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ABSTRACT
        The 10 issues of IDRA Newsletter published in 2001 focus on
education in Texas and on national and statewide educational issues
concerning minority, low-income, or bilingual students. Feature articles are:
"Challenges and Strategies for Principals of Low-Performing Schools"
(Abelardo Villarreal); "Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program in Brazil: Valuing
Youth across Different Cultures" (Felix Montes); "Once Texas' Lowest Ranking
School, Fox Tech High School Wins the National Blue Ribbon" (Rogelio Lopez
del Bosque); "The Missing Piece of the Puzzle: Opportunities To Learn" (Pam
McCollum); "Use of Tests When Making High-Stakes Decisions for Students"
(Bradley Scott); "Transitions from Schools to College: Getting There from
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Our Understanding of Bilingual Education: A Refresher on Philosophy and
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Villarreal); "Early Childhood Education" (Jose L. Rodriguez); "Successful
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Robledo Montecel, Albert Cortez); "Destined To Get an Equitable System of School Funding" (Anna Alicia Romero); "Successful Bilingual Education Programs: 10 Schools Serve as Models" (Maria Robledo Montecel, Josie Danini Cortez); "Texas Study Profiles Successful Bilingual Education Programs" (Oscar M. Cardenas); "Missing: Texas Youth--Cost of School Dropouts Escalates" (Roy L. Johnson); "Successful Bilingual Education Programs: Student Assessment and Outcomes" (Maria Robledo Montecel, Josie Danini Cortez, Albert Cortez); "Successful Bilingual Education Programs: Indicators of Success at the School Level" (Maria Robledo Montecel, Josie Danini Cortez); and "Bullying and Teasing in Elementary School" (Aurora Yanez). (Contains a cumulative index, January-December 2001.) (SV)

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Challenges and Strategies for Principals of Low-Performing Schools

Abelardo Villarreal, Ph.D.

School principals are challenged to create the climate, structures and practices for academic success of all students. A new principal in a school with a high percentage of English language learners and a campus considered academically low-performing may be especially challenged to create that climate.

As a new principal, your school is familiar. The campus has a turbulent past, has had a reshuffling of staff, and needs a new beginning for students who expect educational equity and excellence and a fair chance to graduate from high school and college. You are expected to employ innovative school reform initiatives adapted to address English language learners, who nationally still remain a most academically neglected and shortchanged group of students. You will be faced with the critical task of achieving equity-based educational excellence and a challenge to balance instruction that prepares all students for state criterion and achievement tests and teaches a curriculum that is comprehensive and more encompassing. Many principals are faced with similar situations.

The purpose of this article is to provide principals with a framework for executing research-based changes and provide suggestions and procedures for achieving these changes. First, this article gives a synthesis of the literature of what works in schools with high concentrations of English language learners. Second, this article discusses key challenges that principals face in campuses with these demographics. Third, it provides some

insights on how to frame responses to these challenges.

Synthesis of the Literature

Successful campuses "talk the walk" (articulating what needs to be done) and "walk the talk" (doing what should be done). These campuses evolve in academic environments that are determined to succeed and have no excuses for anything less than success. They use and teach in English and the native language. These campuses embrace a philosophy that values what English language learners bring to the school – another language, another culture and a set of unique experiences that are not part of the mainstream. Successful campuses capitalize on students' language and culture and consider them national assets that should be preserved and utilized.

Principals of these campuses are informed about the most recent knowledge of linguistic, cognitive and social development of English language learners. These principals have been able to neutralize or circumvent the effects of contextual issues (poverty, violence, etc.) within families and communities on the quality of education and achievement outcomes of English language learners.

The box on Pages 8 and 9 is a checklist that elaborates on the research-based attributes that contribute to school and student success. Key indicators of school success are categorized by 10 attributes and may be used as the

framework on which to build a blueprint for change. This blueprint is framed in school improvement plans that have been developed after consultation with personnel at institutions of higher education, teachers, parents and community members.

Challenges in Framing a Blueprint for Change

Principals assigned the responsibility of turning around a campus that has been struggling with academic low performance and a negative image in the minds of the major stakeholders in the community are faced with complex and difficult challenges. Below is a list of these challenges and a discussion of successful strategies that have been used to create the change opportunities conducive to student success. Student achievement and success in other school endeavors are central to any vision and strategy used to guide school reform efforts.

Challenge 1: Improve the school climate. The climate that surrounds the instruction of English language learners must be positive, encouraging, and inviting for teachers, students and their families. A sense of optimism and commitment must prevail. Administrators and teachers can communicate high expectations to students, including English language learners, and can show particular manifestations of high expectations.

Some schools do this by creating

These campuses embrace a philosophy that values what English language learners bring to the school – another language, another culture and a set of unique experiences that are not part of the mainstream.

banners that convey high expectations in both English and the native language. One school had a banner that read: "Only apathy will stop us from reaching the highest star *[Sólo la indiferencia nos puede parar de lograr la meta más alta]."* This banner was on the school marquee and would be placed at the entrance of each wing. Furthermore, teachers were asked to discuss with students each morning what this meant. Teachers and students collaboratively would identify their goal for that day. Families received training from the school on ways to set and communicate high expectations for students. Whenever the school failed to reach its goal, the focus was not on finding an excuse but on how to adjust the instruction.

In a study by The Charles A. Dana Center at The University of Texas at Austin, *Successful Texas Schoolwide Programs,* the authors outline their findings around seven themes. One theme, "No

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Excuses," describes how, in spite of numerous obstacles and difficult odds, teachers and administrators are able to do what they feel is needed in order for students to be successful. A task for the principal is to get teachers, administrators, families and communities together to develop a vision that is inclusive of all students. Non-negotiable at these meetings are the following ideas: Strive high; Every student has the potential; No excuses; *Si se puede* [Yes, it's possible] (Lein et al, 1997).

A diversity of languages and cultures in the school was validated through various cultural celebrations and integrating English language learners in as many classes as possible. For example, at the first staff meeting of the year, the principal made it a point to talk about the different languages and cultures represented at the campus. Part of the principal's message was to use this campus asset and capitalize on it by discussing in teacher meetings and classes the benefits of diversity. Students were provided an option to learn another language. In this particular case, a paraprofessional who was a teacher in Mexico but did not have certain related credentials in the United States was hired to teach Spanish. Each class had at least 45 minutes a week of Spanish language instruction.

Challenge 2: Establish and nurture human relationships among educators, teachers and administrators, among

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In This Issue...

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Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program in Brazil: Valuing Youth Across Different Cultures
Felix Montes, Ph.D.

The IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is a cross-age tutoring program designed to reduce the number of students who drop out of school. The innovative program was developed by IDRA in 1984 in San Antonio. The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program places secondary students who are considered at risk of dropping out of school as tutors of elementary students, enabling the older students to make a difference in the younger students' lives. With a growing sense of responsibility and pride, the tutors stay and do better in school. The program supports them with positive recognition and instruction.

The program has primarily operated in schools in the United States. Through special circumstances, IDRA is implementing it in England and, most recently, in Brazil.

A few years ago a number of leaders from public and private institutions did not come together to launch a new product or to create a new alliance to improve the standing of their respective organizations. Instead, they came together to improve, in a very tangible way, the educational opportunities of youth in at-risk situations in Brazil by implementing the IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program.

Adapting to the Brazilian School Context

A guiding principle of the program is that it be carried out in a socio-cultural and educational context that integrates seamlessly into each specific educational system and that, at the same time, it retains its intrinsic philosophical base of valuing. Given the vastly difference in educational systems in the United States and Brazil, this position required the implementation process in Brazil to proceed with the greatest care at all levels. As in all program schools, an implementation team guides the program. Team members include school principals, counselors, teachers, and IDRA staff and/or consultants. Following are some of the considerations the team in Brazil faced in order to operate the program appropriately there.

First, the implementation team embraced a fresh approach to the adaptation of program materials to local conditions. This required a thorough revision of existing materials (student materials and implementation guides) to ensure that the language usage was appropriate to present-day Brazilian Portuguese. Also, a concerted effort was made to ensure that the words, terms and phrases used actually captured the meaning and intention of the program, as applicable to Brazilian culture and the educational system. This required both a deep understanding of the program and knowledge of Brazilian Portuguese and the Brazilian educational system.

Second, the team weighed unique considerations for selecting which schools would participate. Team members visited several interested schools and interviewed personnel. The schools that made it to the program were those in which the administrators and teachers were: (a) very strong, active leaders; (b) committed to the program philosophy – *all students are valuable, none is expendable*; and (c) strongly connected to the school neighborhood and community. This provided an appropriate environment for the program to operate. The team selected two schools, one in Rio de Janeiro and another in São Paulo.

Third, traditionally, the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is a between-schools program, with students from a middle or high school tutoring students at a nearby elementary school. In Brazil, the program was adapted to local conditions by developing a within-school model as the most appropriate type. Primary schools in Brazil typically have students from first to eighth grade. Therefore, students of the higher-grade levels (six through eight) tutored lower grade level students within

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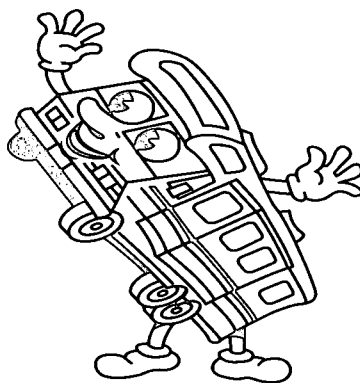
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the same school. The highest number of school desertions (or dropouts) in Brazil are found in the sixth through eighth grades.

Finally, because of various socio-economic issues, including late school entrance, irregular school attendance and high incidence of retention, general over-agedness is a common occurrence in Brazil. Students in the first and second grades may well be 10 or 11 years old. Students in the seventh and eighth grades may be 18, 19 or 20 years old. Given the advanced age of both groups, special care was given to the pairing of tutors and tutees. The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program in the United States includes adult supervision as one of its core components. In the Brazilian environment, this was emphasized even more, and the presence of the teacher coordinators, other teachers and parents during program activities was always very important.

Operating the Program

The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is a comprehensive approach that deeply transforms the relationships of all the participants within their own group, among the groups, and of each participant with himself or herself.

The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is made up of five *instructional strategies* that are intimately related to the tutors' activities: classes for student tutors, tutoring sessions, field trips, role modeling and student recognition. The program also has five *support strategies* that are related to the adult activities to support program implementation and evaluation processes: curriculum, coordination, staff enrichment, parent involvement and program evaluation.

To facilitate implementation, there is a checklist for each of these 10 strategies that includes five to 20 steps or elements. Some elements are critical to the program's success regardless of the location. Others are considered important or desirable based on the school setting.

IDRA conducts an evaluation each year for each participating site that measures the program's impact as well as its implementation. During the first year that the program was in Brazil, the pilot phase, the elements for the instructional and support strategies were carried out successfully. The implementation team clearly placed appropriate emphasis on the :al elements.

> One tutor said that before participating in the [Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program] he was never concerned with the children living on the streets, now he has decided that one of his goals in life is to create an organization to help these children.

Some aspects of the program were not implemented fully for two reasons: program adaptation and limited resources. Materials, curriculum and some activities were adapted or developed at the same time the program was being implemented. This is understandable and was expected. The most important limiting factor was the lack of resources for less critical activities, which, nonetheless, form part of the program.

