



**KEEPING
THE
PROMISE**





We can expand educational opportunity by providing teachers and administrators with innovative, effective training and tools that help every child, regardless of background, succeed in the classroom. IDRA's research and resources support students in diverse schools, ensuring their learning environments prepare them not only to earn acceptance to college, but also to successfully complete their higher education. This grant will help more young people reach their full academic potential and find greater opportunity after graduation."

— Congressman Joaquin Castro

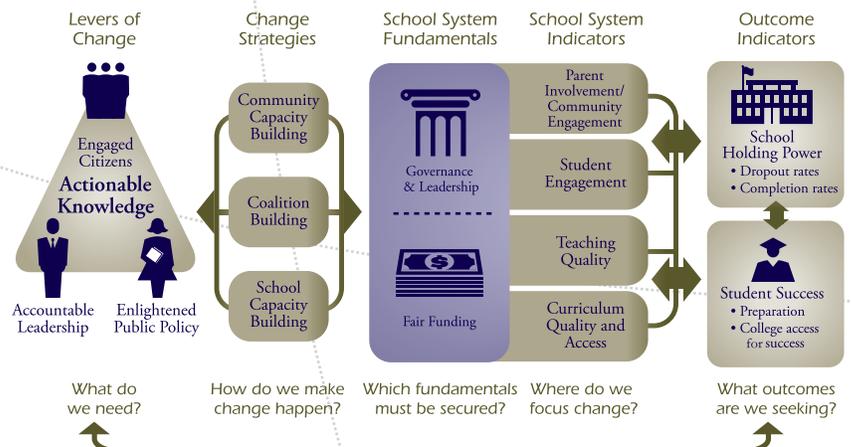
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Everything We Do is Built on a Model for Success

IDRA's Quality Schools Action Framework is a comprehensive action model for graduating and preparing all students for college. The framework (1) outlines the elements that must be in place to create schools that work for all children, (2) describes strategies that most often lead to change, and (3) shows how people can work together across sectors and around key information to leverage change.

Quality Schools Action Framework™



Keeping the Promise: Transforming Education, Putting Children First

Letter from the President



The landmark civil rights decision handed down in *Brown v. Board of Education* turns 65 this coming year; *Mendez v. Westminster* turns 72. But each ruling bristles and pulses with significance today. In states along the border, in the South, the heartland, northern and eastern cities, and the west, pressures to divide America

are seeping into school systems and deeply impacting children. This is nothing new. What is new is mounting pressure at the highest levels to privatize systems that are public and serve the common good and at the same time demonize the communities and children our public schools serve.

All who care about children must hold the line. We must not only react but present real, bold, and accurate expressions of who our children, families and communities are — *who we are* — and what kind of future we envision and are bringing about. This future is rooted in our promise to children. As Chief Justice Earl Warren wrote for the majority in *Brown v. Board*: “Education... is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms.”

In her poem, “Famous,” beloved San Antonio poet Naomi Shihab Nye says, “The river is famous to the fish... The idea you carry close to your bosom is famous to your bosom... I want to be famous in the way a pulley is famous, or a buttonhole, not because it did anything spectacular, but because it never forgot what it could do.”

In these turbulent times for children, we need Naomi’s kind of famous. We need to be the pulley, the buttonhole, the idea, the river — never forgetting what we can do. This is how we keep our promise to children. We need leaders who aspire to be *this* kind of famous.

IDRA’s 2017 Annual Report highlights the experiences of seven such leaders. In the following pages, you will meet education, family, community and youth leaders Jacquelyn Carter Thigpen; Alexander Yang; Gregory Rivers; Eva Carranza and her daughter Andrea; Linda Darling-Hammond; and Tery Medina. IDRA stands shoulder-to-shoulder with them as we strive to secure educational opportunity for all.

For far too long, schools have been cast as petri dishes, where far-away decision-makers pilot solutions. Countless waves of intervention of this type have failed.

On-the-ground experience shows that schools are more like the dynamic, living ecosystems found in nature or the knowledge ecosystems that scholar Homa Bahrami describes.

Like these systems, schools are made up of critical interdependencies — of knowledge; relationships; and networks; mutually depending on one another to learn, fail, course correct, succeed and knowledgeably act. As Bahrami notes, the most effective systems and leaders show “super-flexibility,” “a constant balancing act between the ability to withstand turbulence and the ability to transform and adapt to it.” This is the holistic, adaptive approach, described in IDRA’s Quality Schools Action Framework, around which we and our partners are finding greatest success for children.

As my own tenure as IDRA’s President & CEO draws to a close, I am delighted to celebrate these leaders and our partnerships and progress as a window into “the possible.” It has been my profound honor to work for children, to serve with the men and women of the Intercultural Development Research Association — and with so many of you.

You can count on IDRA to continue to keep its promise by putting children first. The power of the possible is in all of our hands — and within our reach — to bring about a quality public education so all children may find their fullest future and fulfill it.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "María Robledo Montecel". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dr. María “Cuca” Robledo Montecel
President & CEO

National Highlights of Leadership Throughout the Year

JANUARY



Texas Education CAFE Network kicks off new sites. (See Page 13.)

“Texas is losing one in four high schoolers – Bexar County attrition rate hit 28% for class of 2016.”

