

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The comments about the future of the program reflect the fellows’ strong interest in helping the IDRA Education Policy Fellows Program continue and get even better. There was unanimous agreement that the fellowship program had succeeded and would be even better in non-pandemic times in the future. The fellows truly wanted to continue providing feedback.

Because I knew one fellow had left the program, I asked about the fellows’ understanding of why the person left and if there was anything that could or should have been done differently. Although I thought this might be a sensitive question, the fellows all quickly responded that they completely understood why the fellow left, and it had to do with the fellow’s mindset: “The program was not a match for what the fellow wanted to do.” One fellow even said that she encouraged the other fellow to leave if the program was not for him. The fellows thought that IDRA had handled the situation well both professionally and personally. A few were even glad that it happened because it reminded them that “not everyone is right for policy work.” They had

no additional recommendations in this area other than the program and fellows should be prepared that “policy work is not for everyone.”

The directors understood why the one fellow left, but they still wondered if there were things that they might do differently to avoid this. They were aware that the fellow realized he was not a “good fit” after starting the program. They were looking forward to feedback from the fellows on this topic and the whole program.

They were pleased with the overall success of the program and the quality of the outcomes, but both directors sincerely wanted feedback from the fellows about their experiences and perspectives so that they could make the program even better. When they were asked what the program needed for sustainability, the two clear needs were funding and staffing. They recognized that this program was labor intensive for staff who all had other jobs to do. It takes not only money for a quality program but also quality staff time.

## Summary and Recommendations

After the review of 10 themes, it is clear the IDRA Education Policy Fellows Program was a success on every level. IDRA’s inputs and processes seemed to work well and produced outstanding outputs. For certain, the outcomes will outlive the program.

The pandemic made delivery of the program challenging, but it did not alter IDRA’s enthusiasm and copious work in creating a strong program that was able to harness the passion and skills of the four policy fellows. There was an appropriate amount of structure balanced with choice of activities that kept the synergy alive. IDRA invested a great deal of staff time in making this program a success. As one director said, “it was my nine-month obsession.”

The results are indisputable. Not only have the fellows benefitted from this program, but Texas legislative policy has benefitted. IDRA has benefitted. Children and families have benefitted. There are more voices of color in the policy arena. There are more opportunities for marginalized citizens to be heard. The list of benefits could go on. The program has been transformative on multiple levels.

Recommendations for improvement are wrapped in the caveat that are always a few things a program can do better. These recommendations are only suggestions to consider; the program could benefit from thoughtful discussions of possible changes but should never forget that the overall program was excellent, and its core delivery was outstanding.

Recommendations to consider include the following.

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- Start recruitment early and extend it widely with continual use of social media as a major tool.
  - Keep multiple interview rounds and include past fellows on the interviews when possible.
  - Onboarding should include personal networking and interaction.
  - Onboarding might be extended.
  - The curriculum might cover fewer topics.
  - Careful review of the past presenters and topics.

- Possibly include some more on legislative procedures, the Texas Education Code, and the mechanics of writing bills.
  - Provide feedback to individual fellows at specific intervals.
  - Invite feedback from the fellows about the whole process at designated checkpoints during the fellowship.
  - Include discussion of emotional labor, the stress of policy work, and how to maintain balance.
  - Use the fellows as speakers, mentors, or consultants for the next cohort (possibly consider paying them stipends).
  - Follow up with the fellows in a year and see how they have applied or used their experience and learning.
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In sum, the IDRA Education Policy Fellows Program had an impressive first year. The interviews clearly revealed lots of hard work and many accomplishments that will be a legacy for the next cohort. Reflecting on some of the recommendations above can lead to a strong next step forward.