For example, the schools in Brazil did not have resources for a number of recommendations the program has for an optimal family involvement component. These recommendations include having a family liaison and outreach workers, providing transportation for parents to meetings and special events, providing child care for parents attending school functions, and giving stipends to parents attending training sessions. It is important to underscore, however, that the core elements of the family involvement strategy were implemented at a 100 percent level for the program as a whole and for each school.

This extremely successful implementation also was demonstrated by the commitment shown by all stakeholders involved as seen by the following highlights.

- Students sometimes tutored more than the required four hours per week and spent a significant amount of time in other program activities and interacting with program staff. Tutors developed a strong connection with their teacher coordinators, whom they came to see as mentoring adults who they could consult for anything, including personal matters.
- The implementation team set up an important innovation of having a student leader for the whole tutor group. This tutor leader assisted the teacher coordinator with coordinating tutoring

activities and sometimes served as a conduit between the tutors and the teacher coordinators in difficult matters.

- Teachers recognized tutor participation and took these activities into account for their final assessment. The review of the program's key elements and their strong relationship with the recommended Brazilian curricular guidelines provided a rationale for these teachers to perform this operation within a theoretical framework.
- Tutors received more than 50 tutoring classes during the program pilot phase. This was a combination of the regular program weekly classes for tutors and additional informal classes provided by the teacher coordinators to ensure tutor preparation. This is a significant number considering that the program only requires 30 classes.
- Participation by all parties was exemplary. The principals, teacher coordinators, other teachers, tutors and tutees joined for the field trips, attended the guest speaker conversations, and actively participated in project meetings and evaluation focus groups.
- Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program schools hold a recognition event at the end of each year to celebrate the tutors' contributions and achievements. The end-of-year event in Brazil was a whole community affair, with participation from the school neighborhoods, Coca-Cola Brazil, PANAMCO/Spal, the Secretary of Education, the entire school, and families of the tutors, tutees and other students.

Successful Results

The evaluation of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program at each participating school is an integral component of the program. It allows implementation teams to find deviations from the expected results and to plan appropriate adjustments.

Focus group interviews and personal interviews of participants in Brazil were extremely positive. School personnel, parents and tutors gave the program much praise. School staff were surprised at the extraordinary effects the program had on the tutors, especially improved discipline, self-concept, dedication to their education goals, and renewing their views about life and its possibilities for the future. (These are the same adults who just a few months ago had serious doubts about the

IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program in Brazil, 1999 School Year

City	Tutors	Tutees	Total # of Students	Tutors Completing the Program	Completion Rate	Tutors Dropping Out of School	Dropout Rate
São Paulo	25	75	100	22	88%	1	4%
Rio de Janeiro	25	75	100	25	100%	0	0%
Total	50	150	200	47	94%	1	2%

Tutors' Gender		Tutor Grade Level		Tutors' Age	
Male	42.6%	Sixth	61.7%	Average	15
Female	57.4%	Seventh	27.7%	Range	13 to 20
		Eighth	10.6%		

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future possibilities of these students.)

Parents attributed the program with saving their children from the perils of the streets and instilling in them a renewed commitment to their education, families and society. The program was instrumental in creating a more constructive relationship between schools and parents.

One principal stated:

Before the program, parents would come to my office to complain about problems with the school. Now many of these same parents come to the school to thank us for the opportunity offered to their children in the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program.

IDRA completed four case studies of tutors who were selected because they overcame difficult challenges and excelled in their roles as tutors, in their academic performance and in their private lives. In several hours of candid conversations, these tutors explained the changes in their lives in the context of family, school and friendships. They showed a deep sense of humanity as they gained new perspectives for what is really important to them in life.

One tutor said that before participating in the program he was never concerned with the children living on the streets, now he has decided that one of his goals in life is to create an organization to help these children.

Another tutor expressed her hopes for her tutees, "I hope that the tutees will grow up and one day we will all meet, and I will be very happy to know that they grew up with my help."

In addition to the qualitative measures, IDRA examines quantitative measures collected on a pre-test and post-test basis. These measures include tutor self-concept, attitudes toward school, desire to graduate and final year grades. The box above shows a profile of the students participating in the program.

Fifty tutors and 150 tutees in two schools participated in the first year in Brazil. The program completion rate among tutors was 94 percent. The dropout rate for the tutors was only 2 percent. These results were similar to those in the United States.

There were slightly more girls (57.4 percent) than boys (42.6 percent) who participated in the program. Most tutors were enrolled in the sixth grade (61.7 percent), with 27.7 percent in the seventh grade and 10.6 percent in the eighth grade. The tutor average age was 15 and ranged from 13 to 20 years old.

The pre-test and post-test analysis showed that the qualitative perceptions held by school staff, parents and tutors were completely justified. The tutors made significant gains in most aspects of their personal and academic lives. The teacher coordinators and the tutors' teachers were asked to evaluate the tutors at the beginning and the end of the school year. They evaluated the tutors in three general areas: behavior, relationships and academics. They also evaluated the tutors through 15 concepts, from self-concept to desire to graduate.

Pre-test and post-test ratings increased significantly ($p < .05$) in all the three general areas and in 14 out of the 15 concepts. Statistically significant improvements were registered in tutors' self-concept, future goals, discipline, hygiene and dress, and attendance. Statistically significant improvements also were registered in tutors' ability to socialize into their school environment and with schoolmates; and their relationships with teachers, parents, administrators and counselors. Finally, statistically significant improvements were registered in tutors' academic achievement, interest in school and interest in class.

The tutees' teachers were asked to evaluate the tutees at the beginning and end of the school year using a similar but more simplified instrument. They evaluated the tutees in the same three general areas of behavior, relationship and academics. The tutees were evaluated through nine discrete concepts, from self-concept to interest in class.

Statistically significant gains were determined in eight out of nine survey concepts: self-concept, attendance, hygiene and dress, ability to socialize into the school environment and with schoolmates, academic achievement, interest in school and interest in class.

The analysis shows that all the students – tutors and tutees – experienced a profound and positive change in their lives as a result of their participation in the program.

In addition, impressive gains were obtained in tutors' academic performance. In the São Paulo school, tutors' passing rate after participating in the program improved from 64 percent to 91 percent. In the Rio de Janeiro school, the improvement was from 60 percent to 96 percent.

Reflection

Clearly, the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program in Brazil represented a turning point for these tutors, their families and the schools. The program also affected the implementation team deeply. As a result, the program has expanded from two schools during the pilot phase, to five schools during its second year and to seven schools for its third year (2001 school year). By the year 2002, the program will have 11 schools in at least four cities in Brazil. By all accounts, the program has been a great success.

Following are reflections and discussions resulting from my experience as a member of the implementation team. They further elaborate the reasons behind such an extraordinary success in intercultural, international collaboration for the educational improvement of students who once were considered at risk of dropping out of school.

One crucial aspect was the commitment to respecting both the local culture and the program's basic valuing philosophy. From the very beginning, it was clear that the people involved would have to learn from each other. The IDRA team members learned about the Brazilian socio-cultural and educational environment, specifically the conditions of the schools where the program would be implemented. It was important to be patient, be flexible, allow people to learn at their own pace, and be ready to move to the next level when the situation demanded it.

The Brazilian team members learned about the program, about the valuing philosophy (a rather counter-intuitive approach to education), and about the need to review these concepts again and again. Often one understands these concepts at an intellectual level but continues to apply the traditional deficit model in practice. Through frank discussions and a real commitment to make the program work for the students, all team members learned to better communicate with each other and to understand each other at a deeper level.

It was critical to select the right schools for the pilot phase. In Brazil, as in the United States, the schools are a reflection of their society. Therefore, there is great disparity among them. The selection team was able to pinpoint schools that were very poor, serving students ng from nearby *favelas* – extremely poor neighborhoods – that at the same time were led by flexible, pro-active and very engaged leaders. The principals and teacher coordinators made the program their own. In fact, they were the principal force behind the program adaptation and the development of new materials. They saw the program as a raw jewel – very precious in its intrinsic value but needing to be molded and polished, and they did just that. The result was a sparkling jewel. And the work is not finished. The program continues to be adapted and materials continue to be developed as the program expands to new schools.

Providing the appropriate support was extremely important. The IDRA team traveled to Brazil often, at least four times a year, to provide staff training, help with the school selection, participate in implementation team meetings with the school staff, and hold general strategic planning meetings with the partners. Members of the Brazilian team traveled to the United States for a variety of purposes, including observing tutoring and visiting with school staff where the program is operating. Between the visits, support happened continuously through electronic means, including e-mail, telephone and video conferences, and through electronic group (e-group) communications. Thus, the team used modern technology to further the program goals.

The Brazilian team members are meticulous record keepers. Although most educational programs in their schools did not have the rigorous evaluation of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, they embraced it and appreciated its value. This perspective made it easy for the team to conduct implementation and evaluation simultaneously, which is the intention of the program. In this way, the team was able to pinpoint deviations early and correct them and, as shown in this article, collect important data about the program's effectiveness. The evaluation instruments and procedures were also refined over time. Thus, the program has a strong evaluation component both in theory and, more importantly, in practice.

Of paramount importance was the commitment at all levels and the strong support from philanthropic institutions, non-profit organizations and the private sector. The Coca-Cola Foundation in the United States, Coca-Cola Brazil in Rio de Janeiro, and PANAMCO/Spal in São Paulo provided extraordinary support to the program financially, by paying for all aspects of program implementation and activities. They also provided staff from these companies who spent a significant amount of their own time as integral parts of the implementation team, an unparalleled commitment we had not often seen before.

One aspect of the program, often sited by Brazilian teachers as extremely novel, is its strong and comprehensive interconnected strategies. The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program has more than 50 small and large elements that are assembled in a seamlessly interconnected network. Although some elements are more important than others, each plays an important function. The more the team members learned about the program, the more they marveled at its wonderful structure and delicate interconnections.

On August 19, 1998, during the ceremony to sign the contract between the Coca-Cola Company and the Brazilian Ministry of Education, the Minister, Dr. Paulo Renato Souza, recalled a question a youngster once asked him during his participation in a television program. "Minister," the child asked, "why are there good schools and bad schools?" He responded that the difference is that the good schools have support from all the community – the parents, the local and national governments, the private sector and the non-profit sector. The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program in Brazil is an excellent example of how a community, including international partners, have gotten together to create good schools, schools that value *all* children.

Resources

Montes, F. *Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program Pilot Phase Report: Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, Brazil* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2000).

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educators and students, and among educators and families. Goldenberg and Sullivan describe leadership as the "cohesion that makes the other elements and components" of a program work together to create positive change (1994). Principals are charged with the task of establishing and nurturing relationships that collectively can have an impact on the quality of a transitional bilingual education program in a school. The issue of relationships cannot be underestimated as a potent factor in creating an environment conducive to learning.

In 1992, the Institute for Education and Transformation at Claremont Graduate School issued a report of research involving four culturally diverse schools that demonstrate the power that human relationships have on keeping and engaging students in school. Sergiovanni summarizes these findings around seven themes, each stressing the importance of caring relationships based on mutual respect and trust (1994). Furthermore, each theme relates some of the problems that emerge when such relationships are nonexistent or weak. Lessons learned from the study include the following.