– Op Ed by Dr. María “Cuca” Robledo Montecel published by the San Antonio Express-News

➤ <https://budurl.me/2-SAEN011517>

FEBRUARY



New Penny Power Tool – As the Texas legislature began deliberating, IDRA released a new tool to help communities advocate for fair funding of schools. The tool shows how much revenue Texas school districts generate for each average penny of tax set by local taxpayers. Users can search on the maps to find out where their school district ranks.

➤ http://www.idra.org/education_policy/penny-power/



School Finance and Opportunity: The Law and the Road Ahead – At a forum held by the American Enterprise Institute and covered by CSPAN, David Hinojosa, J.D., discussed how school funding systems often divorce policy from research and emphasized the need to ensure that policy requires states to provide equitable opportunities to all their students, particularly those in poverty.

➤ <https://budurl.me/2-CSPAN021317>

MARCH



We developed **27 policy statements and testimony** presented before the Texas legislature by IDRA and the Texas Latino Education Coalition. Sample titles included:

- Vouchers with No Real Safeguards and No Civil Rights Protections are “Civil Wrongs”
- The Texas Top Ten Percent’s Legacy in Supporting Equal Access to Higher Education
- Advancing Equity and Adequacy Through Comprehensive School Finance Reform
- Improved Learning Opportunities for English Learner Students Resulting from Increasing the Bilingual/ESL Weight
- Is Texas Getting a Good Return on Charter Schools? Charter Schools Underperform and Drain Over \$2 Billion from Public Education



University of Houston-Downtown Scholarship Endowment – IDRA established the IDRA Scholarship Endowment in Urban Education at the University of Houston-Downtown in honor of UHD President Emeritus Max Castillo in recognition of his service on the IDRA board for almost 30 years and 17-year tenure with UHD.

(From left) Interim UHD President Michael A. Olivas, College of Public Service interim dean Leigh Van Horn, IDRA President & CEO María “Cuca” Robledo Montecel, IDRA board member Othon Medina, Urban Education chair Ronald Beebe, Dr. Max Castillo.

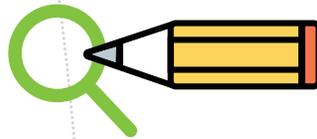
APRIL

Through case studies of five states with varying facilities policies, Dr. Marialena Rivera, IDRA's 2016 José A. Cárdenas School Finance Fellow, examined the factors contributing to expanded state investment in equitable public school facilities and how those factors can be leveraged to encourage states that make minimal investments to expand their support for facilities funding. The five case study states are Massachusetts, New Jersey, Ohio, Texas and Wyoming. An assistant professor of education and community leadership at the Texas State University College of Education, Dr. Rivera's research focused on the politics of education policy, privatization, school finance and school leadership for school improvement. The IDRA José A. Cárdenas School Finance Fellows Program honors the memory of IDRA founder, Dr. José Angel Cárdenas. The goal of the program is to engage the nation's most promising researchers in investigating school finance solutions that secure equity and excellence for all public school students.

► <http://budurl.com/IDRAnCL517aera>



At the **AERA annual meeting**, Dr. Marialena Rivera, IDRA's 2016 José A. Cárdenas School Finance Fellow, provided a briefing on her study, "What about the Schools? – Factors Contributing to Expanded State Investment in School Facilities," followed by a panel discussion with experts from across the country.



American Educational Research Association (AERA) annual meeting presentations – Aurelio Montemayor and Nancy Chavkin led a roundtable on "Youth and Family Leadership: Powerful Family School Community Partnerships in South Texas," sharing stories of IDRA's U.S. Department of Education i3 Initiative to expand development and research of IDRA's family leadership model in five communities in South Texas. And David Hinojosa, J.D., spoke on a panel on "Solving Teacher Inequities by Putting Knowledge into Action."



Aurelio Montemayor, M.Ed., (front) with participants from Richardson ISD.

Annual IDRA La Semana del Niño Parent Institute – More than 250 parents from school districts across Texas and beyond joined IDRA for this parent-led gathering, invigorated with new ideas from other family leaders about how to become stronger advocates, not only for their own children but for all children in their districts. Portions of the event were livestreamed by NowCastSA.

► <https://budurl.me/IDRApi18w>

MAY

IDRA conducted an external meta-evaluation and analysis of information from over 60 projects funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Hispanic-Serving Institutions Grants Program, which funds universities to enhance their ability to support underserved students and develop a skilled workforce.

JUNE



Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program Tutor Winning Essays – In IDRA's national competition, six students received prizes for essays about how the program helped them do better in school and how they had helped their tutees to do better.

► <http://www.idra.org/coca-cola-valued-youth-program/student-essays/>

Valued Youth tutor and tutees in New York City.



Last year, I had a rough year: constantly on campus suspension, referrals, verbally disrespecting teachers... Ever since I started this Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, I feel like I am a different person."

– Jimena Guerrero, 8th Grade, South San Antonio ISD

JULY

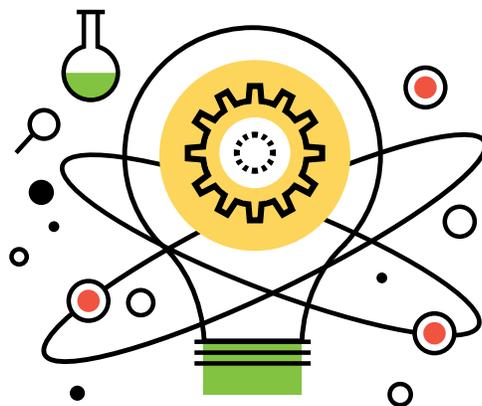


IDRA provided expert research and testimony during the Texas legislative special session, including a new infographic, "IDRA Texas Divestment in Public Education."