# Appendix

## **List of Documents Reviewed**

Proposal Narrative Summary for Kresge Foundation

Logic Model

Call for Fellows 2020

Fellow Application 2020

Fellow Expectations

Social Justice Through Education Policy Survey

## Guided Interview Questions for Policy Fellows

1. Thank you for joining me today for this conversation about the Education Policy Fellows program. I would like to record the session for ease of transcription. Your interview is confidential and only the aggregate summary will be reported. Your statements will be de-identified. Is that okay with you?
2. How did you learn about the policy fellows program?
3. Why did you decide to apply?
4. What did you hope to gain from your participation in the fellowship?
5. How and to what extent were your expectations achieved?
6. What did you think about the recruitment process?
7. What did you think about the selection process?
8. What did you think about the onboarding process?
9. What are your thoughts about the policy advocacy curriculum?
10. What would you change about the curriculum – what would you delete and what would you add?
11. What are your thoughts about the training program – its schedule, the trainers, etc.?
12. What was your area of focus during the fellowship?
13. How much input did you have in selecting this area of focus?
14. What projects and products have you accomplished? What feedback have you received about these projects and products?
15. What projects and products have your policy fellow colleagues accomplished that you thought were significant?
16. How would you describe your relationships with other fellows and the IDRA staff?
17. What type of support have you received?
18. How would you assess the support that you have received?
19. Did you have a mentor?
20. How would you describe your relationship with the mentor and the support you received?
21. How would you assess the involvement of others in your fellowship experience – PACE staff, other IDRA staff, mentors, etc.?
22. In what advocacy and legislative actions were you involved during your fellowship?
23. How often were you involved? How much time did you spend in advocacy and legislative actions?
24. Can you describe some of your experiences and opportunities to connect to communities of color in state-level policymaking?
25. What were the results of your advocacy and legislative actions?
26. Can you describe your experience/thoughts with the TAMU-Commerce course on social justice?
27. How would you describe your knowledge and involvement in policy advocacy and legislation prior to your fellowship? If you had to rate it on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, how would you describe your growth?
28. What impact will the fellowship have on your personal and career goals and actions?
29. What feedback, if any, have you received on your performance as a fellow?
30. What involvement in the policy fellows program do you plan in the future? What are your interests in future cohorts?
31. How would you describe the quality of the fellowship program on a scale of 1 to 5?
32. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program?
33. Can you describe how the policy fellows program contributed to any measurable change in policies and/or programs that improve college access for systematically underserved students?



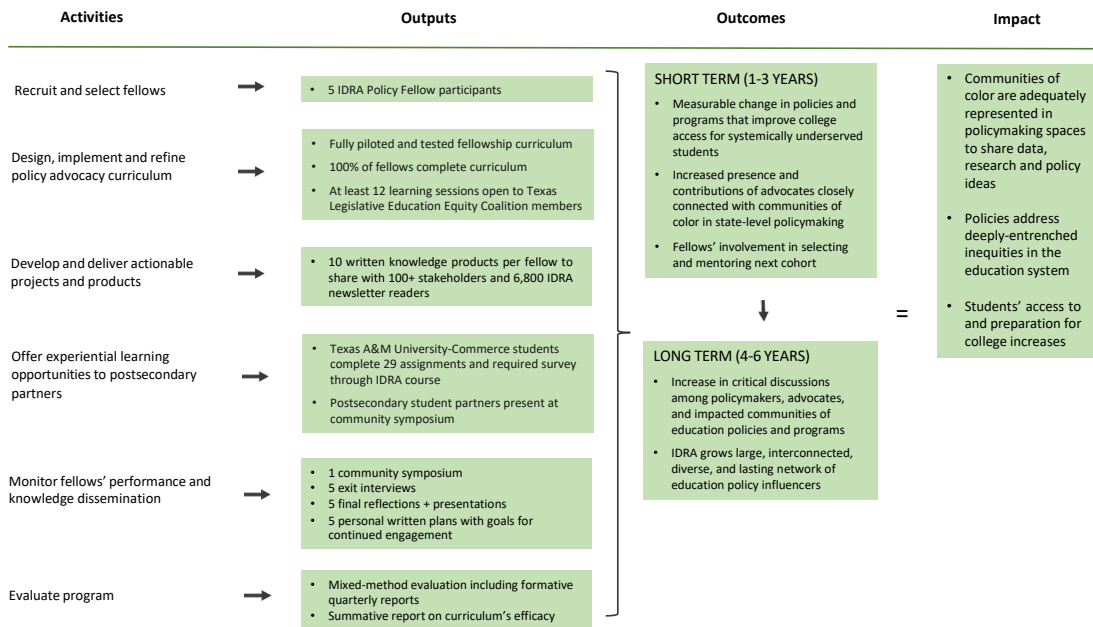
34. Do you think the policy fellows program has led to an increase in critical discussions among policymakers, advocates, and impacted communities of education policies and programs? Can you give an example of why you think this?
35. How, if at all, have you seen the IDRA network grow since you started the fellowship? If yes, what role do you see the fellowship playing to sustain these relationships?
36. Did you ever consider leaving the fellowship prior to completion and why or why not?
37. Are you aware of anyone who left the program prior to completion, and their reasons for leaving the program?
38. Would you recommend the fellowship to one of your friends or someone else?
39. What recommendations would you make for the improvement of the policy fellows program?
40. What do you see as needed for the sustainability of the program?
41. Did we miss something? What additional comments do you have?