- Student depression and hopelessness are the byproducts of poor relationships between educators and students. Schools must emphasize the importance of creating a partnership relationship with students and families based on a desire and commitment to make education work for students.
- Students are conscious of race, culture and class issues and seek to know and understand each other's culture. Schools must address these issues as part of the curriculum and consider them in planning and delivering instruction.
- Students seek adult guidance from teachers and parents and desire to talk about values and beliefs. The myth that poor families have radically different values is debunked by this study.
- Schools usually do not view these critical human relationships with much seriousness. Principals should revisit their campuses and study the relationships that prevail relative to the implementation of a transitional bilingual education program. If any of the answers to the following questions is no, it is critical that some form of intervention occur. The questions are:
- Do all teachers feel a responsibility

for the academic achievement of English language learners?
- Have you created a "community of mind" as reflected in a shared vision and expectations of English language learners?
- Does your faculty consider community people and families of students as assets that must be tapped to form partnerships with school people to design and deliver the best education possible for all students?

Other related challenges to the principal include: (1) creating an impetus and a vision of success without boundaries; (2) nurturing exemplary educational environments that promote academic success and a safe, orderly and caring environment; (3) leveraging funding to garner necessary resources; (4) establishing and consistently nurturing a "sense of family"; and (5) providing opportunities for staff, students and the community to celebrate their successes.

Challenge 3: Provide opportunities for collaborative planning and designing curriculum and lessons. Sergiovanni describes the context of a request for collaborative planning, "Ambivalence between the value of individualism and the need for community accounts for our discomfort whenever someone suggests that teaching practice become more collective" (1994). The fact that successful schools for English language learners require some degree of collaborative planning presents a challenge for principals.

Experience has shown that, although learning communities exist in most schools, the benefits of communities that were formed with some trepidation are minimal. Principals must face this challenge by allowing time for groups of teachers to define the role of the committee and its members and to establish rules that support partnerships.

Principals must set the example, provide ample opportunities for communities to form, celebrate successes of communities, provide support to fledgling ones and guard the concept constantly.

Challenge 4: Provide staff development opportunities on effective teaching strategies. *High expectations* is a key training area and is perhaps one of the hardest areas to address through professional development activities. August and Hakuta affirm by acknowledging, "One important way to
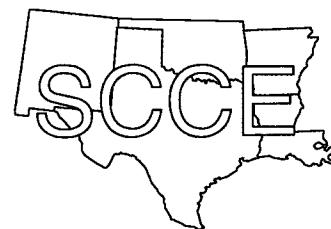
raise teacher expectations is to raise student achievement by helping teachers acquire skills and knowledge needed to be more successful with students, rather than exhorting teachers to raise their expectations" (1997). The need to provide professional development opportunities that are closely associated with the instructional design or model cannot be overemphasized. Topics include specific learning and metacognitive strategies, cooperative learning and thematic units in the native language and English.

Most of the literature on effective bilingual programs document teaching practices that have been observed in classrooms where English language learners succeed academically. For example, Collier identifies three major themes: (1) highly interactive classrooms, (2) problem-solving activities, and (3) inquiry and discovery learning activities (1995). Zehler augments this list to include a predictable environment, active participation in meaningful and challenging tasks, and providing support for understanding (1994).

Challenge 5: Recruit competent teachers who are sensitive and capable to teach *all* student populations. Recruiting teachers who have their heart in the right place and are well informed on the most recent research on effective instructional practices is at the core of the problem. Principals in successful schools "kept their ear to the ground" and always identified teachers who demonstrated the will and the competency to implement quality bilingual education programs.

Cárdenas and Cárdenas make the following recommendations about staffing a bilingual education program (1977). First, staff must be informed of and acknowledge the unique characteristics of language-minority students. Second, staff differentiation is an alternative to adequately staffing a bilingual program. Third, the program must embark a massive retraining of teachers that includes "regular" teachers. Last, there should be a program for lateral and upward mobility of bilingual education staff.

Challenge 6: Provide guidance to

Checklist of Attributes that Contribute to School and Student Success

Conducive Environment
* Values and celebrates student linguistic and cultural diversity (Lein, Johnson and Ragland, 1997; Ogbu and Matute-Bianchi, 1986).
* Values all students, communicates high expectations (Lein, Johnson and Ragland, 1997; Villarreal and Solís, 1998).
* Integrates instructional program and all students in the overall school operation (Berman et al., 1995; McLoed, 1996; Tikunoff et al., 1991).

Spirited and Determined Leadership
* Supports educational equity and excellence for all students (Carter and Chatfield, 1986; Lucas, Henze and Donato, 1990).
* Imparts a sense of urgency for maintaining high academic standards for all students (Lein, Johnson and Ragland, 1997).
* Nurtures and sustains a family environment that is inclusive of parents, students and teachers (McLoed, 1996).
* Expects and exerts pressure to excel (Goldenberg and Sullivan, 1994).

Dedicated and Knowledgeable Staff
* All staff members "walk the talk" and team up to excel in the bilingual education program.
* Teachers consistently receive training and are provided technical assistance when the need arises.
* Teachers receive training that is aligned with the instructional plan prepared for English language learners (Milk, Mercado and Sapiens, 1992).
* Teachers are equipped with strategies and techniques consistent with phonetic and meaning-based approaches.
* Recruitment procedures are strict and seek the best qualified staff for the bilingual education staff (Maroney, 1998).
* Teachers demonstrate a commitment to make education work for English language learners.
* Teachers receive training and know how to assess areas of student needs and plan instruction accordingly.

Partnering with Community and Families
* Relationships with the community and families go beyond just helping at school; they are characterized by a strong desire to get parents involved in the educational process (Robledo Montecel et al., 1993).
* Community and families are perceived as assets that should be capitalized on and integrated into the school resources in a manner that values and seeks their contributions.
* Families play a key role in promoting the cognitive and academic development of their children, and their contributions should be coordinated and integrated into the learning environment (Montemayor, 1997).
* Schools care for the welfare of families by providing opportunities to access various social services available in the community.
* Schools and families join forces to advocate children's rights (Robledo Montecel et al., 1993).

Accessible Learning Environment
* Schools use a diversity of teaching approaches to ensure that all children have access to learning in the most efficient and effective manner (Lucas, Henze and Donato, 1990).
* The learning environment is modified in a number of ways to accommodate the varying needs of English language learners (Berman et al., 1995).
* Classroom teachers use family and community's "funds of knowledge" to base and enrich instruction.

Program and Curriculum Alignment
* Schools have a clear understanding of levels of language and content instruction and use these levels for instructional planning to facilitate transition and efficient progress (Berman et al., 1995).
* Teachers from different grade levels produce and implement a seamless curriculum that flows uninterrupted (McLoed, 1996).
* Goals and objectives for the bilingual program flow from the mainstream curriculum; learning standards are not lowered.
* Schools support students exiting from the bilingual program and transitioning to the mainstream curriculum, and schools address obstacles that could lead to failure in the mainstream program.

Capitalizing on Students' Language and Cultural Resources
* Schools celebrate and value a diversity of languages and cultures as community assets and valuable to the national interest (Lucas and Katz, 1994).
* Schools acknowledge the power of the first language in learning English faster and more effectively (Moll and Díaz, 1985).

Inclusive and Comprehensive Curriculum
* The curriculum is balanced to ensure that its literacy program develops basic and higher order thinking skills (McLoed, 1996).
* Teaching approaches are eclectic, customizing instruction with phonetic and meaning-based approaches (Adams and Bruck, 1995; Purcell-Gates, 1996).
* Schools ensure that reading comprehension and writing skills are developed in the strongest language and provide opportunities to demonstrate their transfer in English (Wong-Fillmore et al., 1985).
* Instruction of skills and concepts addressed in the state-mandated test or standardized tests receive special attention through explicit skill instructional activities.
* Time is allocated specifically for explicit basic and higher order thinking skills instruction; time schedules vary accordingly (Escamilla, 1994).
* Teachers provide opportunities for student-initiated and student-directed learning activities.
* Teachers relate instruction to practical and meaningful student experiences (Pease-Alvarez, Garcia and Espinosa, 1991).
* English language learners have access to grade-level content; curriculum is not watered down (McLoed, 1996).

Instructional Practices and Strategies
* Teachers use periodic, systematic and multiple student assessment measures to inform the instructional decision-making process (Valdez-

Checklist of Attributes... (con't)

Pierce and O'Malley, 1992).
* Assessment is conducted in the student's native language and English when appropriate (McCollum, 1999).
* Student assessment results are discussed and used collaboratively with other teachers to plan and coordinate instruction (McCollum, 1999).
* Successful classrooms use cooperative and collaborative approaches to learning (Calderón, Hertz-Lazarowitz and Slavin, 1996).
* Teachers build-in redundancy in critical skills areas (Saunders et al., 1998).
* Ample opportunities are provided for English language learners to hear adults who are native language speakers at both the social and academic levels (Calderón, Hertz-Lazarowitz and Slavin, 1996; Gersten, 1996).
* Students are provided opportunities for interaction with English-speaking peers (McLoed, 1996).
* Questioning strategies require students to clarify and expand on understanding of text (Gersten, 1996).
* Teachers develop students' metacognitive skills and provide opportunities for students to show competence in selecting and using metacognitive skills (Dianda and Flaherty, 1995).
* Teachers check that instruction is comprehensible and modify instruction accordingly.

Equity-Based Education Excellence
* English language learners are integrated in both academic and social contexts with native English-speaking students (McLoed, 1996).
* The instructional program for English language learners maintains the high academic standards required for all students.
* Bilingual education and ESL programs are an integral part of the mainstream curriculum.
* Bilingual education and ESL programs have the facilities and resources available to do what it must do.

Abelardo Villarreal, Ph.D.
Intercultural Development Research Association, 2001

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new teachers; protect them from the influence of other teachers who overtly or covertly are sabotaging any innovative school reform. New teachers are vulnerable individuals who learn quickly to accede to the whims of indecisive administrators and an apathetic faculty. Many new teachers are placed in "no-win" situations and are overwhelmed by a feeling of "loneliness in the wilderness."

In successful schools, principals provide opportunities for subdominant groups like new bilingual or English as a second language (ESL) teachers to have "access to decision making, creating internal advocacy groups, building diversity into organizational information and incentive systems, and strengthening career opportunities" (Bolman and Deal, 1997). New teachers are acknowledged for their atypical skills and commitment to equity-based educational excellence for *all* learners, including English language learners.

Challenge 7: Map the assets represented in the community and in families and integrate them into the instructional plan. Kretzmann and McKnight acknowledge the power that an asset-based partnership between the school and families can have on student academic success (1993). This asset-based approach focuses on strengths of the family and embraces the "we" concept, in which schools and families share an attitude of mutual resolve to seeking solutions that affect the quality of education.

A caring and responsive school is the best guarantee of a community's future. The partnership that ensues provides a firm foundation for educational renewal and community regeneration. This partnership shares a vision and develops a plan for making that vision a reality. This strategy begins with acknowledging strengths and assets that are present and not with looking for what is absent or problematic. Families and schools are not deficit-driven; they are strength- and asset-driven.

Challenge 8: Organize instruction in innovative ways; build flexibility into the instructional design. There is no single way to specifically address the profile of a successful classroom. No classroom is exactly the same. Modifications and adjustments must be made to ensure that the instructional approach responds to the contextual conditions and is aligned with the characteristics and needs of a diverse student population (Berman et al., 1995).

The challenge of creating the most appropriate instructional model rests with the school and community. For example, schools with effective bilingual education programs create small organizational arrangements (e.g., families and academic teams to build cohesion and unity of purpose, to augment communication among teachers and to create a system of support) (Villarreal and Solís, 1998). Principals must acknowledge, embrace, and promote diversity and must encourage innovativeness in instructional design.

Challenge 9: Provide a challenging, intellectually enriching curriculum. The curriculum should be intellectually challenging, interactive and meaningful. Students' language and culture should be valued and seen as an asset and a strength to build upon and not as a deficit that must be obliterated. The instructional program for English language learners should be the same as the mainstream curriculum.

