

The
Power
of
Voice
and
Action

**Elevating
the Promise**

IDRA 2021-2022 Impact Report

Children First
IDRA
— Transforming Education

Letter from the President



These two years marked dramatic shifts as the world headed out of COVID-19 shutdowns. During the pandemic, schools reemerged as the centers of community connection. They provided meals, secured access to technology, and reminded the world of the critical role of teacher connections with our students.

While families continue to value their public schools, public education became a target of those who gain financially and politically by sowing distrust and lodging racial and gender attacks on students, particularly across the U.S. South.

Those of us who are from and drawn to the U.S. South and Southwest know the complex challenges that have shaped the identities of those regions. Legacies of activism and rich cultural traditions make this part of the country fertile ground for transformative work. We are proud to collaborate to tackle pressing needs in Southern communities, including expanding access to decision-making processes and challenging unjust educational policies and practices.

“We believe all young people should be able to bring their authentic selves to school without fear of being silenced, singled out or shunned.”

We pressed for equitable funding, discipline, instruction, college access, and bilingual education by combining people power with smart policy, legal strategy, research and school support. We helped impacted communities change policy through our proven family-community-school leadership model, our fellowship to prepare the next generation of policy advocates of color, and the virtual Southern Education Equity Network (SEEN). We led statewide education advocacy coalitions in Texas and Georgia. Our legal work included collaborating with students, parents, and lawyers to support high-impact legal strategies, file federal civil rights complaints, provide expert testimony, and write community-centered coalition amicus briefs.

We also trained educators to provide welcoming spaces for all students, implement near-peer student mentoring programs, and develop culturally sustaining instructional resources for educators that combat classroom censorship.

We believe all young people should be able to bring their authentic selves to school without fear of being silenced, singled out or shunned. Through policy advocacy, teacher training, participatory action research, and coalition building, IDRA helped diverse communities tap into their collective power to influence educational policy and practices to ensure schools prepare all young people for college and life.

We value our collaboration with schools, families, students, advocacy partners and funders that make results like these possible. We are grateful to work together as we press forward to elevate the promise of public education through the power of voice and action.

Celina Moreno, J.D.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Celina Moreno".



Fostering Student, Family and Community Advocacy

IDRA's family leadership work has changed how school districts in Arkansas, Georgia, Texas and across the U.S. South support all students to be on track for college, to graduate bilingual and bicultural, and to reduce exclusionary discipline. We elevated student voice through student-led research, student testimony at state capitols, and a student-formed advocacy agenda.

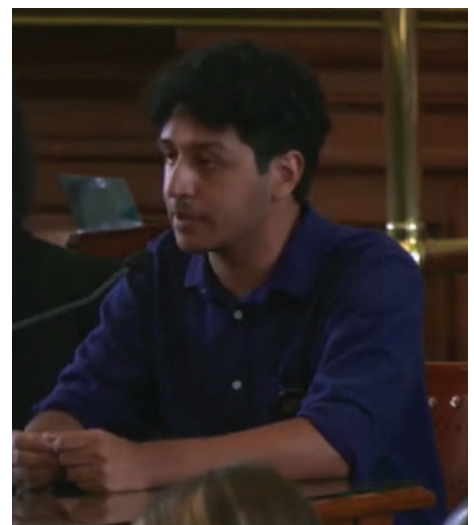
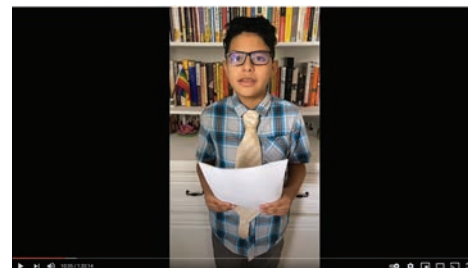
Students of color, emergent bilingual students, and students from families with limited means in the U.S. South are more likely to attend chronically under-resourced schools, struggle through sub-par language programs, experience punitive discipline and school-based policing, and have less access to the support systems and coursework that prepare them for college and life.

Yet they are often excluded from the policymaking and legal processes that create and entrench these challenges. These challenges have worsened recently largely due to the pandemic and the well-coordinated attacks on public education, learning, and diverse young people.

IDRA addresses these challenges through research-driven policy advocacy, community-centered research, and youth peer-to-peer mentoring. We support those who are impacted by education policies to participate meaningfully in how they are crafted.

In 2021 and 2022, IDRA devoted much energy to strategizing with partners around classroom censorship policies and their chilling effects and the many related, politicized attacks on students of color, LGBTQ+ students, and public schools.

During the 2021 Texas legislative session, we catalyzed community advocates, parents and students to be heard by the Texas Legislature through virtual town halls, bilingual weekly virtual office hours, an advocacy certification program for 19 women in south Texas colonias, assistance with bus transportation for an in-person hearing and a virtual hearing when the legislature cut off public testimony.





IDRA launched its Southern Education Equity Network (SEEN) to confront systemic racism in education. SEEN hosts a virtual platform that brings together educational equity organizations and coalitions, including critical advocacy and family engagement partners like the Georgia Youth Justice Coalition and ARISE Adelante in south Texas. SEEN provides advocacy tools, policy resources, and collaborative spaces, and it houses our School Resource Hub that provides curated and original curriculum and instructional resources for educators, students and families to address the chilling effects of classroom censorship policies.

idraseen.org



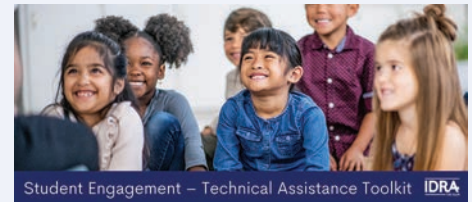
IDRA's Education CAFE™ family leadership model supports community-based organizations in Texas and Georgia, who seek to transform policy and practice in their schools, by providing data analyses, technical assistance around organizing, policy analyses, and support to understand decision-making processes.

With the generous support of the Schusterman Family Philanthropies and Arnold Ventures, IDRA launched its Youth Advisory Board. We trained advisory board members on research, advocacy and community engagement strategies to sharpen students' relationship-building and presentation skills. Throughout 2022, this group of 10th to 12th grade students gave IDRA actionable recommendations to ensure our initiatives continue centering the expertise, needs and dreams of young people and their families. Advisory board members were compensated for their work as well.

IDRA developed and taught a course at Texas A&M University-Commerce on social justice through education policy. We also co-chaired the Texas Counts education committee to support a complete census count.



IDRA supported SEEN partners DEEP Center and the Georgia Youth Justice Coalition in their advocacy at the state capitol.



Engaged students succeed academically. IDRA published its **Student Engagement – Online Technical Assistance Toolkit** to provide educators tools for systemically engaging all students, including students who are usually most marginalized in schools and communities.