## Guided Interview Questions for Directors of Policy Fellows Program

1. Thank you for joining me today for this conversation about the Education Policy Fellows program. I would like to record the session for ease of transcription. Your interview is confidential and only the aggregate summary will be reported. Your statements will be de-identified. Is that okay with you?
2. What are your thoughts about the recruitment process?
3. What did you think about the selection process?
4. What did you think about the onboarding process?
5. What are your thoughts about the policy advocacy curriculum?
6. What would you change about the curriculum – what would you delete and what would you add?
7. What are your thoughts about the training program – its schedule, the trainers, etc.?
8. How did fellows select or get assigned their area of focus? Your thoughts about how well this worked or didn't work?
9. What projects and products have the policy fellow colleagues accomplished that you thought were significant?
10. How would you describe your relationships with the fellows?
11. How about their relationships with each other?
12. And finally, the fellows and their relationships with other IDRA staff?
13. How would you assess the support that the mentors have received?
14. Did they all have mentors?
15. How much time do you estimate that they spent in advocacy and legislative actions?
16. Can you describe some of their experiences and opportunities to connect to communities of color in state-level policymaking?
17. What were some of the results of their advocacy and legislative actions?
18. Can you describe your experience/thoughts with the TAMU-Commerce course on social justice?
19. What feedback, if any, have you given the fellows on their performances as fellows?
20. What involvement in the policy fellows program do you see for the current Fellows in the future?
21. How would you describe the quality of the fellowship program on a scale of 1 to 5?
22. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program?
23. Can you describe how the policy fellows program contributed to any measurable changes in policies and/or programs that improve college access for systematically underserved students?
24. Do you think the policy fellows program has led to an increase in critical discussions among policymakers, advocates, and impacted communities of education policies and programs? Can you give an example of why you think this?
25. How, if at all, have you seen the IDRA network grow since you started the fellowship? If yes, what role do you see the fellowship playing to sustain these relationships?
26. Do you want to comment on the fellow who left the program prior to completion, and their reasons for leaving the program?
27. What recommendations would you make for the improvement of the policy fellows program?
28. What do you see as needed for the sustainability of the program?
29. Did we miss something?
30. What additional comments do you have?

**IDRA POLICY FELLOWSHIP: LOGIC MODEL**

**Inputs: External Funding + Stipends/Benefits + IDRA Staff + Local Partners (universities, elected officials, grassroots coalitions, etc.)**



### IDRA Education Policy Fellows – Expectation

Item No.	Education Policy Fellows Expectations
1	Engage fully and enthusiastically with IDRA staff and fellow cohort members in learning and community-building; complete work in a timely manner; communicate promptly with colleagues and external partners; exercise professional judgment at all times; center the perspectives, expertise, needs, and dreams of children and their families in all activities.
2	Produce at least 10 documents about research, best practices, and policies for internal use or dissemination by IDRA’s communications team. Documents can include op-eds, infographics, newsletter articles, hearing testimonies, talking points, community-focused policy explainers, or issue briefs.
3	Identify a minimum of two policy changes within their priority area to focus on during the Texas legislative session. This focus will require fellows to produce research and data analyses, contact relevant legislative offices, participate in hearings, and secure community support for the change.
4	Attend at least four professional development sessions, hosted by IDRA staff.
5	Respond to at least three readings, panels, or sessions, presenting their responses to the cohort.
6	With support of IDRA team, reach out to and meet with at least 15 legislators and/or staff from the higher education and public education committees in the Texas House and Senate.
7	Meet at least eight times with a mentor identified by IDRA and the fellow.
8	Independently reach out to three people to meet with from IDRA’s network of supporters.
9	Contribute to a weekly newsletter during the legislative session to provide information to IDRA’s community engagement listserv.
10	Make at least one presentation about your policy priority area to the students in the Texas A&M University Commerce course: Social Justice Through Education Policy.
11	Create a personal written plan with goals for continued engagement with the fellowship program and the network of education advocates.
12	Join the Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition (TLEEC) and begin participating in regular meetings, sub-committees, etc. Fellows will present information about their focus area and policy agenda to the coalition during one regular meeting.
13	Create a presentation for the fellows symposium and produce one written reflection paper about their fellowship experience. IDRA will publish these documents and presentations.
14	Participate in an exit interview, identifying successes and areas for improvement for the next cohort of fellows.
15	Participate in the selection process for the next cohort of Fellows (summer/fall 2022), including through outreach to networks and reviews of application materials.
16	Serve as a mentor for the next cohort of fellows.
17	Others