The major difference lies in the language used for the delivery of instruction or an adaptation of teaching strategies to ensure comprehensible input and meaningful student-teacher dialogue. The delivery will be made either in the students' native language or in sheltered instruction in English.

For example, bilingual education and ESL programs have been mislabeled as remedial programs since their inception. Traditionally, these programs have been created to address a deficit-driven program of instruction for English language learners that tends to keep students from participating in the mainstream curriculum. It is not uncommon for parents to deny enrollment of their children in bilingual education because of the remediation stigma attached.

In addition, successful classrooms are print-rich. Books are available in the students' native language and English. Administrators, teachers and community members should promote reading by allocating times for everyone, including cafeteria workers, janitors, and office clerks, to spend time reading.

Challenge 10: Align curriculum both horizontally and vertically. Curriculum fragmentation is perhaps one of the most irresponsible school practices that contributes to educational chaos in this country. Study after study reveals that scaffolding instruction in a manner that is incrementally more difficult is a more responsible approach. Teachers across

grade levels must have opportunities to discuss the chain of skills and content that form the school's curriculum. Elementary school teachers must have opportunities to align their curriculum by communicating with middle school teachers. Likewise, middle school teachers must communicate with high school teachers.

Bilingual and mainstream teachers at each grade level should meet to plan their grade level instruction collaboratively, thus ensuring alignment horizontally. This alignment not only is realized through planning but also is extended to include team teaching, pairing of classes and regrouping students (McLoed, 1996). In other words, English language learners should have the same opportunities as their English-speaking counterparts to take advantage of the curriculum.

Challenge 11: Establish a program that capitalizes on the linguistic strengths of students and families in the community. Campuses with effective bilingual education programs celebrate linguistic and cultural diversity in different ways. Banners and other important public displays at a successful school are written in a minimum of two languages. Cultural celebrations, especially associated with the cultures represented in the school, are conducted and integrated into the school's curriculum. Teachers use cross-cultural interactions where students and teachers learn from each other's differences. Instruction is based on the structured use of at least two languages.

Initially, the use of a specific language is based on the relative proficiency of the student in the two languages. In a transitional bilingual education program, teachers stress the need to develop reading and writing proficiency in the first language as a prerequisite to successful learning of English. Children's books reflect the variety of cultures and benefits of diversity, and they are written in the languages used for instruction.

Challenge 12: Ensure and deliver grade-level content. Successful schools challenge English language learners with grade-level content. They are aware that content is the same as that expected in the mainstream curriculum; delivery is different. In the bilingual education classroom, delivery can occur in the native language or in both English and the native language. The education of English language learners is also guided by the same educational

standards that have been adopted by the local district.

The selection of textbooks and other supplementary materials must be carefully scrutinized to ensure that these materials challenge English language learners at their grade level. Particular problems exist at the secondary level where English language learners are often denied access to regular science and mathematics courses because of poor English skills (McLoed, 1996). Successful schools conclude that English language learners are intellectually capable to learn this content. Schools must find ways of delivering this content by teaching in the native language, using sheltered instruction and other ESL methods. Anything less than grade-level content will retard their normal progress in school and block students from access to an equal educational opportunity.

Challenge 13: Promote instructional approaches that foster biliteracy development and content acquisition. Biliteracy development requires teachers to have a deep understanding of the role of the first language in the development of the second language. Teachers involved in delivering content instruction should be trained in second language teaching methodologies and be able to pace and modify instruction to make it comprehensible.

Collaborative and cooperative learning strategies provide opportunities for English language learners to interact with other students in meaningful and constructive ways that promote the use of biliteracy skills and cultural understanding by creating a forum for students to learn and appreciate each other's cultural differences and similarities. Thematic units have been used effectively by some successful schools. A living skills curriculum reinforces the benefits of positive character traits personally and academically.

Research indicates that there is no set of instructional strategies that was present in every successful school that has been studied. Each used a variety of instructional strategies and collaboratively adjusted instructional strategies to achieve better academic results. They were, however, guided by a shared and dynamic vision of success that kept them seeking for more effective methods to deliver instruction.

Framing the Change: A Principal's Major Task

Bolman and Deal identify four sides of leadership that must be adjusted when introducing or adapting a school innovation (1997). Uprooting, adjusting or creating instructional design that is consistent with the attributes of a successful instructional program for a diverse student population requires a re-examination of the four sides of leadership and how action on the part of the principal can set the tone for successful change. These four sides of leadership include (1) structural, (2) human resource, (3) political and (4) symbolic leadership.

Bolman and Deal state: "Ideally, managers combine multiple frames into a comprehensive approach to leadership. Wise leaders understand their strengths, work to expand them and build teams that

HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT IDRA ACTIVITIES

In October, IDRA worked with **11,503** teachers, administrators, parents and higher education personnel through **111** training and technical assistance activities and **276** program sites in **17** states plus the United Kingdom and Brazil. Topics included:

- ◆ Preventing Gender Bias in the Classroom
- ◆ Keeping Adolescents in School
- ◆ Strategies for Teaching Bilingually
- ◆ Parent Institute at the Texas Association for Bilingual Education annual conference
- ◆ Title VII Systemwide Program Evaluation

Participating agencies and school districts included:

- ◇ Wagon Mound Public Schools, New Mexico
- ◇ Austin Independent School District (ISD), Texas
- ◇ University of Southern Colorado
- ◇ Los Angeles County Office of Education, California
- ◇ Edgewood ISD, San Antonio, Texas

Activity Snapshot

Through the national-Goals 2000 Initiative, the U.S. Department of Education has established parent information and resource centers (PIRCs) across the country to bring-together-parents, schools, universities, community organizations and businesses to support under-served student populations. IDRA operates the center that serves Texas, called *Reform in Education: Communities Organizing Networks for Emerging-Collaborations with Teachers* (RE-CONNECT). The center's work is based on the valuing principle that recognizes all parents as teachers and leaders regardless of economic condition or background. A primary focus for RE-CONNECT is families of preschool children ages birth through 5 and parents of school-age children. The center also engages in special initiatives to reach low-income, minority and-limited-English-proficient parents. Some of the tools used by RE-CONNECT for its support activities include parent-to-parent training, parent institutes, video conferences for educators-on-parent involvement and leadership, materials dissemination and a web site (at www.idra.org).

Regularly, IDRA staff provides services to:
- ◆ public school teachers
- ◆ parents
- ◆ administrators
- ◆ other decision makers in public education

Services include:
- ◇ training and technical assistance
- ◇ evaluation
- ◇ serving as expert witnesses in policy settings and court cases
- ◇ publishing research and professional papers, books, videos and curricula

For information on IDRA services for your school district or other group, contact IDRA at 210-444-1710.

can provide leadership in all four modes" (1997).

Below is a list of activities that a principal with a struggling transitional bilingual education program can implement to place the program on the road to recovery.

Structural Leadership – Uses organization designs that promote maximum efficiency and success.

○ Conceptually and physically integrate the bilingual education program to the mainstream curriculum.

○ Coordinate activities with grade level lead teachers to involve bilingual teachers in planning and implementing grade level instruction.

○ Redefine tasks and responsibilities to show how every staff member can share in the responsibility to increase the academic achievement of English language learners.

○ Develop policies and procedures that are consistent with equity-based excellence in education for *all* students, including English language learners.

Human Resource Leadership Capitalizes on skills, attitudes, energy and commitment to reach goals.

○ Create a philosophy and a vision of equity-based excellence as the cornerstone of a renewed way of seeing English language learners and their potential for success.

○ Map existing interpersonal relationships that promote the school's vision, create relationships that form partnerships among teachers and personnel including the ones who were never before involved in these matters.

○ Nurture these relationships, redirect those relationships that are counterproductive, and celebrate relationships and partnerships that promote the school's vision and create a sense of family among all staff.

Political Leadership – Organizations respond to the whims of political interests.

○ Plan overall strategies to address the hostility and indifference that exists in the campus and in the community toward bilingual education as a viable response to the needs of English language learners.

○ Establish and nurture a critical mass of staff members who promote equity based excellence for English language learners.

Resources on School Renewal and Leadership

Building Communities from the Inside Out:
A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing A Community's Assets
Book by J.P. Kretzmann and J.L. McKnight (Chicago, Illinois: ACTA Publications, 1993).

Ed Initiatives
Biweekly look at progress on the Secretary's of Education's priorities. Online resource: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/EDInitiatives (free).

Hispanic Families as Valued Partners: An Educator's Guide
Guide by María Robledo Montecel, Aurora Gallagher, Aurelio M. Montemayor, Abelardo Villarreal, Ninta Adame-Reyna, and Josie D. Supik (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 1993).

Leadership for Tomorrow's Schools
Book by Jerry L. Patterson (Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1993) ISBN 0-87120-209-3.

Lessons Learned from Successful Schools
Powerpoint presentation by Joseph F. Johnson, Jr., that includes handouts. The handouts require Adobe Acrobat Reader (15 pages, summer 1999). Available online only: http://www.starcenter.org/ppt/lessons/index.htm (free).

Lessons Learned from Visits to National Title I Distinguished Schools
Powerpoint presentation by Dr. Joseph Johnson and Richael McClure (15 pages, 1999). Available online only: http://www.starcenter.org/ppt/lessonslearn/index.htm (free).

Reframing Organizations – Artistry, Choice and Leadership, second edition
Book by Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal (San Francisco, Calif.: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1997) ISBN 0-7879-0822-3.

Rethinking Educational Change with Heart and Mind – 1997 ASCD Yearbook
Edited by Andy Hargreaves (Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1997) ISSN 1042-9018.

Re-thinking the Education of Teachers of Language Minority Children:
Developing Reflective Teachers for Changing Schools
Occasional Papers in Bilingual Education, Number 6, by R. Milk, C. Mercado, and A. Sapiens.(Washington, D.C.: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, 1992).

School Leadership: It's About Teaching and Learning
One of several related articles in *Parent Press* by Parents for Public Schools (December 2000). Parents for Public Schools national office: 1520 North State Street, Jackson, Mississippi 39202-1645, 1-800-880-1222, www.parents4publicschools.com.

School Reform and Student Diversity:
Case Studies of Exemplary Practices for English Language Learner Students
Book by P. Berman, B. McLaughlin, B. McLoed, C. Minicucci, B. Nelson, and K. Woodworth (Berkeley, Calif.: National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning and B.W. Associates, 1995).

Voices from the Inside: A Report on Schooling from Inside the Classroom – Part I:
Naming the Problem
Book by the Institute for Education and Transformation (Claremont, Calif.: Claremont Graduate School, 1992).

For additional resources, visit the IDRA Field Trip at

www.idra.org

° Work with the "opposition" by creating coalitions of individuals with differing views on tasks where they share views. Being able to work together builds a bond that allows for differences to be openly discussed and negotiated.

Symbolic Leadership – A perspective guided by meaning, belief· and personal commitment.

° Unite around the school's vision and discuss its meaning for all students, including English language learners. Come up with manifestations of this new definition at all levels of the school operation. For example, English language learners may also be gifted and talented. Therefore, the school should manage to adjust the existing gifted and talented program to be inclusive of students with other diverse needs.

° Create stories about the successes in education at the campus. Create stories about reasons for celebrating. Talk about ways to create more stories that relate successes with students, including English language learners.