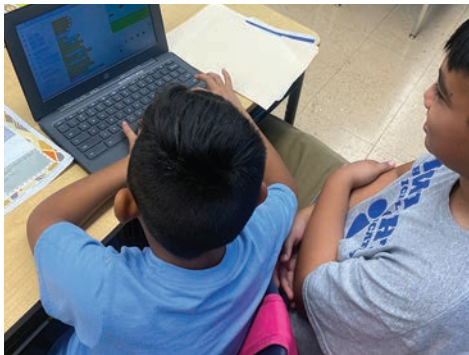
Students will have an opportunity to examine how current policies impact education through the various lenses of people who are actually doing the work. Students at A&M-Commerce will be better prepared to enter the workforce with a knowledge mindset, ready to create positive outcomes for their respective communities and learning communities, than most other graduates around the state of Texas.”

— Dr. Kimberly McLeod, Dean of the College of Education and Human Services, Texas A&M University-Commerce



Building College Access & STEM Pipelines

IDRA is leading a new generation of computer scientists in underserved schools and using research and policy advocacy to promote the critical importance of rigorous coursework and college preparation for all.



Our nation needs many more students to attend college and graduate, but several things are getting in the way, particularly for marginalized students. Among those who do get into college, many are unable to finish. We need young people, when they graduate high school, to have the option to attend college and succeed.

Educators across the country know the urgency of increasing STEM participation and performance by race and gender. This need is reflected by a dismal STEM pipeline that traces back to states' uneven investment in high-quality STEM programs that effectively prepare girls and students of color with high-quality math and science.



IDRA launched VisionCoders, a new eighth-grade computer science course developed by IDRA in partnership with Texas A&M University-San Antonio and 12 Title I middle schools in Bexar County. In this course, middle school students who are in at-risk situations become software designers who create educational games for prekindergarten, kindergarten and first-grade students. This field-initiated, research-based program is funded by the U.S. Department of Education.



In 2021-22, IDRA continued to manage the Texas expansion of the international Chief Science Officer program, particularly in historically under-resourced schools and to serve students of color, girls and students in families with low incomes. IDRA provided leadership training and mentoring for students as they developed and carried out action plans to encourage STEM at their school. Action plans included things like coordinating field trips, hosting science nights, starting STEM-related clubs, initiating student-led civic action projects, and bringing speakers from local industries to engage students in conversations about the STEM workforce.

VisionCoders was created with a similar purpose of that of Texas A&M University-San Antonio – to be at the forefront of regional innovation while creating a pathway for South Bexar County students to prepare for the future of STEM careers. Skills such as critical thinking, math and computing will enable them to be successful in educational and employment aspirations in this highly competitive field.”

— Dr. Cynthia Teniente-Matson, President, Texas A&M University at San Antonio



Smart SA Sandbox: CSOs presented STEM lessons to participating community members.



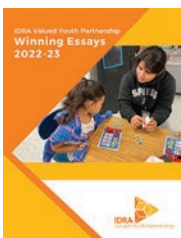
IDRA and the Consulate General of Mexico in San Antonio partnered to help Mexican and Mexican American families navigate the U.S. education system and learn about important educational opportunities in both countries. The program, called Ventanilla de Orientación Educativa (VOE), provides information on the civil rights of immigrant and emergent bilingual students, local educational services, and resources on how to access and succeed in college.

As students prepared for the new school years in both 2021 and 2022, IDRA delivered computers to students in areas hard-hit by the digital divide. Through a partnership the Consulate General of Mexico in San Antonio, Arca Continental Coca-Cola Southwest Beverages donated hundreds of laptops for students in IDRA programs.



When schools reopened in the fall of 2021 following COVID-19 closures, students and educators carried with them the trauma of the pandemic experience. Faced with students' increased mobility, family economic hardship,

lost relationships with teachers, and lack of academic success, schools lost touch with many students. IDRA provided webinars and resources to school and community leaders on strategies that have been proven successful in the IDRA Valued Youth Partnership program and how they could integrate them into their school planning.



As the IDRA Valued Youth Partnership continued through its third decade of operation in schools, we made adaptations for COVID-19 protocols and created new ways for tutors to connect with their tutees. In 2022, tutors wrote in our essay contest about how the program helped them do better in school and how they had helped their tutees to do better.



Consulate General of Mexico in San Antonio in a ceremony with Esteban Moctezuma Barragán, Ambassador of Mexico to the United States.



Alamo STEM Educators Conference, March 2022. IDRA serves as the lead of the Alamo STEM Ecosystem and helped coordinate the Annual ASE Educator Conference for educators and industry leaders.



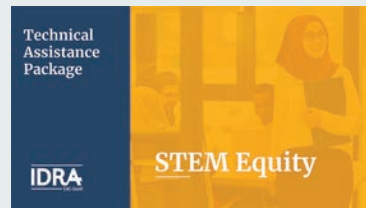
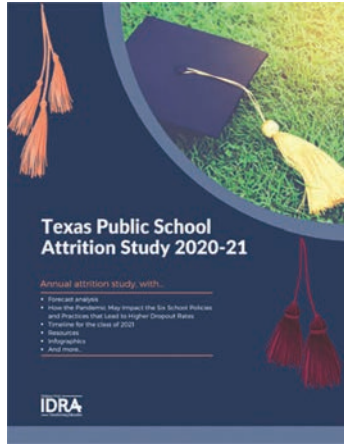
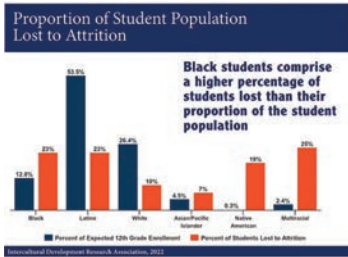
Laptops were donated to IDRA's Texas CSO program to about 40 youth STEM ambassadors from five San Antonio school districts.



The Dee Howard Foundation partnered with IDRA to provide resources for students to expand their exploration of STEM careers by tapping San Antonio's rich aviation and aerospace industry.

“Alliances like this demonstrate a genuine commitment of the private and the nonprofit sectors to fight against social disparities together.”

— Jean Claude Tissot, President of Arca Continental Coca-Cola Southwest Beverages



This IDRA College Preparation – Online Technical Assistance Toolkit provides a resource that outlines research on the connection between taking math courses and college preparation, on-demand webinars, articles and podcast episodes as tools for college preparation structures in schools and districts.



In this IDRA STEM Equity – Online Technical Assistance Toolkit, we show how schools and communities can open pathways for girls and students of color in the curricular pipeline to prepare them for STEM careers.



- ▶ Computer science equals problem solving – Infographic
- ▶ Math and College Readiness – IDRA Infographic

IDRA’s Youth Leadership Now is a new in-school program where eighth grade students considered high-need tutor K-1st grade students. The middle schoolers also are mentored by teachers who help them prepare to transition into high school. IDRA is partnering with Texas Education Service Center (ESC) Region 19 for this project that integrates IDRA’s intergenerational family leadership model to engage families and YLN tutors in action equity projects. This field-initiated, research-based program was funded by the U.S. Department of Education and prepared in 2022 to begin its pilot year in 2023-24.