AUGUST

Texas ESSA Plan – IDRA provided guidance to Education CAFE members and others in submitting comments to the draft Texas state plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The plan could lead to a series of significant changes for K–12 schools in Texas.

SEPTEMBER



Teacher Preparation – As the federal transition to teaching program came to a close, IDRA celebrated 15 years of work through six projects to develop 815 culturally-proficient educators to be successful in classrooms with diverse student populations. IDRA’s transition to teaching programs prepared teachers through college or university coursework and IDRA professional development to perform well in high-need schools. Out of those, 768 teacher candidates became fully certified in bilingual education and various STEM areas, including mathematics and science, with ESL or special education supplemental certification. Because of this collaboration, participating colleges refined their accelerated teacher preparation programs to address the needs of Texas’ rapidly changing student population.

Principal Preparation – Congressman Joaquin Castro announced federal funding from the U.S. Department of Education for IDRA to prepare 25 new principals from a pool of highly qualified master teachers. The new project, Re-energizing Leadership to Achieve Greater Student Success, also is supporting 139 current principals and leadership team members in eight diverse schools and is implementing effective practices to improve achievement of high-need students.

OCTOBER



(From left) David Hinojosa, J.D., IDRA National Director of Policy; Dr. Ricardo R. Fernández, Lehman College President Emeritus; Dr. José Luis Cruz, Lehman College President.

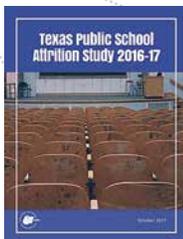
Lehman Scholarship Endowment – IDRA established a scholarship endowment in honor of Dr. Ricardo R. Fernández, Lehman College President Emeritus. Dr. Fernández has served on the IDRA board for 16 years and had a 26-year tenure at Lehman College.

DECEMBER

Ready Texas Study – With funding from the Greater Texas Foundation, IDRA conducted a study of the state’s new graduation requirements to see how the changes are affecting student courses and implications for college readiness. The study found that rural school districts had a 24 percent drop in students taking Algebra II.

Through the IDRA EAC-South, 1,765 teachers from Horry County Schools in Myrtle Beach South Carolina enrolled in our **Fundamentals of ELL course**. Ninety percent have successfully completed the course to date. This initiative to build capacity across an entire school district will last three years.

NOVEMBER



32nd Annual Texas Public School Attrition Study – IDRA’s analyses found that the Texas attrition rate of 29 percent for Hispanic students was below 30 percent for the first time in three decades. In 1985–86, when IDRA’s attrition studies began, the rate for Hispanic students was 45 percent going as high as 54 percent after that year. Yet, the statewide rate returned to 24 percent after one-year bump. By 2017, time-series data indicated that Texas public schools lost a cumulative total of more than 3.7 million students before high school graduation. While overall attrition rates in Texas have declined and seem stuck at about 24 percent, racial and ethnic gaps continue unabated.



IDRA Testimonials



IDRA has been very instrumental in the turnaround work here in the district... by becoming a partner with the work from the onset."

– Dr. Joanela De Leon, Assistant Superintendent for Turnaround Champion Schools, San Antonio ISD



We remain grateful to IDRA for its tremendous work in dispelling charter school myths and for advocating for strong neighborhood public schools."

– Dr. Jayme Mathias, Executive Director Mexican American School Board Members Association



Your students, teachers, parents and administrators appreciate you. I know I still do!!!"

– Elida Carrillo via Facebook



I loved the dialogue. I also love how transparent the speaker was throughout the workshop."

– Participant in IDRA EAC-South training session on implicit bias and cultural competence



Thank you for challenging us to do a better job educating and understanding our EL students."

– Participant in IDRA EAC-South training session on instruction for English learners



Thank you IDRA for your webinar today on culturally responsive pedagogy. Well done and informative."

– Saroja R. Warner, Ph.D., Director of Teacher Workforce Initiatives at the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)



I know that there are students capable of going to college but who don't think they are college material or that they can afford to attend. I was one of those students, and I want all students to be given the chance."

— DR. JACQUELYN CARTER THIGPEN



Photography by Rory Doyle

Empower & Excel

DR. JACQUELYN CARTER THIGPEN



Student Scottie Salley with Dr. Thigpen.

Dr. Jacquelyn Carter Thigpen, superintendent to more than 3,500 students and 500 employees in the Cleveland School District in Mississippi has a vision for all children: “to receive the very best education they can get.” To make this happen, she and her colleagues have assembled a leadership team and board who are dedicated to their mission: “to educate and empower all children to excel.”

For Jacquelyn, excellence begins in the earliest grades. “I am a firm believer that the graduation rate will not increase until we require universal pre-kindergarten for all students.”

Under her leadership, the district has **expanded PreK programs** and is working to reduce cost barriers to PreK. To **promote college readiness**, Jacquelyn’s team started requiring all 11th grade students in the district to take the ACT two years before the state required it. This year, the district is partnering with community businesses and families to provide over \$20,000 to pay for students to take dual credit courses at Delta State University.

A quality education, according to Jacquelyn, calls for a **holistic approach**. She and her team have worked to increase student health insurance access and enrollment; have secured a school nursing grant; and are providing a school-based therapist for schools throughout the district.