° Divide the school into "houses," each named after a university campus. The school's primary reason for calling each "house" after a university is to provide an alternative to affiliation with gangs and other dysfunctional groups in the community or in school. '

The knowledge about what to do is easy once these major leadership challenges are addressed. Principals in struggling campuses must communicate the need and commitment to improve the quality of the instruction at the campus. The task is not easy, yet it is not impossible. Research shows that campuses have taken a 180-degree turn changing from a low performing to an exemplary status where all staff are one family having a powerful, positive impact on the lives of children.

Resources

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Who's Accountable?

In the self-directed school, the principal is presented with what may appear to be a dilemma: "If I successfully empower my stakeholders and pass authority and responsibility on to them, will I still be held accountable for the successes and failures of the school, or will the stakeholders – the real decision makers – be held responsible?" Although it may seem anti-intuitive at first, it soon will be very clear to the superintendent, the board, as well as the principal that the principal remains accountable.

In a collaborative, high involvement school like a self-directed school, principals will no longer be prized for their ability to keep the lid on and to run a tight ship. Instead, the principal will be judged and evaluated based on his or her ability to listen effectively, use conflict resolution, build consensus, build teams, facilitate stakeholder problem-solving and know how to delegate and hold individuals and clusters responsible for their respective performances.

If a self-directed school is successful, it will be because the principal facilitates and empowers the stakeholders to make the decisions that led to that success...In what appears to be a contradiction, a self-directed school principal must be strong enough to be weak. The principal must be strong enough as an attitude builder, facilitator, administrator, coach and advisor to release the power and authority that has traditionally been reserved for the position of principal. Through modeling, coaching, advising and providing training, the principal must allow a new leadership to emerge – the collective leadership of the stakeholders working together in teams.

From *The Self-Directed School: Empowering the Stakeholders* by R. McIntire and J.T. Fessenden. (Jefferson City, Missouri: Scholastic). As printed by Parents for Public Schools, December 2000.

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Abelardo Villarreal, Ph.D., is the director of the IDRA Division of Professional Development. Comments and questions may be directed to him via e-mail at contact@idra.org.
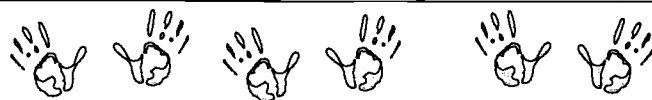
IDRA *La Semana del Niño*
Early Childhood Educators Institute™

"Valuing and Capitalizing on the Linguistic and Cultural Assets of a Diverse Student Population"

Join us for the popular Eighth Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Early Childhood Educators Institute as we celebrate and get ready to teach a new generation of children. The institute offers a valuable series of information-packed professional development concurrent sessions that are customized to value and capitalize on the linguistic and cultural assets brought forth by a diverse student population. This year's event will focus on building reading concepts and skills of young learners. Topics include: literacy, technology, social development, curriculum, and dual language.

You can also take this opportunity to visit model early childhood centers. These visits provide you with the opportunity to share ideas while seeing them in action. Institute participants will travel to high-performing, high-minority sites in the San Antonio area that are effectively working with diverse learners. Two school visits (one each on Wednesday and Thursday) are available to paid institute registrants on a first come, first served basis. Transportation will be provided. You also will have the opportunity to interact with parents to discuss ideas to form effective learning partnerships.

The action-packed schedule begins at 8:00 a.m. each morning and continues through 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, and 2:30 p.m. on Thursday. The institute includes luncheon sessions on Tuesday and Thursday.

—————————— Special Activities ——————————

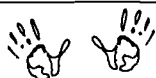### Pre-Institute on Reading and Dual Language Programs – Monday, April 23
IDRA will convene a panel of reading experts to provide teaching and classroom management ideas designed to strengthen your approach to developing literacy in more than one language. This one-day pre-institute takes place on Monday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and includes a luncheon session.

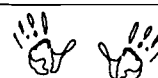### Parent Institute – Thursday, April 26
This one-day event will concentrate on the challenges in early childhood education and how to maximize parent leadership. Parents and educators will dialogue on ways to focus their leadership to enhance early childhood learning.

Video Conference on Family Issues – Wednesday, April 25
Parents, community liaisons and community resource personnel across the state will come together to celebrate the International Week of the Young Child with a long distance conversation focusing on parent leadership and outreach. The video conference will be held at participating Texas regional education service centers. If you are interested in attending at your local video conference site and cannot attend the institute, contact Yojani Hernández at IDRA (210/444-1710) for details.

Mark your calendar

April 24-26, 2001

Pre-institute: April 23, 2001

San Antonio Airport Hilton

Eighth Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Early Childhood Educators Institute™

Registration Form

YES I will attend the Eighth Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Early Childhood Educators Institute.
(Please use one form per person. Feel free to make copies of this form.)

Name _____

School or Organization _____

Title/Position _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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$_____ Total enclosed   PO # _____

Fees Before March 15

___ $175 institute registration, April 24-26, 2001*

___ $75 pre-institute registration, April 23, 2001**

___ $225 discounted institute and pre-institute registration

___ $15 parent institute registration, April 26, 2001

Fees After March 15

___ $195 institute registration, April 24-26, 2001*

___ $95 pre-institute registration, April 23, 2001**

___ $240 discounted institute and pre-institute registration

___ $15 parent institute registration, April 26, 2001

Register **on-line** with a purchase order number at *www.idra.org*

Mail form with a check or purchase order to IDRA at 5835 Callaghan Road, #350 San Antonio, Texas 78228-1190 Attention: Carol Chávez

Fax form with a purchase order to IDRA at 210-444-1714 Attention: Carol Chávez

* Includes institute sessions, Tuesday and Thursday luncheons, two school visits [for first paid registrants], and materials.

** Includes pre-institute sessions, luncheon and materials.

Make payable to: Intercultural Development Research Association. A purchase order number may be used to reserve space. Full payment prior to the institute is expected.

Institute Sponsors

IDRA is pleased to bring you this Eighth Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Early Childhood Educators Institute. Supporting IDRA projects include:

- IDRA *South Central Collaborative for Equity* (the equity assistance center that serves Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas),
- *RE-CONNECT* (the parent information resource center at IDRA that serves Texas), and
- *STAR Center* (the comprehensive regional assistance center that serves Texas via a collaboration of IDRA, the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin, and RMC Research Corporation).

Each of these IDRA projects provides specialized training and technical assistance to public schools. Information on how your campus can use these resources to improve instruction and assessment will be available at the institute and may also be obtained by calling IDRA at 210/444-1710 or by visiting IDRA's te (www.idra.org).

Hotel Information

The institute will be held at the San Antonio Airport Hilton. The hotel is offering a special rate of $96 per night for a single or double room, $106 per night for three to a room and $116 per night for four to a room (plus state and local taxes), based on availability. The hotel reservation deadline for the reduced rate is April 13, 2001. Call 1-877-377-7227 to make reservations. Be sure to reference the Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Early Childhood Educators Institute in order to qualify for the special rate.

IDRA

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The W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Engaging Latino Communities for Education (ENLACE) initiative is entering its next phase. The $28.7 million six-year initiative is supporting broad, community-wide coalition building and collaboration as a catalyst for increasing opportunities for Latino students to achieve educational success. The Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) will continue to serve as the managing partner for the initiative. The National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP) is serving as cluster evaluator.

ENLACE is derived from the Spanish word *enlazar*, which means to link or weave together. The linking together or weaving of valuable resources in the community is a vital component of the initiative. ENLACE is increasing opportunities for Latinos to enter and complete college through sustainable partnerships among higher education institutions and local communities.

Phase I of the initiative took place in 2000 as the Foundation provided one-year planning grants to 18 coalitions in the initiative's target areas across the United States. In Phase II, the Foundation will soon announce the names of eight to 10 implementation grantees who will receive up to $2 million each over four years to carry out their plans. Phase III of the effort will focus on institutionalization and sustainability.

During Phase I, IDRA provided technical assistance to help identify and strengthen partnerships among higher education institutions, K-12 schools and communities; create blueprints for change; and plan for leveraging resources to reach and sustain the ENLACE goal of increased educational access and graduation rates for Latino students. During Phase II, IDRA will continue its technical assistance support to sustain the momentum to keep this initiative moving at its vigorous pace and build strategic connections to broaden national efforts that can catalyze and sustain change.

Due to the efforts of many, ENLACE is already making a difference. Individuals and institutions in communities are taking a stand for Latino students. Communities are being strengthened by the development of inclusive, interrelational partnerships where everyone is a stakeholder in the well-being of that community. It is anticipated that communities will see that the new entity being formed is stronger than all of its parts, and can look within themselves to determine how to capitalize on the strengths that each part of the community brings to bear. People are, in fact, willing to change the status quo – eager to make a difference.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation was established in 1930 "to help people help themselves through the practical application of knowledge and resources to improve their quality of life and that of future generations." Its programming activities center on the common vision of a world in which each person has a sense of worth; accepts responsibility for self, family, community, and societal well-being; and has the capacity to be productive, and to help create nurturing families, responsive institutions, and healthy communities.

To achieve the greatest impact, the Foundation targets its grants toward specific areas. These include: health; food systems and rural development; youth and education and higher education; and philanthropy and volunteerism. When related to these areas, funding also is provided for leadership, information systems/technology, efforts to capitalize on diversity, and social and economic community development programming. Grants are concentrated in the United States, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the southern African countries of Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe.

For more information about ENLACE, visit the ENLACE web page at www.idra.org.

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IDRA Newsletter

Once Texas' Lowest Ranking School, Fox Tech High School Wins the National Blue Ribbon

Rogelio López del Bosque, Ph.D.

Inside this Issue:

- ✧ Opportunity-to-learn standards
- ✧ High-stakes testing
- ✧ Early childhood educators institute coming soon
- ✧ Resources on accountability

Five years ago, Louis W. Fox Technical High School was the lowest ranking school in Texas. Today, it has been elevated to National Blue Ribbon status and given the state accountability rating designation of "recognized" in the 1999-00 school year. The school has been able to defy the stereotypical vision of an inner-city school: low socioeconomic status student population, mostly minority, with a reputation of poor attendance and a school with no goals. Nicknamed Fox Tech, this school has regenerated its ties to the community and alumni.

Impetus for Change:
Low Student Performance

Despite a glorious and proud heritage, Fox Tech was disestablished in May 1995. Less than a quarter of the school's students were passing the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), the state-administered criterion-referenced testing program that draws its objectives from the state-mandated curriculum established by the State Board of Education. Texas' accountability system utilizes this standardized test, along with other data, to rate schools and districts as either "low-performing," "acceptable," "recognized" or "exemplary."

In 1995, the district took a bold step. It asked all staff to re-apply for positions at Fox Tech. The school was "re-established" immediately with a new administration and one-third of the original staff.

The task of returning the school to its former glory would be a major test for the new administration. School leaders began by looking at what had to be done differently to increase enrollment and eliminate the high dropout rate. The new principal, Ms. Joanne Cockrell, explains: "Many articles, based on research, have been written about improving schools. It sounds like common sense to me, but why do we not see these practices more often?"

Ms. Cockrell believes that many of the attributes of high-performing schools should be obvious to educators. She says:

> What I wanted to do when I got this job was to put into use those practices I always thought were common sense. There are two very important areas of focus as far as I am concerned: a strong focus on children and strong leadership. As a leader and working with teachers, I am very clear that I am not in the business of giving jobs to adults. That is not my purpose. My purpose is educating children. The only way I can do that is by employing the best teachers.

She comments on the high number of schools that say "children first" but wonders how many of them actually put the saying into daily use.