Founded by IDRA in 2001, the Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition (TLEEC) is a collaborative of organizations and individuals with the mission to improve the quality of public education for all children, with a focus on racial equity. In 2021, IDRA and TLEEC led the defeat of an attempt to gut the Texas Top Ten Percent Plan during one of the toughest Texas legislative sessions in recent memory.

IDRA’s annual attrition studies published in 2021 and 2022 showed that Texas is failing to graduate one out of every five students – which translates to losing 10 students per hour.

In 2020-21, the first full school year during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Texas high school attrition rate declined to 19% last year, which is the lowest rate in over three decades.

“ I have come to appreciate the opportunity IDRA has given me... Being a tutor has taught me so much about children and how they learn. Seeing this in action has inspired me to be a teacher.”

— Jade Hernández, VYP Tutor, 11th Grade, Odessa High School, Ector County ISD, Texas



Leading Culturally-Sustaining Schooling

IDRA assisted schools as they transitioned back to in-person instruction to re-engage students in academic and socio-emotional learning.

To educate our growing diverse student population, educators must foster learning environments that are inclusive of students from different backgrounds than themselves and fellow students. Gaps in cultural understanding have the effect of widening disparities in academic performance of students from different groups.

IDRA trained thousands of teachers in 11 southern states to create classrooms that are inclusive of all students, regardless of their race, gender, native language or immigration status.

In 2021, the IDRA EAC-*South*, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, held a virtual conference for hundreds of educators featuring equity experts from across the country to provide effective tools to help them reopen schools after the pandemic, strategies to reconnect with students for their mental well-being and accelerated learning, and reclaim their own sense of connectedness, community and power.

Also, through the IDRA EAC-*South*, we convened over 500 educators and school leaders virtually for two days focused on ensuring equitable learning environments for all students, **ReOpen – ReConnect – ReClaim – Ensuring Equitable Learning Environments for All Students**. Sessions featured Dr. Theodora Regina Berry, University of Central Florida; Norma V. Cantu, J.D., Chair, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights; Dr. Paul Gorski of the Equity Literacy Institute; Dr. Da’Mond T. Holt, national trauma expert; Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Superintendent, Alexandria City Public Schools, and Kennetra

Wood, Alexandria City PS; Dr. Muhammad Khalifa, Ohio State University; Dr. Daniel King of Learning Innovation, Transformation, LLC, and former superintendent of Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD; and many more.

We partnered with a Mississippi school system to provide diversity, equity, and inclusion training and produce the district’s first diverse faculty recruitment plan.

And we conducted a review of over 150 school board policies of a Virginia district aimed at uncovering policies that thwart the success of historically marginalized groups and dismantling current systems that are barriers to student success.

Through IDRA’s multi-year **School TurnAround and Reenergizing for Success (STAARS) Leaders** project, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, IDRA’s educator coaching model strengthened schools serving diverse student populations. We continued our multi-year project in 2021 and 2022 serving a cluster of schools in San Antonio facing state education agency accreditation consequences.

IDRA served on the Texas Steering Committee for My Brother’s Keeper to develop a policy agenda and strategies across the state to change the lives of boys and young men of color in Texas. IDRA Chief Legal Analyst Paige Duggins-Clay, J.D., spoke on a panel for the My Brother’s Keeper Texas 2022 Summit, Call to Action: From Making Moves to Making a Movement.

“Without the efforts of the IDRA EAC-*South*, schools and students would not have the support that they need to overcome barriers in the areas of race, sex, religion, and national origin to positively impact student learning.”

— Karli Saracini, Assistant Commissioner of Educator Effectiveness and Licensure Arkansas
Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, Arkansas Department of Education

Does your school reopening plan ensure educational equity?

Ask these 5 questions. Click on the ? to get ideas to increase equity.

Does your plan address academic needs of traditionally underserved students?

Including plans to...

- Teach and support students of color, those with disabilities, those from families with limited means, English learners and other traditionally underserved students.
- Monitor learning and progress in non-punitive ways.
- Provide enhanced professional development on culturally relevant and sustaining practices.

Does your plan protect the health & physical safety of all students, teachers & staff?

Including plans to...

- Consider the health needs of teachers, students and families, particularly those who are most vulnerable to COVID-19.
- Rely on current research on the health and economic impacts of COVID-19 on communities of color.

Does your plan have support of families, students, school staff & other community members?

Including plans to...

- Incorporate community input.
- Designate staff to be responsible for outreach to families, especially those with whom the school has had limited contact since closures began.
- Ensure authentic engagement with students and families about their reopening needs.

You are taking steps toward equity!

Keep going and share your challenges and successes.

Does your plan bridge the digital divide for students?

Including plans to...

- Provide necessary digital devices and training.
- Ensure affordable and consistent broadband connectivity.
- Provide digital platforms with real-time translation services.
- Rely on family and staff surveys about learning preferences.

Does your plan create safe, welcoming and supportive schools?

Including plans to...

- Prohibit disciplining students (and parents) for truancy and unintentional non-compliance with health requirements.
- Ensure teachers and staff are trained to respond to trauma in non-punitive ways.
- Prepare teachers and staff to speak with students about racial justice issues.
- Hire counselors, social workers and nurses to assist needs of adults and students.

www.idra.org See IDRA's online primer: Ensuring Education Equity During and After COVID-19 IDRA
facebook.com/IDRAad https://idra.news/EdEquityinCOVID IDRA
Ensuring Education Equity



Culturally Responsive Instruction and Leadership – Online Technical Assistance Toolkit helps educators embrace what, for many, is a new vision for engaging with families and community members.



IDRA published, **Ethnic Studies – Online Technical Assistance Toolkit**, designed to provide educators tools and resources for implementing ethnic studies in K-12 schools where students study histories, experiences, cultures and issues of race, ethnicity and indigeneity with a focus on the experiences and perspectives of people of color in the United States.

As schools prepared to reopen after COVID-19 closures, IDRA urged schools to prioritize equity to ensure that students had their academic, health, and safety needs met, especially for underserved students, such as English learners, Black and Latino students, students receiving special education services, and students from families with limited incomes.

We published a bilingual infographic, **Does your school reopening plan ensure educational equity?** to help schools and communities learn how to do so. We also published a Policy Primer “Ensuring Education Equity During and After COVID-19,” as a living document listing policies to preserve and promote educational equity.



For many years, the IDRA EAC-South has provided a wide range of services to Randolph County schools and leaders that have supported the district in reaching unitary status. Our collaboration has helped ensure educational equity for all students by addressing equity issues, such as disproportional access to diverse and highly qualified teachers.”

— John Jacobs, Superintendent,
Randolph County Schools, Alabama

IDRA launched its **LGBTQ+ Equity – Online Technical Assistance Toolkit**, which provides contextual data and action steps for school leaders and teachers to ensure schools are safe places for LGBTQ+ students to learn free from bias and discrimination.