Her dedication is rooted in her own upbringing and education. Jacquelyn Carter Thigpen is the 10th of 12 children born to Simon and Olevia Carter, Simon, a custodian with the City of Cleveland, and Olevia, a Head Start teacher. “My mother, who earned a GED after she started teaching, declared that all 12 children would graduate high school.”

A graduate of East Side High School in Cleveland, Mississippi, Jacquelyn went on to earn master’s degrees in guidance and counseling, school psychology, and educational administration

from Delta State University, and a doctorate in education, with an emphasis on curriculum and instruction.

Jacquelyn has served as Cleveland School District’s superintendent for more than 10 years, building on experience as a school psychometrist, alcohol and drug counselor, and director of special services.

“A leader,” she underscores, “has to drive the vision, hire the best people, and allow them to do what you have hired them to do. As a leader, I don’t ask my people to do anything that I’m not willing to do.”

The district has been under a desegregation plan for many years. In 2016, the judge ordered the district to consolidate its two middle schools and two high schools into one of each. “I knew that we would need training to bring the staff together and merge the cultures from the four schools.” She reached out to the IDRA EAC-South for assistance. Middle school and high school teachers received **training in implicit bias awareness and increasing cultural competence**. In addition to building diversity, the sessions were aimed at **fostering positive classroom environments**, promoting positive practices for addressing student behaviors, and setting high expectations for all learners by building instructional capacity. Teachers were able to voice their concerns regarding consolidation and discuss strategies to build a **culture of care** at each campus. Jacquelyn was appreciative of the service provided and plans to initiate similar technical assistance training for the elementary level educators.

“I am passionate about quality and equity in education,” Jacquelyn says. “Growing up, we lived in the same neighborhood that our teachers lived in. We played with their children. They visited our homes, not only when we were in trouble but just because we were neighbors. I would like to see all students become citizens who contribute to make our community and society better.”

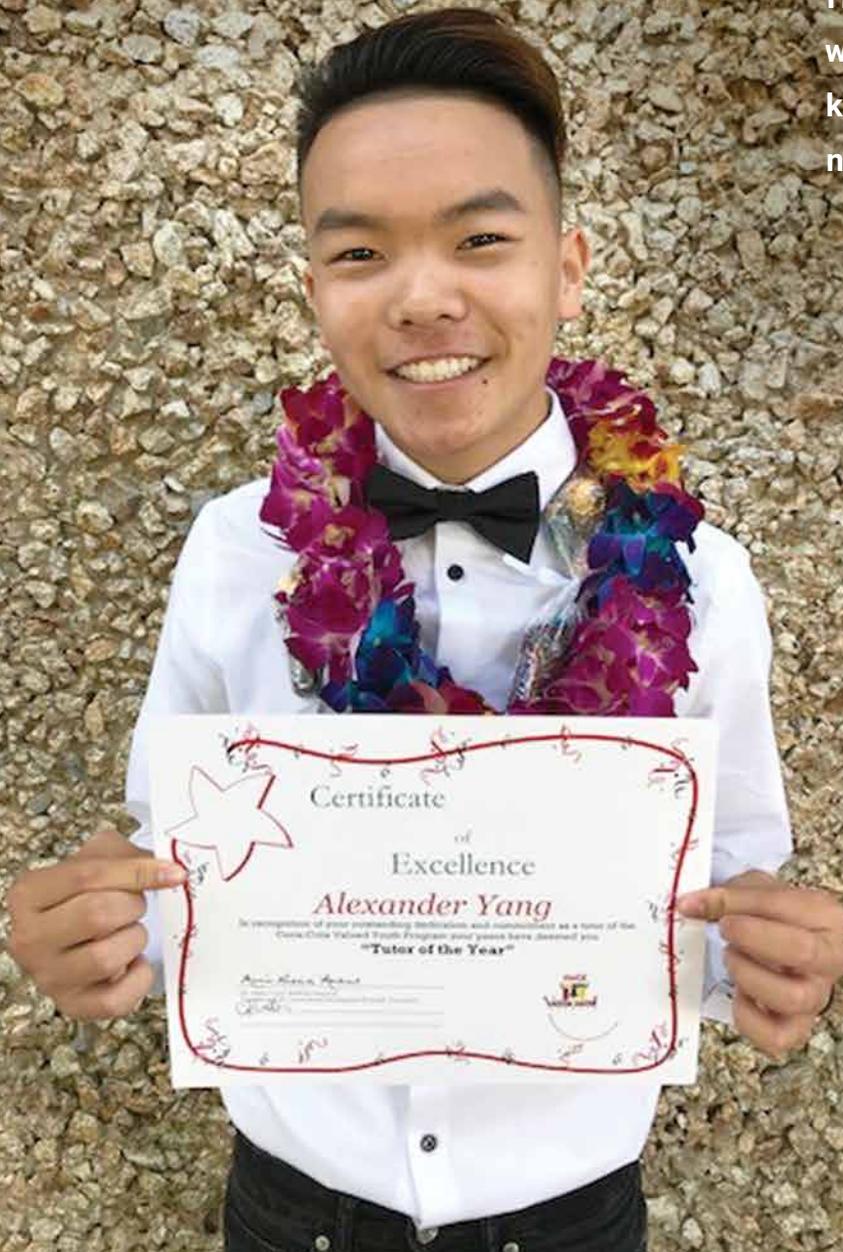


IDRA is one of only four centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education to provide desegregation services for the nation’s public schools. Our center, IDRA EAC-South, covers Washington, D.C., and 11 states, developing local capacity in the region among the nearly 3,000 school districts and 29,632 schools with over 1 million educators and 16 million students.