In a 1989 Texas Education Agency publication, the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) outlined attributes of successful schools (Cárdenas et al., 1989). The following are some of the strategies IDRA described that promote scholastic success:

- Communicate high expectations.

- Use encouragement to support independence, self-esteem, risk-taking and acceptance of others.
- Monitor teaching to identify and change negative expectations and behavior.
- Use a wide variety of teaching styles.
- Maintain high expectations that are appropriate to each student's ability level, and monitor student progress in order to maintain appropriate expectations.
- Exhibit strong school leadership that assumes and supports success.
- Plan for staff development and institute cooperative decision making.
- Correlate campus and programmatic activities designed to serve students who are considered at-risk of dropping out with the core curriculum.
- Incorporate critical and higher-order thinking skills in all course content areas.
- Conduct ongoing evaluations of student learning outcomes to modify teaching strategies and organizational operations.
- Create campuses that are centers for community involvement, support and interaction.
- Increase recognition of students' accomplishments and special talents both in academic and non-academic pursuits.
- Create ways in which students who are considered at-risk of dropping out can be acknowledged as peer leaders and

> **Fox Tech has shown that there is no room or time to blame students, community, parents, or the economic level of the student population for a school not being successful.**

more fully participate in projects that respond to student and community needs.

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) has been studying initiatives for turning around low-performing schools. It describes low-performing schools as those schools with:
- high rates of teacher turnover,
- high percentages of uncertified and/or inexperienced teachers,
- frequent leadership turnover,
- low rates of parent and community involvement, and
- single, piecemeal, uncoordinated reform efforts.

On the other hand, attributes of high-performing schools are:
- academic focus,
- leadership,
- high teacher quality, and
- accountability.

The turn-around created at Fox Tech

by the teachers, staff and students beautifully illustrates these attributes.

After the re-establishment, moving the school forward would not be easy, but the positive attitudes and expectations were definitely there. It was apparent to all staff that the essence of a successful school is valuing students, teachers, parents, and community; understanding that students always come first; and having pride in the school, self, community and heritage. In an interview with IDRA, the principal outlined the five focal areas that are being principally addressed in this transformation.

Strengthening School Pride

Fox Tech is nestled in the middle of downtown San Antonio. Across the street is a major bank, a historic church, a leading hospital, an art institute, and many other businesses. One block away is the city library, which, sitting in its great splendor, bright colors and design, can be seen from the freeway and from miles away.

If you were to drive past Fox Tech, you would never know that it is a high school. Its architecture is modern and blends in with the busy downtown area. Built in the 1970s, Fox Tech reflects the new but maintains old charm in the original renovated building that still stands and is part of the school. The only clues from the outside that this is a high school are the stadium and the large parking lot for the

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In This Issue...

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The Missing Piece of the Puzzle: Opportunities to Learn

Pam McCollum, Ph.D.

Teresa López is a 17-year-old student from Mexico who arrived in Houston a few months ago. She is a sophomore at the city's largest high school where she has one class period of English a day. During the remainder of the day, she sits through classes in the sophomore curriculum that are geared to assist English-speaking students pass the state accountability test required for graduation. While the rest of the students are discussing the titration process in chemistry, Teresa is given a list of vocabulary words to copy and define.

Teresa's case is not an isolated one. She is considered at-risk of dropping out because she possesses three of the characteristics that classify a student as at-risk of failure. She is an immigrant student with limited English proficiency who lives in a high-poverty area. As a secondary-level recent-immigrant student, she must quickly learn English in order to master academic content. Additionally, because she lives in a state that requires a graduation test regardless of course grades, she must pass an exit test to receive a high school diploma.

According to the *Improving America's Schools Act* (IASA), a student should be classified as at-risk of failure if he or she is a member of any of the following groups: children in high-poverty areas, children who are limited English proficient, migratory children, neglected or delinquent children, homeless children, immigrant children, American Indian children, children with disabilities, refugee children, and teen parents.

Where do students like Teresa fit in standards-based reform? The nation's governors, in addition to policy-makers and education leaders, have demonstrated their support for standards-based reform and expressed their belief that *all* students will achieve at high levels. How this belief and support translates to different groups of non-mainstream children, however, has not been made clear.

Within the present educational climate, *all* students are expected to perform to challenging academic standards without having equal opportunities to learn. As J. Kozol and others point out, the poor academic performance of the nation's children is strongly related to inequities in school financing that advantage the fortunate and seriously impede the success of others in less affluent districts (Kozol, 1991; Coons, 1970; Cárdenas, 1997).

This article briefly describes the tenuous position of secondary-level recent immigrant students who are English language learners (used hereafter instead of limited English proficient) within standards-based reform. It also presents an initial set of opportunity-to-learn standards that need to be in place in order for students to achieve challenging academic standards and successfully complete high school.

Recent Immigrant Students and Standards

In 1994, the IASA was passed, reauthorizing the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA). The significance of the IASA was the establishment of its core principle that "disadvantaged children should achieve to the same challenging academic standards as their more fortunate peers." The IASA


Did You Know?

The number of Title I schools that states have identified as "needing improvement" has grown from 7,616 in 1996-97 to more than 8,800 in 1998-99.

A survey by the U.S. Department of Education found that only nine states report that they can provide support to at least half of the schools in need of improvement; 12 states report that they serve less than half of the schools in need of improvement; and 24 states say they have more schools in need of improvement than they can serve.

Nineteen states now require students to pass a high school exit exam in order to graduate.

Title I requires that states include reading and mathematics in their standards, assessment, and accountability policies. All states include student performance in mathematics and either English/language arts or reading in their Title I accountability systems. In 1999-00, many states also included other subjects: writing (19 states), social studies (20 states), and science (19 states). In all but one case, the same states assess both social studies and science for Title I purposes. Three states will add writing in 2000-01, and one state will add both social studies and science. Other states include multiple subject areas in their testing systems but do not use the results to determine school performance for accountability purposes.
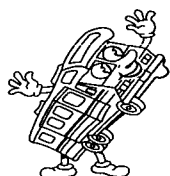
For more facts and statistics, go to the "Field Trip" on IDRA's web site.

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legislation mandated changes in how education is delivered, including improved instruction and professional development to align with high standards, stronger accountability, and coordination of resources to improve education for all children.

The 1994 IASA legislation noted that in addition to national academic standards to be implemented by the states, voluntary opportunity-to-learn standards should be identified to ensure students access to the resources needed to meet academic standards.

The IASA legislation highlighted a number of conditions that are necessary for learning, including a safe school staffed by appropriately-licensed and certified staff who have appropriate, up-to-date materials

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have one hour of ESL per day would have the equivalent of only four months of full-time ESL instruction during four years of high school. For most, this approach does not provide sufficient opportunities to learn English, master academic content, and successfully pass an exit test in order to graduate.

In addition to insufficient support in mastering English for academic purposes, the current heavy emphasis on high-stakes testing is another barrier for high school English language learners. Nineteen states now require students to pass a high school exit exam in order to graduate. However, English language learners who do not receive special services through a newcomers center or other special program aimed at serving them appropriately, often sit through classes designed to help

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well as students in other non-mainstream groups, are to be included in the standards movement. The following is an initial taxonomy of opportunities-to-learn standards for recent immigrant English language learners at the high school level.

Opportunity-to-learn standards fall into four categories: curriculum, policy, teacher and counselor preparation, and practice. The standards should include, at a minimum, the following.

Curriculum
An ESL program must enable students to use English as a medium for learning academic content.

In order for students to achieve academic standards, in addition to general communication skills, students must possess cognitive academic language proficiency (Cummins, 1984; Cummins, 1983). At this level, students are able to problem-solve in English and perform the types of cognitive activities required in content-area instruction.

Policy
Amendments to existing policy must be made to accommodate the learning needs of groups of recent-immigrant students.

Secondary students often are placed in classes that are appropriate for meeting graduation requirements but that are inappropriate given their English proficiency. Policies need to be more flexible to allow immigrant students to earn credit for graduation. For example, a requirement to take a specific number of ESL courses in a non-credit sequence may be a disadvantage for students who could skip a course if policy allowed. District policies should be examined and, if appropriate, revised to give immigrant students sufficient opportunities to learn and graduate.

> In general, most secondary-level English language learners are seen as "beyond the purview" of a standards-based education system primarily due to their inability to understand and use English for learning. As a result, secondary-level English language learners are often given low-level, unchallenging material because they are considered unable to participate in class.

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and equipment and adequate release time for planning. Moreover, teachers are to have access to high-quality, in-depth staff development that encompasses the presentation, implementation, and refinement of innovations, teaching techniques and methodologies to improve their teaching skills and stay abreast of innovations.

In general, most secondary-level English language learners are seen as "beyond the purview" of a standards-based education system primarily due to their inability to understand and use English for learning. As a result, secondary-level English language learners are often given low-level, unchallenging material because they are considered unable to participate in class.

Support services to English language learners at the secondary level vary widely and may range from no special support within or outside the regular classroom, to the most frequently occurring offering of one period of English as a second language (ESL) instruction daily. Based on an average school year comprised of 185 days, t immigrant high school students who

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English-speaking students pass the exit test.

This is an extreme case of "assessment-driven instruction" where the test has *become* the curriculum. This "test-based" curriculum is taught and retaught in secondary schools to help students earn a passing score on the exit test. Tests may begin as early as the sophomore year of high school in order to provide students multiple opportunities to pass the test. This extreme narrowing of the curriculum may assist native English speaking students to master the content of the exit test, but it does little for English language learners who do not yet fully comprehend the language of instruction.

Reform initiatives across the country are focused on students performing to challenging standards, but opportunity-to-learn standards – which are voluntary – are generally ignored. If *all* students are to meet these high standards, schools must ensure students are provided the resources they need to learn.

The opportunity-to-learn standards in the 1994 IASA legislation must be addressed if recent-immigrant students, as

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Teacher and Counselor Preparation
Teachers must be skilled in teaching ESL.

ESL was once considered a specialty for a few who taught in metropolitan areas. But now, expertise in ESL is essential for teaching in most school systems. Teacher preparation institutions need to require ESL courses for *all* future teachers so that teachers know how to promote second language acquisition and literacy before they encounter their first teaching assignment.

Use of Tests When Making High-Stakes Decisions for Students

Bradley Scott, M.A.

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) of the U.S. Department of Education receives many requests for advice and technical assistance regarding testing. In response, it has created a document entitled, *The Use of Tests When Making High-Stakes Decisions for Students: A Resource Guide for Educators and Policy-Makers.* The need for a publication such as this is clear:

Educational stakeholders at all levels have approached the OCR requesting advice and technical assistance in a variety of test-use contexts, particularly as states and districts use tests as part of their standards-based reforms. Also, increasingly, OCR is addressing testing issues in a broader and more extensive array of complaints of discrimination that have been filed with OCR. These corresponding developments confirm the need to provide a useful resource that captures legal and test measurement principles and resources to assist educators and policy-makers (U.S. Department of Education, 2000).

The publication is available for distribution in hard copy form and can be accessed in its entirety through the OCR web site at http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCR. It is a guide that is intended for use at both the elementary and secondary school levels.

The guide addresses standardized measures generally recognized by the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (Joint Standards).* The guide does not address teacher-made tests, but the basic principles to which it adheres are still applicable even to classroom teachers in individual classrooms. Among those principles cited in the guide are:

- A test should not be used as the sole criterion for making high-stakes decisions unless it is validated for such use.
- A high-stakes decision should not be made on the basis of a single test score. Other relevant information should be taken into account if it will enhance the overall validity of the decision.
- As the stakes for testing increase for individual students, the importance of considering additional evidence to document the validity of score interpretations and fairness in testing increases accordingly.
- Educators should carefully monitor over time all of the information and other inputs that go into the decision-making process and the outcomes to ensure that there is no discrimination arising from the use of any criteria. Should any criterion be found to be discriminatory, it should be eliminated.