<https://idra.news/TApackages>



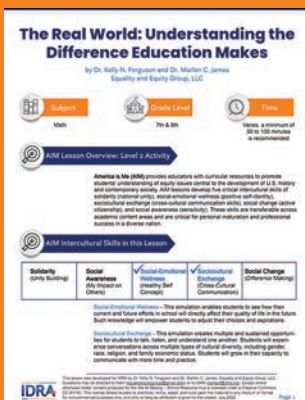
Combatting Classroom Censorship

IDRA led statewide coalitions in Texas and Georgia that brought together hundreds of individuals and organizations to advance a strong vision of educational equity and fight against classroom censorship policies and their chilling effects.

Classroom censorship hurts all students, and especially targets Black, Latino and LGBTQ+ students. It compromises the representation of historical and modern figures and events, narrows permissible instructional materials, and jeopardizes students' learning through false reflections of U.S. history and society by limiting truthful instruction and conversation.

Beginning in 2021, policymakers in states across the South pressed to censor teacher speech, limit what students can say and learn about racism and current events, and attempt to whitewash history. IDRA actively opposed classroom censorship policies, including leading a collection of over 97 organizations in Texas, participating in national strategy meetings, and working with partners to oppose bills filed in Georgia.

We lifted the voices of students and families to policymakers and school leaders against classroom censorship measures and their chilling effects, like book bans. When the Texas Legislature passed laws censoring classroom discussion and whitewashing history, they denied systemic racism even exists in schools. Students wanted to make the point that silencing student speech about racism only serves to perpetuate that racism. We worked with the TEACH Coalition, a collective of Texas students, parents and educators, who sent the state Attorney General a student-led collection of first-hand stories. We featured some of the 88 public school students in a media briefing, podcast interview and articles as they described their experiences of racial discrimination in school and their concern about the impact of the new classroom censorship bill in Texas.



Teacher feedback on the Real World lesson in IDRA's SEEN School Resource Hub:

“ There were ah-ha moments like, ‘My high school diploma [alone] is not going to get me very far.’ I definitely saw a lot of those ah-ha moments.”

“ The actual lesson is the magic... Topics like that engage students because it's real and relevant.”

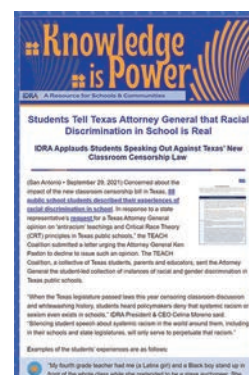
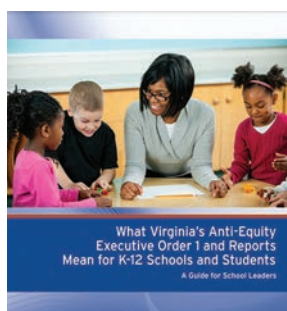
IDRA convened the Georgia Coalition Against Classroom Censorship with 150 registered members representing advocacy groups, students and educators in the fight against classroom censorship policies. In 2022, IDRA joined the ACLU of Georgia and the Southern Poverty Law Center to support educators, students and parents in Georgia as they monitored how a new, restrictive education law signed by Gov. Brian Kemp would impact public school lessons about race and racism.

We launched our **Knowledge is Power** e-newsletter series providing over 19,000 people with policy, advocacy and classroom resources for equity and excellence in education in the midst of classroom censorship policies.

IDRA also released a publication, **Lessons Learned from our Classroom Censorship Advocacy**, featuring tools and strategies to support others' inclusive, community-centered work as well as analyses of new laws.

And we published a guide to clarify the new classroom censorship law in Texas, SB 3, and to deter its chilling effects.

IDRA published an analysis showing that directives in Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin's anti-equity Executive Order 1 do not apply to local school division policy or practice. **What Virginia's Anti-Equity Executive Order 1 and Reports Mean for K-12 Schools and Students**, was designed to help school leaders continue to promote culturally sustaining school practices.



IDRA SEEN School Resource Hub

IDRA launched its SEEN School Resource Hub to promote accurate and inclusive education by providing lesson plans and tools for teaching history and current events about race and gender in today's classroom censorship climate. With input from educators and students, the hub provides and curates lesson plans, instructional best practices, historical resources, policy updates and data maps to support educators and advocates who want to promote culturally-sustaining schools and fight harmful censorship policies. Our original lessons, like **The Real World: Understanding the Difference Education Makes**, include modifications for emergent bilingual learners.



We partnered with Unladylike2020 to give students access to inspiring stories representing diverse cultural backgrounds. In 2022, the award-winning PBS series launched its content for viewing and streaming with Spanish subtitling. The series tells the inspiring stories of little-known heroines and the women who follow in their footsteps. Its accompanying lesson plans are featured on the IDRA SEEN School Resource Hub.

idraseen.org/hub



Promoting Effective School Discipline & Safety

IDRA works to ensure schools are safe and welcoming every day, for every student. We have provided expert testimony to Congress about school safety and against corporal punishment, led coalitions in Texas and Georgia to challenge school policing policies, and trained teachers in research-based strategies like restorative practices. We have helped school districts rewrite their codes of conduct and produced policy briefs that shape narratives about what real school safety looks like for all students.

Schools should be spaces where students feel safe and welcome, actively engage with learning, and strive for success. Unfortunately, ineffective discipline practices that punish students harshly and take them away from the classroom – like suspensions, alternative school placements, corporal punishment, referrals to law enforcement, and expulsions – are prevalent in U.S. schools. When such actions disproportionately impact or target certain student populations, they could constitute a violation of students’ civil rights.

IDRA showed leadership in urging policymakers to take meaningful steps to address gun violence across the country, to try and ensure children and teachers have the resources and support they need in their schools, and to invest in strong, relationship-centered learning environments. In this work, IDRA National Director of Policy, Advocacy and Community Engagement Morgan Craven, J.D., presented invited testimony, *Serving All Students – Promoting a Healthier,*

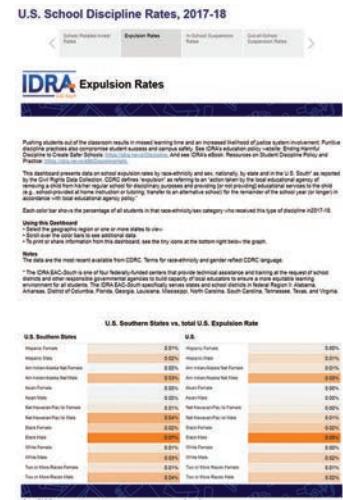
More Supportive School Environment, in a listening session on federal relief: *The Next Steps for our Children, Teachers and Parents in Uvalde* before the U.S. Congressional Children’s Caucus.