My biggest role models have been there for me since day one of my life, and they are my loving mother and father. Both of my parents came from little money and didn't have much, but they built themselves to be incredibly strong. They've truly been there for me when I needed them most, and I know I can always count on them no matter where they are."

— ALEXANDER YANG



Photography by Sulema Carreón-Sánchez, Ph.D.

Strength in Service

ALEXANDER YANG



Alexander Yang attends John Still Middle School, Sacramento Unified School District in Sacramento, California. The school is led by Principal Reginald Brown. Kimiyo Harada, who is the school's teacher coordinator for the IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program.

Alexander Yang was born into an ethos of service. The third child of four, Alex was raised on the Naval Air Station in Lemoore, where his father worked in Navy aircraft maintenance. Located in California's Central Valley, Lemoore is among the U.S. Navy's busiest airfields, and his father was often away at sea working on an aircraft carrier. Alex missed his father terribly when he was away. And in April of 2015, he lost his father to cancer.

Alex **strives to honor his parents**. "My father always told me to work hard and do what I love most. This encouraged me to do even greater things in life like getting better grades and taking the opportunity of being in this incredible program."

As an IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program tutor, Alex is part of a cohort of 19 students at John Still Middle School, in tutoring younger students with the support of teacher coordinator, Ms. Kimiyo Harada. Thinking about his fourth grade tutees, Alex shares: "**No words can describe the feeling I have every morning knowing I will hopefully impact a child's life**. When the students greet me and proudly show me the scores they receive, I can really see the progress they've made and feel genuinely happy to have played a part in their improvement."

He is also proud of the **challenges he has overcome** as a tutor. The previous year, he had a high number of absences, some due to illness but others because he just didn't want to come to school. But as a Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program tutor, he knows his tutees count on him to help them with their work and he doesn't want to let them down by not being there to help them learn.

"When I started tutoring, **I thought I would be incapable of doing a good job** and unable to truly understand the kids I would be teaching. But I've **learned to be more confident** in myself and my skills. Sometimes, I feel that I'm the one learning from them instead of the other way around, and

through all the experiences I've had, I learned that I love helping them."

Alex believes it is "important for young people like myself to be leaders in their schools because everyone is unique and we can all benefit to learn from one another."

Ms. Harada has played a major role in his leadership. "She has not only taught me valuable school lessons but life lessons that encourage me to better myself. I am amazed by how much effort she puts into the school and children here."

Now at 14, Alex has **dedicated himself to family, school, tutoring** and Muay Thai training, a form of kickboxing. He dreams of one day becoming a successful clothing designer for brands like Nike or Adidas.

For the children he tutors, he also has a dream. "My hope is that they find happiness and satisfaction in helping others. They are very smart, and I hope that they share their knowledge with everyone they know."



The IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is a research-based, internationally-recognized dropout prevention program that has kept 98 percent of its tutors in school. This dropout prevention program works by identifying junior high and high school students in at-risk situations and enlisting them as tutors for elementary school youngsters who are also struggling in school. Given this role of personal and academic responsibility, the Valued Youth tutors learn self-discipline and develop self-esteem; schools shift to the philosophy and practices of valuing students considered at-risk. Since its inception in 1984, the program has kept 34,600 students in school, young people who were previously considered at risk of dropping out. The lives of more than 718,000 children, families and educators have been positively impacted by the program. The program design is based on IDRA research on the dropout issue and school holding power. The program has grown across the United States and has been in Brazil, England and Puerto Rico.



Equity in education is critical. Our geography should not define our success in life. I have always worked in inner-city schools, and being a product of Edgewood, the poorest school district in Bexar County, I know that our society will not compete in a global society if we do not educate all our students.”

— PRINCIPAL GREGORY RIVERS



Photography by Hector Bojorquez

Catalyzing Conviction

PRINCIPAL GREGORY RIVERS



Gregory Rivers, principal at Charles C. Ball Academy, has deep roots in the communities his school serves. A native of San Antonio, he attended Henry B. Gonzales Elementary School and Edgewood High School. He dreamed of being in the NFL, but in high school, his coaches encouraged his other talents. At 19, working at an afterschool daycare center, **inspiration struck**.

"A student was struggling in math, and I began helping her. I'll never forget the bus dropping her off at the daycare center and her running to show me that she received an 'A'. I was hooked. That feeling of a young child succeeding and being a catalyst for her success paved the path of my career."

Gregory would first pursue that path at Brewer Elementary, where he taught for almost a decade. "This is where my **understanding of school turnaround began**," he says, "under the leadership of Dr. Sylvia Reyna who was principal at the time."

Leading up to that chapter, he had started his college career at San Antonio College, attended the University of the Incarnate Word, and then completed his bachelor's degree in education at St. Mary's University. He later returned to UIW to work on a master's degree in education, which he completed with distinction.

Today, as principal at Ball Academy in the San Antonio ISD, his work is guided by a **spirit of innovation and a mission of student success**. "Leadership is the willingness to try what is uncomfortable and what has never been attempted," Gregory says. "It is having the conviction to stand by your decisions good or bad — and offering inspiration to those who choose to follow you."