In addition to these general principles are a set of test measurement and use principles and legal principles that create a framework for all of the information that is contained in the two chapters of the guide. These principles are grouped under "Test Use Principles," and "Legal Principles." Under both major groups of principles are several subgroups. Detailed explanations of the two groups follow, with statements directly from the guide.

Test Use Principles

Educational Objectives and Content

"Before any state, school district, or educational entity administers a test, the objective for using it should be clear."

- *Placement Decisions*
  "Decisions concerning the appropriate educational program for a student with a disability, placement in gifted and talented programs, and access to language services are examples of placement decisions. The joint standards state there should be adequate evidence documenting the relationship among test scores, appropriate instructional programs, and beneficial student outcomes."

- *Promotion Decisions*
  "When a test given for promotion purposes is being used to certify mastery, it is important that there be evidence that the test adequately covers only the content and skills that students have actually had an opportunity to learn."

- *Graduation Decisions*
  "When large-scale standardized tests are used in making graduation decisions, there should evidence that the tests adequately cover only the content and skills that students have had an opportunity to learn."

Overarching Principles

Can the following question be answered in a way that benefits the students: Is there sufficient confidence in the test results at issue to allow for informed decisions to be made that will have specified consequences for the students taking the test? Following are criteria that should help educators and policy-makers to answer this question.

- *Measurement Validity*
  "Is a test valid for a particular purpose, and does it accurately measure the test taker's knowledge in the content area being tested?"

- *Attribution of Cause*
  "Does the student's performance on the test reflect knowledge and skills based on appropriate instruction, or is it attributable to poor instruction or to such factors as language barriers unrelated to the skills being tested?"

- *Effectiveness of Treatment*
  "Do test scores lead to placement and other consequences that are educationally beneficial?"

Legal Principles

The guide states that constitutional, statutory, and regulatory principles "form the federal legal nondiscriminatory framework applicable to the use of tests for

high-stakes purposes." Clearly, Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, Title II (ADA), and the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibit intentional discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, color, sex and disability. The guide also points to specific sections of Section 504 and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) that contain specific provisions relative to the use of high-stakes tests for individual with disabilities.

These legal bases allow three things to occur. They provide (1) a framework for the analysis of discrimination; (2) principles related to inclusion and accommodations; and (3) federal constitutional questions related to testing of elementary and secondary school students for high-stakes purposes. Details of the these topics follow.

Framework for the Analysis of Discrimination

- *Different Treatment*
  This refers to practices applied consistently to similarly situated individuals or groups regardless of their race, national origin, sex or disability.
- *Disparate Impact*
  This is when the criteria or methods of administration have the effect of subjecting individuals or groups to discrimination.

Principles Related to Inclusion and Accommodations

- *Limited-English-proficient students*
  "States or school districts using tests for high-stakes purposes must ensure that, as with all students, the tests effectively measure limited-English-proficient students' knowledge and skills in the content area being measured... It may be necessary in some situations to provide accommodations [regarding language differences] so that the tests provide accurate and valid information about the knowledge and skills intended to be measured."
- *Students with disabilities*
  Federal law requires that students with disabilities be included in statewide and districtwide assessment programs with the necessary accommodations: "There must be an individualized determination of whether a student with a disability will participate in a particular test and the appropriate accommodations, if any, that a student with a disability will need."

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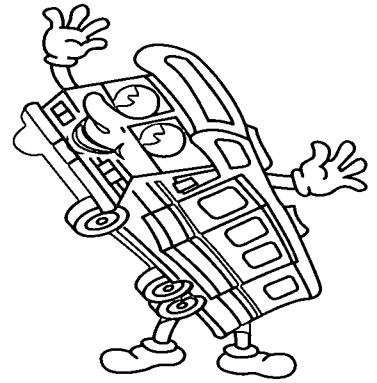**Register for a special prize!**

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This month's question is...
   What was the biggest influence in your educational success?

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Federal Constitutional Questions Related to Testing of Elementary and Secondary School Students for High-Stakes Purposes

The due process and equal protection requirements of the Fifth and 14th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution would apply to ensure appropriate decisions were made by public schools and states. The courts have examined three questions in addressing due process claims related to the use of tests: (1) Is the purpose of the testing program legitimate and reasonable? (2) Have students received adequate notice of the test and its consequences? and (3) Have students actually been taught the knowledge and skills measured by the test?

Conclusion

All of these principles serve as a basis for the content of the remainder of the guide. The first chapter focuses specifically on an in-depth explanation of the measurement principles and their application. The second chapter explains the legal principles and the law with practical examples to facilitate understanding of how the law is applied.

Educators and policy-makers can gain tremendous insight into the measurement and legal principles that may guide the Office for Civil Rights in its investigation and compliance reviews under Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 from *The Use of Tests as Part of High-Stakes Decision-Making for*

Students: A Resource Guide for Educators and Policy-Makers. The document should be used as one of the tools for local internal examination of the use of tests for high-stakes purposes. Finally, the guide contains appendices that provide excellent resources in testing and high-stakes decision-making.

The Intercultural Development Research Association's (IDRA) South Central Collaborative for Equity is the equity assistance center that serves Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. It is available to assist school districts in such a self-examination. Contact the equity assistance center at IDRA, 210-444-1710 or www.idra.org/scce.

Resources

U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. *The Use of Tests as Part of High-Stakes Decision-Making for Students: A Resource Guide for Educators and Policy-Makers* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, December 2000).

Bradley Scott, M.A., is a senior education associate in the IDRA Division of Professional Development and director of the IDRA South Central Collaborative for Equity. Comments and questions may be sent to him via e-mail at contact@idra.org.

students and staff.

Outside the buildings, uniformed students are at the bus stop, loading city buses, making conversation, and studying. Unlike many high schools in the area, the parking lot is not full. Most of the students do not own cars and use district and public transportation. Many now come from around the city just to attend Fox Tech.

People from all over Texas and the United States call to inquire about the school. Many of these calls are from teachers seeking a teaching position. Calls to the school's main switchboard are greeted by a warm recording: "Welcome to Fox Tech High School, the only National Blue Ribbon winner and "recognized" high school in the history of San Antonio Independent School District. We are beginning our 122nd year of excellence in education." The tone of the message is positive, sincere and exudes pride in the students, school and community.

As you walk into the main school building, you are reminded of a university atmosphere. The school is very quiet, extremely clean and polished. Fox Tech was just named the "Outstanding School Building of the Year" in the San Antonio Independent School District (ISD) for cleanliness. It is cheerfully decorated with student art projects and other beautiful and clearly visible work that proudly reflects the school's ethnically-diverse population. Everywhere on campus you will find displays, awards, and even an area that is a mini-park – a place for lunch, socializing and studying. The campus is spotless, there is not so much as a gum wrapper on the floor. Teachers and students alike are so proud of their school that they all do their part in keeping the school clean. Everyone becomes part of the solution.

The Wall of Fame, located on the second floor, has pictures of the many successful Fox Tech graduates. In the center sits a huge buffalo – the Fox Tech mascot – again reflecting pride of school and student ownership. As you walk into the front office, there is a warm feeling not typical of many schools. You are greeted with a friendly and sincere, "Good morning, may I help you?" Staff and students working in the front office have the same attitude of good service that is expressed in either English or Spanish. The school building and front office are both "people friendly."

Academic Focus

With the new administration and staff came the creation of "schools-within-the-school" as a means of meeting the needs of all students. The idea was to create small, caring communities within the framework of the larger school setting. Multiple academies were established, each with its own assistant principal, counselor(s), instructional guide, and core and magnet teachers.

Each academy began to create, build and establish its own program by working collaboratively and always with the students foremost in mind. The ongoing planning, evaluating and assessing of programs has resulted in a law and research academy, an applied technology academy, and a universal global academy. Ms. Cockrell comments:

> We created schools [academies] that allow students to choose what they want. Our vocational school grew so much that I had to divide it into the computer-based school and the 19th

Century Program classes, which include your basics. It is important that the students choose, but also important that they know they are not stuck in those schools. They have an opportunity to change schools if they are not happy.

In an attempt to move the concept to an even higher level by, again, focusing on the needs of the students in each academy through careful assessment, other needs were identified. These included more law-related information and courses, a more technology-based strand, and a program to assist the students who were considered as being in at-risk situations. The countless hours of careful planning, monitoring and evaluating programs focused on student needs has resulted in an assets-based model that values the students and instills pride in school, learning, community and heritage.

One of Ms. Cockrell's goals is to provide students a quality education so

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Transformation at Louis W. Fox Technical High School, San Antonio, 1994-95 to 1999-00

1994-95 School Year
Texas Education Agency disestablishes the school at the end of the school year.

1995-96 School Year
The school is re-established for the new school year with a new administration.
By the end of the year, the school is removed from "low-performing" with a new administration status in math.
The school is still rated as "low-performing" due to its 14.7 percent dropout rate in 1993-94.

1996-97 School Year
Fox Tech's dropout rate improves dramatically, according to TEA reports.
Attendance increases.

1997-98 School Year
The school is named "most improved school" by the San Antonio Independent School District.
$1,000 awarded to each teacher by the HEB grocery store chain.
The school rating is upgraded to "acceptable" by TEA.
Dropout rates and attendance improve.

1998-99 School Year
The school rating is upgraded to "acceptable-plus" by TEA.
Dropout rates and attendance continue to improve.

1999-00 School Year
Fox Tech is named a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education.
Dropout rates and attendance continue to improve.

Louis W. Fox Technical High School
Summary Data 1994-95 to 1999-00

	Texas Assessment of Academic Skills			
	├─────── Percent of Students Passing ────────┤			
	Reading	Mathematics	Writing	All Tests
1994-95	47.7	22.1	71.5	20.7
1995-96	50.3	32.1	58.1	24.0
1996-97	60.7	32.4	75.4	29.2
1997-98	73.5	65.6	84.6	57.0
1998-99	75.0	73.0	87.0	65.0
1999-00	82.0	85.0	88.0	71.0

that all students have options when they graduate, "When they change their minds at 19- or 20-years-old and decide they want to go on to a higher education, they will have the background to do it."

Fox Tech has different courses in leadership. Student's electives are geared to their needs.

Instructional programs are carefully selected and given the resources needed to succeed. If they do not work for the students, they are discarded. Fox Tech does not "force-fit" a program. If the program does not address students' characteristics, then the program is not used. Ms. Cockrell comments on the strategy: "You can call it an individual plan for each student. This is for every child, not just for special education or the gifted and talented."

Leadership

The principal at Fox Tech advocates a leadership attitude that is straightforward, where students and teachers are to be respected and offices have an open door policy. Students, teachers and parents know that the principal is there to listen when they need to voice either praise or concerns.

Ms. Cockrell also emphasizes the importance of pride. The students must have pride in themselves, in their community, and in their school. She says: "The school was the worst in the state. That tells you that there was no pride in self or school. We found people who had a vision of pride and began instilling that pride in the students."

Teacher Quality

Preparing students for success 'es adapting, having a good attitude,

and giving the students priority. Ms. Cockrell and her staff make every decision based on these three things. Adapting to new techniques and continuous learning by her staff are priorities to Ms. Cockrell.