IDRA increased our national advocacy in Washington, D.C., including co-hosting a federal congressional briefing in 2021 on banning corporal punishment. Director of the IDRA EAC-*South* Paula Johnson, Ph.D., provided remarks in the briefing. And Morgan Craven, J.D., spoke in a news conference held by U.S. Rep. Donald McEachin and Sen. Chris Murphy, who introduced legislation to end corporal punishment in schools. The following year, Morgan Craven, J.D., presented invited testimony in a federal hearing of the U.S. House Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education Subcommittee. IDRA also joined partners in Mississippi to present on why the state should prohibit corporal punishment.

IDRA created community action data dashboards to provide a new level of high-quality, accessible data on school discipline, including corporal punishment. We provided professional development for restorative justice facilitators at 21 campuses across three school districts in the U.S. South.

IDRA trained and supported students, who surveyed their peers who report that misguided school discipline, like punishment for dress code violations, in-school suspension, and out-of-school suspension policies, are harmful and cause disruptions to their learning.

idra.news/EndCorpPunishment



In 2022, IDRA was asked by students, families, and the Lubbock NAACP to challenge racially discriminatory practices in two west Texas school districts through an administrative complaint filed with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. IDRA worked with the complainants' legal counsel at Ellwanger Law, ACLU of Texas, and Texas Civil Rights Project. The complaints alleged that Slaton ISD and Lubbock-Cooper ISD failed to protect Black students experiencing racial bullying and harassment in their schools and imposed inappropriate and harmful discipline against those students.

IDRA's Chief Legal Analyst Paige Duggins-Clay, J.D., helped to bring national media attention, including MSNBC and NBC Nightly News, to the families' stories in this community and others across the state.



What Safe Schools Should Look Like for Every Student
A Guide to Building Safe and Welcoming Schools and Rejecting Policies that Hurt Students

The student and families in Idaho, Texas, and our neighbors. We have done the research and we are here to help you. This guide provides a roadmap for building safe and welcoming schools and rejecting policies that hurt students.

We are not just here to help you. We are here to help you build a safe and welcoming school for every student. We are here to help you build a safe and welcoming school for every student.

What are some effective practices? An even better question is how to build a safe and welcoming school for every student. We are here to help you build a safe and welcoming school for every student.

Read the full report on <https://idra.news/WhatSafeSchools>.

IDRA developed a new Issue Brief, **What Safe Schools Should Look Like for Every Student – A Guide to Building Safe and Welcoming Schools and Rejecting Policies that Hurt Students**, to provide a roadmap for safer schools for all students.

We published our **School Discipline – Online Technical Assistance Toolkit** to help school leaders and educators identify ways to proactively build safe and trusting communities and end their reliance on approaches to discipline that are harmful to students.



IDRA published its **Interrupting Bullying and Harassment in Schools – Online Technical Assistance Toolkit** designed to give educators and school leaders the tools that they need to prevent bullying and harassment by fostering a positive school climate.





Representing Voices of Communities of Color in Policymaking

IDRA carried out its groundbreaking IDRA Education Policy Fellowship program to build a pipeline of advocates in Texas – and launched the program in Georgia.

IDRA changed the landscape of state-level education policymaking by training advocates to influence state law and lead a powerful network of impacted communities. Texas policy advocacy is traditionally run by people who do not reflect the population of its K-12 public schools, 72% of whom are students of color. Students of color make up most of the Georgia public school population – about 63% – and Georgia grows more diverse each year.

Yet, advocates of color are rarely present in the rooms where decisions about the lives and opportunities for students of color are made. IDRA's innovative program seeks to change that picture.



Leading into the 2021 Texas legislative session, IDRA launched its Education Policy Fellow program and introduced four Education Policy Fellows to amplify the voices of communities of color across the state. During their nine-month fellowship, they worked with policymakers to inform policy proposals, presented 22 testimonies, and partnered with and formed coalitions of students, families and advocates focused on improving racial equity in education policymaking spaces.

Fellows produced eight policy analyses and research reports, 11 articles, four op-eds and media interviews, five podcast episodes, a digital equity video advocacy campaign, and over a dozen virtual community engagement events. They also helped IDRA lead a series of 10 virtual “office hours” events to help advocates prepare their own testimony.

“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.”

— Education Policy Fellow



An external researcher evaluated IDRA’s Education Policy fellowship program, conducting detailed interviews and surveys and comparing pre-program goals with post-program outcomes. The resulting report demonstrated the effectiveness of the fellowship program, leading to additional fellow cohorts.

“In my 40 years of conducting evaluation interviews, I have never interviewed a more passionate group who were so eager to share the tremendous impact this fellowship had on their personal lives, their careers, and their educational goals,” said evaluator Dr. Nancy Chavkin. Dr. Chavkin is the Regents’ Professor and University Distinguished Professor of Social Work at Texas State University. “The results are indisputable. Not only have the fellows benefitted from this program, but Texas legislative policy has benefitted. IDRA has benefited. Children and families have benefited. There are more voices of color in the policy arena...The program has been transformative on multiple levels.”

With the program’s success, IDRA expanded to Georgia with a new policy fellow in early 2022 and, by late 2022, had launched a new program cycle with five fellows preparing to serve in Texas and Georgia in 2023, working 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 first cycle of the IDRA Education Policy Fellows Program was generously supported by The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Trellis Foundation, and Kresge Foundation, and in partnership with the John Gardner Public Service Fellowship, facilitated by Stanford University’s Haas Center for Public Service. The IDRA Education Policy Fellows Program in 2021 was supported by The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the Kresge Foundation.



ABOVE: Staff members Mikayla Arciaga, M.A.Ed. [l] and Terrence Wilson, J.D. [r] with IDRA Education Policy Fellows in Georgia [center] Jonathan Peraza Campos, M.S., and Ruth Youn.



RIGHT: IDRA Education Policy Fellows in Texas: [l-r] Steve Kemgang, Alisha “Tuff” Tuff, and Diana Long.



Focusing on state-level policy helps ensure a strong future for Texas, but only if we ensure that communities of color have a voice in imagining and creating that future. We are energized by the work that the IDRA Education Policy Fellows Program accomplished, and we are proud to have supported fellows’ efforts to connect theory, policy and practice through their experiences and within their communities.”

— Kristin Boyer, Executive Director for the Trellis Foundation.



Policy, especially education policy, has the potential to impact generations of families and children. That’s why it’s imperative that those influencing state law reflect the lived experiences and diverse identities of the constituents they serve. It’s important that we build strong racially diverse pipelines of talent through efforts like the IDRA’s Education Policy Fellows program, to ensure a more just and equitable future.”

— Edward Smith, Ph.D., Senior Program Officer at the Kresge Foundation.



Serving Emergent Bilingual Students

Emergent bilingual students bring unique skills and insights into the classroom. IDRA worked to ensure they have the same opportunities to succeed academically as their English-speaking classmates. IDRA helped shape bilingual education policy and trained thousands of teachers of emergent bilingual students across the U.S. South.



"Don't label me for what people say I lack."

It's time to focus on students' unique potential for bilingualism and biliteracy!