"**Equity in education is critical**," Gregory emphasizes. "It is the equal opportunities created by caring adults that can make a difference in a child's life."

He works closely with IDRA to fulfill this promise. "Our partnership with IDRA has been one of our best successes," he says. "IDRA has been instrumental in providing professional learning for our teachers, which helped us receive a 'met standard' rating in one year. We have taken that learning and transformed it to a "mastery institute" that we feel will close instructional gaps in reading, writing and math."

Ball Academy has successfully implemented the IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program for upper level students; is adopting a school wide read aloud mentoring program; and was selected as a dual language campus. "We are excited for the opportunities," Gregory shares. "The future is bright for students and their families at Charles C. Ball Academy."

“That feeling of a young child succeeding and being a catalyst for her success paved the path of my career.”

— Gregory Rivers



Through our STAARS Leaders project, IDRA is increasing leadership effectiveness in partnership with the San Antonio ISD. IDRA provided school leaders with coaches and differentiated and comprehensive professional development and technical assistance. Supported by the U.S. Department of Education, this project leads to transformational change that begins with a school's leadership team. Effective, informed, committed principals mentor and support their teachers who, in turn, nurture and enrich their students and turn around low performing campuses.

“

To be a leader calls – first and foremost – for empathy, integrity, dedication, and humility, and most importantly, a deep knowledge about what you are advocating.”

– EVA CARRANZA



Photography by Michael Sandoval

Voices for Children

EVA & ANDREA CARRANZA



Eva Carranza, founding president of the ARISE South Tower Comunitario PTA (now an Education CAFE), envisions a community united around the educational success of every child. As a powerful community leader and advocate, she is working side-by-side with families, colleagues and youth leaders to achieve this. Collaborating with community members and meeting with high school and university administrators, teachers and other agencies, Eva works with other parents at ARISE to create forums for raising families and communities' most pressing concerns about education.

Education has always been important to Eva. "As a little girl growing up Mexico, I dreamed of becoming a teacher or a lawyer," she shares "but for lack of money, I had to leave my studies after high school and go to work at a factory." It was there that she met her future husband and, together, seeking to build a better life for their family, they moved to the United States. But when Eva's daughter, Andrea, was three, her husband left. "Suddenly, I was here, alone in a country that was not my own, with a new language, not knowing how to drive or secure employment. I began working cleaning houses, caring for children, selling second-hand items – whatever was needed to make ends meet."

Eva discovered ARISE's early childhood programs and enrolled Andrea in *Temprana Edad*. The connection to other parents would be pivotal. "I knew that working for a better future for my daughter – for children – was most important to me. With ARISE, **drawing my own experience** allowed me to become a living example that we all have unique gifts and talents to bring to bear."

Now in her last year of high school, Andrea is inspired by her mother's example. "My mother became a strong independent woman who showed me the importance of **understanding that nothing can hold us back**. She has taught me never to give up, no matter the circumstances."

At 12, Andrea became a youth volunteer at ARISE; she has dedicated seven years of service to the program. **Education quality and access for all children is a top priority** for Andrea as well. "It is unfair when students don't get the information necessary to graduate."

"My goal is for students to pass down knowledge to other students, creating a never-ending chain."

Where parent and family perspectives are not in the room, Eva works to challenge and change this. She helped 100 parents study to take their driver's license exam to get to a meeting about the implementation of new graduation requirements. And in collaboration with IDRA, she worked with school superintendents to bring 35 principals to a community meeting focused on education and development in the Rio Grande Valley in South Texas.

Eva shares, "Our goal is for more parents in our community to have the same opportunities we have had to express our rights, fulfill our obligations, and **develop our leadership and voice to advocate for our children's education**."

Andrea agrees. "I want to be able to see my community stand together and help each other in any way possible in being able to speak for themselves. And I want this vision to be passed down from generation to generation for things to get better and better."



During the Texas Education CAFE Network's first year, IDRA has launched Education CAFEs in El Paso, Houston and San Antonio. With support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and mentoring from the existing Education CAFEs in the Texas Rio Grande Valley, families across the state are collaborating with districts, educators and school leaders to inform policy and practices to promoting college success of all students. Education CAFEs emphasize the diversity of communities who are engaged in impacting their public schools.

► <http://www.idra.org/families-and-communities/education-cafe/>



I want all children to be successful in a fast changing knowledge-based economy and to be fulfilled as thoughtful and educated human beings – in all dimensions – through an equitable empowering education. As W.E.B. Du Bois said, ‘Of all the civil rights for which the world has struggled and fought for 5,000 years, the right to learn is undoubtedly the most fundamental.

– DR. LINDA DARLING-HAMMOND

Photography courtesy of Learning Policy Institute

The Right to Learn

DR. LINDA DARLING-HAMMOND



Linda Darling-Hammond grew up in Cleveland in the wake of the federal policies and reforms following Sputnik that would give her a firsthand experience of educational opportunity – and inequality.

Linda would be the first member of her family to go to college and part of the first class of women at Yale. Coming from a long line of musicians, she was a music major and performed with the world premiere of Leonard Bernstein’s *Mass* in Vienna.

She was on the verge of joining a European tour of *Carmen Jones* when she decided to pursue teaching, something she had enjoyed as a piano teacher and an afterschool English teacher in a Yale program for New Haven students. Education would become her lifelong passion.

“But,” she says, “I entered the profession entirely the wrong way. Like so many teachers... I joined an intern program and tried to learn on the job. I was enthusiastic but did not get the training and skills I needed to support the kids.”