Limited-English-Proficient-English-Learner

Emergent Bilingual

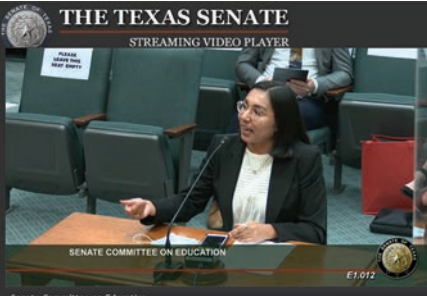
See IDRA Testimony: <https://idra.news/TestimonySB2066> **IDRA**

IDRA changed how policymakers and schools in Texas refer to *emergent bilingual students*, ensuring the language in our state policies and classrooms is affirming and recognizes the many talents these students bring to their schools. Until then, that state used terms, like *limited English proficient*, focusing on what students lack. The new Texas law would not have happened without IDRA.

idra.news/EmergentBilingual

IDRA collaborated with the Texas Early Childhood English Learner (ECEL) Initiative, a project that brought together experts from across the state to discuss challenges and opportunities for emergent bilingual students and develop a multi-level policy roadmap (2021). IDRA was proud to serve on the steering committee of the initiative, along with Texans Care for Children, Philanthropy Advocates, Texas Association for the Education of Young Children (TAEYC), and Dr. Dina Castro of the University of North Texas at Denton.

The keystone piece of legislation to emerge from the ECEL Initiative created a statewide strategic plan for educating the over 1 million emergent bilingual students in Texas. This plan set goals and benchmarks for increasing the number of certified bilingual educators, high-quality dual language programs and high school students graduating with a biliteracy distinction.



THE TEXAS SENATE
STREAMING VIDEO PLAYER

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senate Committee on Education

Until now, Texas lacked a teacher certification program that equips professionals to serve the tens of thousands of Texas students who sit at the intersection of learning English in school and a developmental or learning disability. IDRA backed a bill to create a bilingual special education certification to help ensure that students' needs are more appropriately met and understood by school leaders.

IDRA Bilingual Education Lead Dr. Lizdela Piñón, Ed.D., was appointed to the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) Bilingual Special Education Educator Standards Advisory Committee. IDRA held a series of roundtable discussions to convene professionals in bilingual special education to help guide development of the rules and standards for the certification.



IDRA Deputy Director of Policy Chloe Latham Sikes, Ph.D., co-authored a report, **Creating a More Bilingual Texas – A Closer Look at Bilingual Education in the Lone Star State**, with Chandra Kring Villanueva of Every Texan that outlines six recommendations for policymakers to address the ongoing challenges to achieving educational equity for emergent bilingual students.



IDRA published the **Serving Emergent Bilingual Students – Online Technical Assistance Toolkit**, which gives educators a literature review and videos providing an introductory overview of emergent bilingual students and programs to serve them.

In South Carolina, IDRA led district-wide training to equip over 3,000 teachers to serve emergent bilingual students with a variety of techniques ranging from building academic vocabulary, critical questioning, and facilitating substantive conversations.

IDRA held a series of webinar sessions on translanguaging for social justice during the IDRA EAC-South 2022 convening. Through translanguaging, emergent bilingual students use all of their linguistic and cognitive resources to better understand content provided to them in a language they have just begun to learn. More than 500 people viewed the six-part series live and on-demand on IDRA's YouTube channel.



The San Antonio City Council recognized IDRA in October 2022 for the Month of the Bilingual Child.



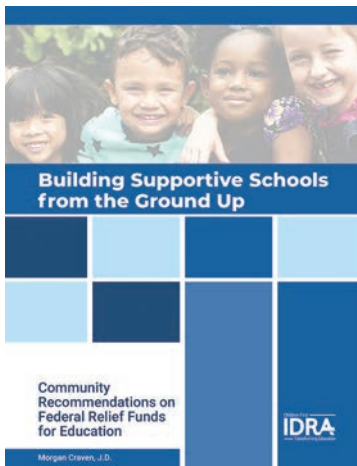
IDRA serves our community by ensuring that all students achieve equal educational opportunity so that they may access and succeed in college, [including] English learners. IDRA does great work to realize equity in education.”

— Councilwoman Ana Sandoval, M.S., M.H.S.



Keeping the Public in Public Education

IDRA has provided expert witness testimony, written school finance laws, organized communities and fiercely advocated equitable school funding systems in Texas and Georgia. IDRA's José A. Cárdenas School Finance Fellows Program engages the nation's most promising researchers in investigating school finance solutions.



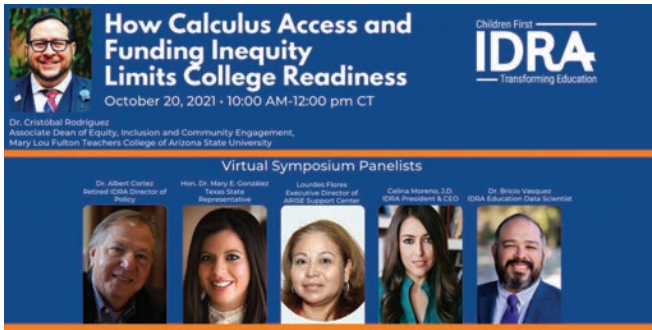
Since its founding, IDRA has worked to make sure public schools are funded fairly for a strong multiracial democracy. Unfortunately, states across the country continue to have funding systems that benefit some students more than others. And, some policymakers and fringe actors push for policies that would funnel much-needed public resources to private schools, hurting traditional public schools and the students and families they serve.

As states and school districts across the country received billions of dollars in COVID-19 federal relief funding, IDRA held an online dialogue session, **What Would YOU Do? Spending Federal Relief Funds in Schools**, for students, families, and other advocates to learn how those funds could be spent and help develop community-driven recommendations for how school districts should use the funds to support all students. IDRA's report, **Building Supportive Schools from the Ground Up**, highlights the main strategies identified during the sessions.



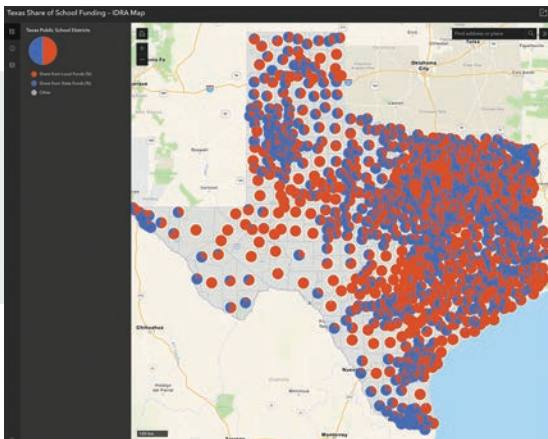
In Georgia, IDRA and coalition members successfully urged legislators in 2022 to refuse to pass several bills that would have established new vouchers that divert public money to private schools up to \$6,000 per entering child.