Teaching in Philadelphia, and later in Camden, Linda saw the “**devastating effects of inadequate school funding** in school districts that predominantly serve low-income, African American students.”

“Schools were designed in ways that were impersonal and nonproductive,” she says. “I became passionate about teacher education and about redesigning schools.”

The **drive to get to the root of educational inequality** inspired her to pursue an Ed.D. in urban education, which she earned at Temple University with highest distinction; to research education policy as a social scientist and program director with RAND; to teach for a decade at Teacher’s College at Columbia University; and to co-found both a preschool and a public high school to serve students in East Palo Alto. Her

dissertation on school finance reform took up the issue of equity that undergirds quality teaching and schooling.

Linda has since worked with schools, districts and community-based organizations around the country to study, develop and scale new models for better serving diverse students. Her **research and leadership in teacher preparation** and licensing has impacted generations of new teachers and the field.

Today, Linda is President & CEO of the Learning Policy Institute and is the Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education Emeritus at Stanford University where she founded the Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education. She also chairs California’s Commission on Teacher Credentialing and is past president of the American Educational Research Association.

She is collaborating with IDRA on school finance equity, working with governors and state legislators to address educational inequalities and make better investments. “Unless we change the way the country trains, organizes and funds schools,” she emphasizes, “children will be inequitably treated.”

“It is easy to get discouraged by politics” she says, “but working in schools, **there is always hope in the people**. Parents and teachers are working together every day to help students thrive.”



Under a federal court order regarding personnel and employment of Black faculty and staff, a school district in Alabama requested assistance from the IDRA EAC-South. We conducted a comprehensive review of the district’s policies and practices and provided research-based recommendations and guidance. As a result, the district developed a much better grasp of the intricacies involved in formulating revised policies and procedures and improved its understanding of the comprehensive nature of the work involved that extends to other supports, including mentoring, meaningful student and community engagement, and cultural competency. Through this increased knowledge and awareness, the district improved its recruitment and hiring practices, hired additional Black faculty candidates, and ensured that Black faculty are not assigned disproportionately to schools with higher numbers of Black students.

“

Leadership must be a shared endeavor — a collaboration that sets the pace and charts a path toward the future, always being open to change and growth today.”

— TERY J. MEDINA



Photography by Cody Hughes, Point of Hues

Building Bridges

TERY J. MEDINA



Tery J. Medina is passionate about the United States' educational promise to children. "This is a country that supports a child's right to learn in so many different ways. It sets us apart from other countries. Supports must be there to make quality education a reality for each child, regardless of all of the categories, boxes and walls that are artificially created."

Tery is a veteran educator with more than 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, instructor, education consultant, and former associate director for the Southeastern Equity Center. In working to secure a high-quality education for all children, she feels that the greatest obstacles are people being "afraid or against sharing of resources and power" but that fear can be overcome by people with "a clear vision of what *can* be."

Working collaboratively across agencies and roles — with state departments of education, community-based organizations, schools and committed educators — instills her with hope for the future. "There are so many committed individuals who work smarter and harder to make sure public education delivers — **together we can realize the promise of a bright future for each and every student.**"

Tery came to the United States as a Cuban refugee and has devoted much of her professional life to building bridges across cultural differences to create mutual respect and understanding. Her consultancy work with the IDRA EAC-South during the past year helped dozens of teachers and administrators across the American South not only improve their instructional practices for English learner students but also their relationships with the children.

Her own education — and her parents' commitment to education — inspired her. "My eighth grade English teacher, Ms. Lin," she recalls, "was a first-year teacher who made stories and language come alive. She enrolled me in honors English, even though I was an EL student."

"If not for public schooling, and my parents' belief in getting an education," she says, "I am not sure what would have become of me professionally."

First following a career path toward pediatrics, Tery realized, "My heart could not bear to see children in pain." She knew that children's well-being needed to be at the core of her lifelong work — but in another field — education. Tery earned a master's degree in education with a minor in diagnostic teaching with a minor in bilingual education; earned a master's degree in administration and supervision; and developed and **honed expertise** in the areas of diversity and cross-cultural education, equal/equitable education, Hispanic cultures, human relations, special education, parent and community engagement, and teaching English to speakers of other languages.

She became a **powerful advocate for children's educational and civil rights**. "Being a special education teacher, you are always seeking places and opportunities where students and their parents are not represented or included."

Tery's advocacy intensified with the influx of Haitian refugees in South Florida. "Fleeing persecution in their home country, these children faced so many 'strikes'... but they needed to learn. Having been a refugee kid myself brought out that empathy and resolve within me."



In Mississippi, the state department of education had observed recurring issues with teachers not being culturally aware of language and cultural differences in their classrooms. The IDRA EAC-South collaborated with the department to lead full-day cultural competency, implicit bias and English learner pedagogical training for school districts in four areas across the state. Over 80 percent of participants reported that they were likely to change their approaches and teaching due to the training.

New IDRA Tools, Research and Publications



Study of Annual Dropout and Longitudinal Graduation Rates in Texas Charter Schools

Along with the attrition study, this year IDRA analyzed data for charter schools in the state finding that the Class of 2016 saw graduation rates of 62 percent in charter schools compared to 90 percent in traditional public schools.