Chloe Latham Sikes, Ph.D., wrote a new bilingual issue brief: **How Texas Schools Are Funded - And Why that Matters to Collective Success**.



IDRA released the report by our José A. Cárdenas School Finance Fellow, Dr. Cristóbal Rodríguez, **Texas is Not Financing College Readiness – Wealth and Inequities Highlighted by the Civil Rights Data Collection** at a virtual symposium. Dr. Rodríguez, associate dean, inclusion and community engagement and associate professor at Arizona State University, analyzed the relationship of school finance policies and practices and their influence on equitable access to college readiness courses.

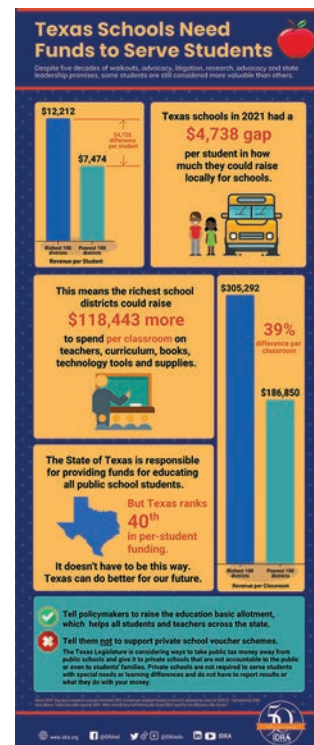
IDRA named University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) assistant professor Dr. Vanessa A. Sansone and University of South Carolina assistant professor Dr. David G. Martínez as our 2022 IDRA José A. Cárdenas School Finance Fellows. Dr. Sansone conducted a comparative case study analysis of CARES Act spending patterns among selected HSIs within Texas. Dr. Martínez analyzed South Carolina school finance priorities in high-proportion Latino districts during COVID-19.



We created community action data dashboards to provide a new level of high quality, accessible data on school funding.

idra.news/DataDashboards

Members of IDRA Education CAFEs in the Texas Rio Grande Valley wanted to learn about IDRA Texas' system of funding schools so that they could advocate for fair funding. IDRA led a series of sessions in Spanish via Facebook Live and IDRA's YouTube channel describing the system and the issues facing policymakers during the 2021 legislative session.





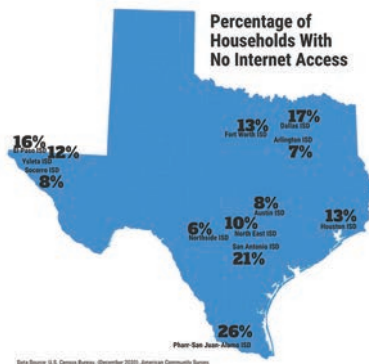
Bridging the Digital Divide

IDRA worked to diminish the effects of the digital divide through conducting research, community campaigns, delivering 100 donated laptops to students, evaluating a cc digital divide program, and securing a seat for urban school district representation state broadband board.

The abrupt shift to virtual learning in response to COVID-19 derailed schooling for millions of Texas students without reliable Internet access. In 2021, IDRA released a report, **Digital Destination – Texas Needs Broadband Connectivity for All Students & Families**, on the digital divide’s effects on Texas students and families and what Texas should do to secure equitable access to broadband for Texas’ most vulnerable student populations.

As Texas policymakers considered legislation to expand broadband Internet access to areas across the state through the new State Broadband Development Office, IDRA worked to ensure urban school districts were included because urban children, many of whom are students of color, often are left out of the conversation when it comes to expansion of broadband access.

IDRA held multiple virtual forums where students, parents and educators shared stories of the digital divide’s effect on them, including through our Digitally Divided, Communities United Campaign. Many provided testimony and public comments on pending legislation. Our report, **Plugged In, Tuned Out – Student Engagement Patterns in Texas Public Schools During COVID-19 Show Need for Statewide Broadband Access**, showed that limited Internet access in large urban districts was connected to lower rates of student engagement.



IDRA released its **Digital Equity – Online Technical Assistance Toolkit**, designed to introduce community stakeholders to the conversation around digital equity and invite school leaders to consider how schools can make informed decisions about increasing students’ access to broadband Internet, computer technologies, and the digital skills training necessary for supporting their educational success.



“Digital skills are essential to our daily lives. We need them to take advantage of every opportunity that is provided to us as parents, students and community organizers. IDRA is a bridge that connects us with the tools, training and skills we need to advance in the digital world. Even greater, IDRA is giving our students the opportunity to be leaders and demonstrate the skills they have.”

— Lourdes Flores, President, ARISE Adelante

New IDRA Tools, Research and Publications

In 2021 and 2022, IDRA produced over 800 materials, including 183 videos and webinars, 99 news releases and policy statements, 62 publications, ebooks, factsheets and online tools, 24 podcast episodes, 29 infographics and 425 other products.

Classnotes Podcast Episodes

Teaching High Level Math through Distance Learning – Podcast Episode 208

Connecting with Students in the Virtual Biology Classroom – Podcast Episode 209

A Culture of Student Engagement Through Schoolwide Restorative Practices – Podcast Episode 210

Teaching that is Culturally-Relevant, -Responsive, and -Sustaining – Podcast Episode 211

Digital Inclusion is Vital for Students and Families – Podcast Episode 212

Students Want Schools to Teach Inclusive Truth – Podcast Episode 213

Education Advocacy Hinges on Community Collaboration – Podcast Episode 214

An Inside Look at Advocating with Communities of Color – Podcast Episode 215

Education Policy Fellows Get Things Done in the Suppression Session – Podcast Episode 216

The Future of Education Advocacy and Being Pushy – Podcast Episode 217

STEM Journeys of Two Young Women of Color – Part 1 – Podcast Episode 218

STEM Journeys of Two Young Women of Color – Part 2 – Podcast Episode 219

Benefits of Reflection for School Leaders – Podcast Episode 220

Nurturing Courageous Critical Conversations in the Classroom – Podcast Episode 221

Tools for Schools Dealing with Bullying – Podcast Episode 222

The Law in Education – *Brown v. Board of Education* – Podcast Episode 223

The Law in Education – *Plyler v. Doe* – Podcast Episode 224

Uniting Community Voices in Georgia Policymaking – Podcast Episode 225

Evaluating Shared Family Leadership in Education – Part 1 – Podcast Episode 226

Evaluating Shared Family Leadership in Education – Part 2 – Podcast Episode 227

Even Digital Natives Need to Learn Digital Literacy – Podcast Episode 228

The Law in Education – Students Press for Affirmative Action – Podcast Episode 229

AIM Framework for Teaching Intercultural Skills – Podcast Episode 230

The Law in Education – U.S. Supreme Court Update – Podcast Episode 231



The Mexican American School Boards Association (MASBA) awarded IDRA as its 2022 Outstanding Advocacy Partner.



The Georgia Youth Justice Coalition, Working Families Party, Georgia Shift, Peaches for Progress Coalition, and Mi Familia Vota, recognized IDRA for its organizing work at its Youth Voter Power Summit featuring over 100 student organizers.

Financials

Statement of Financial Position

	As of August 31, 2021	As of August 31, 2022
Assets		
Total Current Assets	\$1,958,163	\$1,048,973
Assets Designated for Development and Research	16,591,200	15,616,504
Other Assets	176,014	169,529
Total Assets	\$18,725,377	\$16,835,006
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Total Current Liabilities	\$438,560	\$234,596
Net Assets - undesignated	205,669	104,251
Net Assets - designated for development and research	17,597,569	15,704,417
Net Assets - temporarily restricted	483,579	791,742
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$18,725,377	\$16,835,006

Statement of Activities

For the year ended August 31, 2021, and 2022

Support and Revenue		
Foundations and Governmental	\$3,714,272	\$4,347,856
General Administrative Fund Revenue	448,512	553,749
Contributions and Grants - Corporations	15,000	0
Program Revenue	452,618	121,143
Other	31,675	33,780
Total Support and Revenue	\$4,662,077	\$5,056,528
Expenses		
Program Services	\$3,993,377	\$4,957,258
Management and General	504,032	563,875
Total Expenses	\$4,497,409	\$5,521,133
Change in Net Assets		
Change in Net Assets for Operating Activities	\$164,668	-\$464,605
Investment Income	1,299,077	-1,221,842
Other non-operating Income	5,476	40
Total Change in Net Assets	1,469,221	(1,686,407)
Net Assets, beginning	16,817,596	18,286,817
Net Assets, ending	\$18,286,817	\$16,600,410

The Statement of Financial Position as of August 31, 2021, and 2022, and the Statement of Activities for the year ended August 31, 2021, and 2022, are part of IDRA's financial statements. The complete audited financial statements are available upon request to IDRA.

Staff in 2021 and 2022

President & CEO

Celina Moreno, J.D.

Executive Team

Hector Bojorquez

Christie L. Goodman, APR, Fellow PRSA

Morgan Craven, J.D.

Roy L. Johnson, M.S.

Staff

Mikayla Arciaga, M.A.Ed.

Nilka Avilés, Ed.D.

Sulema Carreón-Sánchez, Ph.D.

Michelle Castillo, Ed.M.

Charles A. Cavazos

Linda Cantu, Ph.D.

Juanita "Janie" Daywood

Paige Duggins-Clay, J.D.

Reymundo Flores, M.B.A.

Stephanie Garcia, Ph.D.

Irene Gómez, Ed.M.

Paula Johnson, Ph.D.

Chloe Latham Sikes, Ph.D.

Thomas Marshall III, M.Ed.

Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed.

Lizdelia Piñón, Ed.D.

Christina Quintanilla-Muñoz, M.Ed.

Ana Ramón

Annette Ramos

Jocelyn N. Rivera

Joanna D. Sánchez, Ph.D.

Claribel Tirú

Bricio Vasquez, Ph.D.

Silvia Valencia, M.B.A.

Michelle Martínez Vega

Terrence Wilson, J.D.

IDRA Board of Directors

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Max Spencer Castillo, Ed.D.

Ricardo R. Fernández, Ph.D.

Rosalinda González

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Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr. Ed.D.

Dena Keeling, Ed.D.

Othón Medina, Vice Chair

Jessie Rangel

María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., IDRA President Emerita

Jesse S. Treviño*, Founding Board Member Emeritus

Leo Zuñiga

* *deceased*

Fellows and Interns

Interns

Amanda Alvarez, Communications, 2021
Samantha Boiser, Policy, Advocacy and Community Engagement, 2021
Alejandra Caballero Pinedo, Communications, 2021
Samuel Cervantes, M.P.P., Communications, 2021
Adriana Cortes, Educational Practice, 2022
Mia Covarrubias, Policy, Advocacy and Community Engagement, 2022
Alicia DeHoyos, Educational Practice, 2021
Jailynn Eaton, Communications, 2022
Lauren Fontaine, Policy, Advocacy and Community Engagement, 2022
Haley Gray, M.P.P., Policy, Advocacy and Community Engagement, 2022
Natalya Green, Policy, Advocacy and Community Engagement, 2022
Makiah Lyons, Education Law, 2022
Gabriel Martínez, Research, 2022
Melivia Mujica, Educational Practice, 2021, 2022
Michelle Nguyen, Educational Practice, 2021
Monica Obregon, Educational Practice, 2022
Rahi Patel, Research and Evaluation, 2021
Alejandra Salazar Gonzalez, Policy, Advocacy and Community Engagement, 2022
Lola Solís, Research and Evaluation, 2021
Shaca Sweet, Communications, 2021-2022
Savina Tapia, Policy, Advocacy and Community Engagement, 2021
Darlissa Villanueva, Educational Practice, 2022
Taylor Zey, Communications, 2022

Fellows

Mikayla Arciaga, M.A.Ed., IDRA Education Policy Fellow – Georgia, 2021
Altheria Caldera, Ph.D., IDRA Education Policy Fellow – Texas, 2020-21
Salih Çevik, Ph.D., IDRA Southern Education Leadership Initiative Fellow, 2021
Araceli García, IDRA Education Policy Fellow – Texas, 2020-21
Haley Gray, M.P.P., IDRA Southern Education Leadership Initiative Fellow, 2021
Steve Kemgang, IDRA Education Policy Fellow – Texas, 2022-23
Diana Long, IDRA Education Policy Fellow – Texas, 2022-23
Thomas Marshall III, M.Ed., IDRA Education Policy Fellow – Texas, 2020-21
David G. Martínez, Ph.D., José A. Cárdenas School Finance Fellow, 2022-23
Jonathan Peraza Campos, M.S., IDRA Education Policy Fellow – Georgia, 2022-23
Christina Quintanilla-Muñoz, M.Ed., IDRA Education Policy Fellow – Texas, 2020-21
Vanessa A. Sansone, Ed.D., José A. Cárdenas School Finance Fellow, 2022-23
Alisha “Tuff” Tuff, IDRA Education Policy Fellow – Texas, 2022-23
Ruth M. Youn, IDRA Education Policy Fellow – Georgia, 2022-23

Funders Who Have Helped Make IDRA’s Work Possible

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The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
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Marguerite Casey Foundation
The Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund
Migration Policy Institute*
The National Coalition of Advocates for Students
The National Endowment for the Humanities
National Education Association
National Institute of Mental Health
The National Science Foundation
National Urban Coalition
Philanthropy Advocates*
The Primerica Foundation
The Rockefeller Foundation
San Antonio Area Foundation and the United Way of San Antonio
Seek Common Ground*
South Texas Higher Education Authority
Southwestern Bell Texas Department of Community Affairs
Texas Education Agency
Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
Trellis Foundation*
U.S. Department of Education*
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
U.S. Department of Justice
University of Houston
The W.K. Kellogg Foundation
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The William Randolph Hearst Foundation

* Grants during 2021 and 2022 reporting period

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