Others

Booklet: IDRA Education CAFE Start-Up Packet (two versions: English, Spanish)

Map Tool: Student-Teacher Demographic Diversity Gap

Online Tool: Students in All Senatorial Districts Benefit Greatly from the Top Ten Percent Plan

Online Tool: IDRA Penny Power Tool

Online Tool: Trend graphs: Attrition Rates and Numbers Over the Last Eight Years

Factsheet: Texas School Finance – What to do about “Recapture”

List: Resources on Preventing and Responding to Cyberbullying in Schools

List: Sources of Education Data

Tool: Asking Questions of Student Data

Tool: Four Stages of Writing

Booklet of the 2017 Winning Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program Essays

Video: Unfair Funding – A Brief Tale (student creation)

Tool: How to Comment on the Texas ESSA Plan

List: Resources on Preventing and Responding to Cyberbullying in Schools

IDRA EAC-South Literature Review Sets

- **Diversifying the Field** – Barriers to Recruiting and Retaining Teachers of Color and How to Overcome Them.
- **Grow Your Own Educator Programs** – A Review of the Literature with an Emphasis on Equity-based Approaches

Other Infographics

- Texas Public School Attrition study 2016–17
- Timeline for the Class of 2017
- Texas Divestment in Public Education
- 5 Steps on How to Start an Education CAFE
- 5 Reasons Research Shows Teacher Leave

IDRA Classnotes Podcast

Capacity Building Among School Leadership

– IDRA Classnotes Podcast Episode 177

Supporting LGBTQ Students Faced with Harassment

– IDRA Classnotes Podcast Episode 176

5 Strategies for College Readiness in Diverse Schools

– IDRA Classnotes Podcast Episode 175

Authentic Family Engagement through Education CAFEs

– IDRA Classnotes Podcast Episode 174

Skills Needed for Teaching in Diverse Classrooms

– IDRA Classnotes Podcast Episode 173

Using Socioeconomic Status for School Integration

– IDRA Classnotes Podcast Episode 172

Taking Project Based Learning Schoolwide

– IDRA Classnotes Podcast Episode 171

How Inclusive Education Shapes Teaching in Diverse Classrooms

– IDRA Classnotes Podcast Episode 170

A Principal on Leadership for a Turnaround School – Part 2

– IDRA Classnotes Podcast Episode 169

These New IDRA Tools, Research and Publications are available online:

www.idra.org/annual-reports

Statement of Financial Position

As of August 31, 2017

Assets

Total Current Assets	\$ 792,881
Assets Designated for Development and Research	15,032,107
Other Assets	174,285
Total Assets	\$ 15,999,273

Liabilities and Net Assets

Total current liabilities	100,653
Board Designated OPEB*	249,148
Net Assets - undesignated	549,123
Net Assets - designated for development and research	14,782,959
Net Assets - temporarily restricted	317,390
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 15,999,273

* Other post-employment benefits (OPEB) as designated by the IDRA Board of Directors.

Statement of Activities

For the Year Ended August 31, 2017

Support and Revenue

Foundations and governmental	\$ 2,653,925
Program Revenue	631,826
Investment Income	531,769
Other	1,709
Total Support and Revenue	3,819,229

Expenses

Program Services	3,709,130
Management and General	33,269
Total Expenses	3,742,399

Change in net assets

Change in net assets for operating activities	76,830
Non-Operating (OPEB)	366,298
Total Change in net assets	443,128
Net Assets, beginning	15,206,344
Net Assets, ending	\$ 15,649,472

The Statement of Financial Position as of August 31, 2017, and the Statement of Activities for the year ended August 31, 2017, are part of IDRA's financial statements. The complete audited financial statements are available upon request to IDRA.



The program just gets better and better each year. I know that the relationships these guys form mean so much to both the tutors and the tutees... We are extremely happy with having the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program and thankful to be blessed to have these helpers at San Jacinto."

— Pam Walker, Ector County, Texas



Horry County Schools is grateful for the partnership and resources that IDRA has provided our district during our Sheltered Instruction initiative. After conducting a comprehensive needs assessment with stakeholders, IDRA created relevant coursework targeting instruction and best practices for English learners. Customized online modules allowed participants to review information independently as well as interact with fellow educators during monthly professional learning community meetings. IDRA's progress monitoring efforts will allow administrators to benchmark the gains that participants are making as they advance through the sheltered instruction modules. We are thankful to have this tailored support.

— Melissa Westbury,
Horry County Schools, South Carolina



About IDRA

The Intercultural Development Research Association is an independent, private non-profit organization dedicated to assuring educational opportunity for every child. IDRA strengthens and transforms public education by providing dynamic training; useful research, evaluation, and frameworks for action; timely policy analyses; and innovative materials and programs. Each year, IDRA works hand-in-hand with thousands of educators, community members and families. All of our work stems from an unwavering commitment to creating self-renewing public schools that value and promote the success of students of all backgrounds.

Mission

The Intercultural Development Research Association is an independent non-profit organization. Our mission is to achieve equal educational opportunity for every child through strong public schools that prepare all students to access and succeed in college.

Strategy

Be a leading national voice for action and change that catalyzes educational opportunity through integrated research, policy and practice.

Staff

María “Cuca” Robledo Montecel, *Ph.D., President & CEO*
Abelardo Villarreal, *Ph.D., Chief of Operations*

Professional Staff

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Sofía Bahena, Ed.D.
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Lucia “Lucy” Estrada
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Special thanks

to Laurie Posner, M.P.A.,
for conducting the
interviews featured in
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