She is also concerned with hiring and retaining new teachers:

All our new teachers in this district are involved in a mentorship program since we know we lose them in the first five years. I meet with them and their mentor often and I get feedback. Teaching school now is 50 times harder than it was when I became a teacher. You have to keep current just like you have to keep current in any position.

A teacher's attitude is another focus of Fox Tech's success. Ms. Cockrell explains:

When I hire somebody, I hire their attitude. If they have the right attitude toward teaching, it goes a long way toward making up for any other shortcomings. I always want to see the strengths in teachers, and I practice an assets-based model with staff and value them always. No person is a born teacher, you make yourself a good teacher through attitude and learning. I want my teachers to keep current in the loop and be part of the solution. When teachers have demonstrated to me that they no longer are interested in our children, then perhaps it is time for them to seek a position elsewhere. We do not hire people who cannot stay here for 25 years.

Making the students first on the list of priorities has helped make Fox Tech a success. Teachers are very involved with their students. One way the teachers

monitor students is by calling their homes. Teachers must call the homes of all the students enrolled in their second period class at the beginning of the year. They check attendance and give parents the opportunity to correct the home phone numbers. Teachers are also expected to call home and personally invite parents to the "distinguished graduates night" in October. They are asked to call home when there are problems and make notes of any responses from the parents.

The teachers at Fox Tech also make a point of showing the students they are valued by attending events hosted by the school. Ms. Cockrell says:

I rely on the commitment from teachers to support the children outside the classroom as well. Our students know teachers are not paid for the extra time they spend outside of the classroom in the evening, standing by the sidelines, rooting them on or attending an event that involves after-school hours.

Teachers at Fox Tech are at the school 185 days of the year, and there are as many as two or three events per day. Teachers are asked to attend at least 10 events per year. Ms. Cockrell also makes sure to recognize teachers who go above the required attendance and support. Children need to know their teachers care and that they come first. This commitment from teachers is critical.

Accountability

According to Ms. Cockrell, everyone — custodians, cafeteria personnel, paraprofessionals, teachers, administrators and students — at Fox Tech is accountable for its success or failure.

Each one of the academies has an instructional guide, an assistant principal, and at least one counselor. They work with the same students all the time. It is the responsibility of the instructional guide to look at the quality of teaching and to assess the curriculum. Proper implementation of the curriculum is critical for maximum student impact. Therefore, the instructional guide helps ensure that the teachers and the curriculum are a good fit.

Students are responsible for their own success. Ms. Cockrell has a system of naming each class of students for a specific positive trait. She says: "One group that was recognized was a particularly tough group when they were freshmen. I spoke

with them, and the staff and I decided that the class was really gifted, and we had to change to work with them." After working with the class for some time, they were named the "Dream Class." This was appropriate because they first had to dream of what they could accomplish. With support and affirmation from the staff, the Dream Class members developed their goals. Ms. Cockrell says with pride, "Of course, they tested the highest in the district."

Students show their drive through collaboration and support of each other. An example of this philosophy presented itself when the Dream Class won a reward – not having to wear their uniforms for four weeks – because they were recognized on the TAAS. After the class won the reward, they requested that one of their prize weeks go to the sophomore class to support them and challenge them to do better.

Students dropping out of school is a serious issue for the school. Ms. Cockrell says: "No student can withdraw from school without having a conference with me. We want to encourage them to stay in school, but if there is no other alternative, we always leave the door open to welcome them back." The entire staff is challenged to prevent students from dropping out in the first place and bringing them back if they do leave.

Summary

Fox Tech has made an amazing turn around, going from the lowest ranking school in the state to being nationally recognized in a short five years. Based on my personal observations of the school, interviews with the principal, and conversations with staff members and students, I surmised the following as contributing to Fox Tech's success.

Five years ago when the school was re-established, failure was not an option. By carefully selecting staff, the principal was able to instill a path to success. As a group, they were going to do whatever was necessary to *succeed* rather than to follow a path to *keep from failing*.

Fox Tech has shown that there is no room or time to blame students, community, parents, or the economic level of the student population for a school not being successful. Their approach has been one of not placing blame on anyone and not falling in love with their problems. Rather, group – including students and

parents – they came up with solutions. Programs were carefully screened, and curriculum was heavily monitored. These measures were viewed not as ways to create a convenient situation for staff but as ways for meeting the needs of the students.

Lastly, the process of change was created not by exerting the staff's or the district's wills on the students. It was not about holding an external power of fear over the students and community. The change process was about true human power of the principal, staff, students and community working collaboratively in an environment based on mutual respect, understanding, compassion and good intention.

Resources

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. "Talking Points – Turning Around Low-Performing Schools," documents from the OESE leadership team (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, October 2000).

Cárdenas, J.A., and A.M. Montemayor, M. del Refugio Robledo, A.L. Trujillo (eds). *Successful Schooling for Economically Disadvantaged At-Risk Youth* (Austin, Texas: Texas Education Agency, 1989).

Rogelio López del Bosque is the marketing coordinator in the IDRA Division of Professional Development. Comments and questions may be directed to him via e-mail at contact@idra.org.

Seven Characteristics of High-Performing Schools

- High-performing schools set **high standards** for student achievement and plan curriculum and assessment based upon those standards.

- High-performing schools **hold teachers and administrators accountable** for meeting school goals.

- High-performing schools create a **safe, orderly environment** that allows students to concentrate on academics.

- High-performing schools **maximize time spent on instruction**.

- High-performing schools have teachers and administrators who are **committed to the philosophy and mission of their schools** and who have **access to quality professional development** that helps them achieve that mission.

- High-performing schools have high levels of **parent and community involvement**.

- High-performing schools have the **freedom of flexibility in curriculum design**, as well as in making personnel and finance decisions.

– Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. "Talking Points – Turning Around Low-Performing Schools," documents from the OESE leadership team (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, October 2000).

Mark your calendar

April 24-26, 2001

Pre-institute: April 23, 2001

San Antonio Airport Hilton

Eighth Annual

IDRA *La Semana del Niño*
Early Childhood Educators Institute™

"Valuing and Capitalizing on the Linguistic and Cultural Assets of a Diverse Student Population"

The popular Eighth Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Early Childhood Educators Institute offers a valuable series of information-packed professional development sessions that are customized to capitalize on the linguistic and cultural assets brought forth by a diverse student population. This year's event will focus on building reading concepts and skills of young learners. Topics include: literacy, technology, social development, curriculum, and dual language. Ms. Cami Jones, director of early childhood education at the Texas Education Agency, will be a featured speaker focusing on the pre-kindergarten curriculum guidelines in Texas. Another featured speaker, Ms. Margarita Robledo, is the author of more than 50 children's books and recipient of national awards in Mexico and the United States.

You can also take this opportunity to visit model early childhood centers. These visits provide you with the opportunity to share ideas while seeing them in action. Institute participants will travel to high-performing, high-minority sites in the San Antonio area that are effectively working with diverse learners. Two school visits (one each on Wednesday and Thursday) are available to paid institute registrants on a first come, first served basis. Transportation will be provided. You also will have the opportunity to interact with parents to discuss ideas to form effective learning partnerships.

The action-packed schedule begins at 8:00 a.m. each morning and continues through 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, and 2:30 p.m. on Thursday. The institute includes luncheon sessions on Tuesday and Thursday.

Special Activities

Pre-Institute on Reading and Dual Language Programs - Monday, April 23

IDRA will convene a panel of reading experts to provide teaching and classroom management ideas designed to strengthen your approach to developing literacy in more than one language. Dr. Josefina Villamil Tinajero, associate dean of the College of Education at the University of Texas at El Paso, will present the keynote at the luncheon. She is a noted author and leader in the field of bilingual education. This one-day pre-institute takes place on Monday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and includes a luncheon session.

Parent Institute - Thursday, April 26

This one-day event will concentrate on the challenges in early childhood education and how to maximize parent leadership. Parents and educators will dialogue on ways to focus their leadership to enhance early childhood learning.

Eighth Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Early Childhood Educators Institute™

Registration Form

YES I will attend the Eighth Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Early Childhood Educators Institute.
(Please use one form per person. Feel free to make copies of this form.)

Name _____

School or Organization _____

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Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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$_____ Total enclosed   PO # _____

Fees Before March 15
___ $175 institute registration, April 24-26, 2001*

___ $75 pre-institute registration, April 23, 2001**

___ $225 discounted institute and pre-institute registration

___ $15 parent institute registration, April 26, 2001

Fees After March 15
___ $195 institute registration, April 24-26, 2001*

___ $95 pre-institute registration, April 23, 2001**

___ $240 discounted institute and pre-institute registration

___ $15 parent institute registration, April 26, 2001

Register **on-line** with a purchase order number at *www.idra.org*

Mail form with a check or purchase order to IDRA at 5835 Callaghan Road, #350 San Antonio, Texas 78228-1190 Attention: Carol Chávez

Fax form with a purchase order to IDRA at 210-444-1714 Attention: Carol Chávez

* Includes institute sessions, Tuesday and Thursday luncheons, two school visits [for first paid registrants], and materials.

** Includes pre-institute sessions, luncheon and materials.

Make payable to: Intercultural Development Research Association. A purchase order number may be used to reserve space. Full payment prior to the institute is expected.

Video Conference on Family Issues – Wednesday, April 25

Parents, community liaisons and community resource personnel across the state will come together to celebrate the International Week of the Young Child with a long distance conversation focusing on parent leadership and outreach. The video conference will be held at participating Texas regional education service centers. If you are interested in attending at your local video conference site and cannot attend the institute, contact Yojani Hernández at IDRA (210/444-1710) for details.

Hotel Information

The institute will be held at the San Antonio Airport Hilton. The hotel is offering a special rate of $96 per night for a single or double room, $106 per night for three to a room and $116 per night for four to a room (plus state and local taxes), based on availability. The hotel reservation deadline for the reduced rate is April 13, 2001. Call 1-877-377-7227 to make reservations. Be sure to reference the Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Early Childhood Educators Institute in order to qualify for the special rate.

Institute Sponsors

IDRA is pleased to bring you this Eighth Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Early Childhood Educators Institute. Supporting IDRA projects include:

- IDRA **South Central Collaborative for Equity** (the equity assistance center that serves Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas),
- **RE-CONNECT** (the parent information resource center at IDRA that serves Texas), and
- **STAR Center** (the comprehensive regional assistance center that serves Texas via a collaboration of IDRA, the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin, and RMC Research Corporation).

Each of these IDRA projects provides specialized training and technical assistance to public schools. Information on how your campus can use these resources to improve instruction and assessment will be available at the institute and may also be obtained by calling IDRA at 210/444-1710 or by visiting IDRA's web site (www.idra.org).

Teachers and counselors must understand the background and culture of their students.

Future teachers also need to know how to instruct students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The unwitting violation of cultural norms can inhibit learning. Education ethnographies are an excellent resource for teachers to learn how education is provided in the students' culture of origin and the role that parents play in their children's education.

Teachers and counselors must understand the basic issues of educational linguistics.

Counselors often are the first people immigrant students meet after they register. In order for counselors to make appropriate decisions about students' placement in programs of study and for teachers to best serve students, they must be grounded in a number of issues:

• how second languages are acquired in natural settings and best learned in the classroom;
• the relationship between language proficiency and academic achievement;
• sources of cultural bias in classroom texts, materials, and tests; and
• the relationship between first- and second-language literacy.

One study found that high school counselors of immigrant students who lacked appropriate background knowledge served as gatekeepers and underestimated students' potential, which negatively affected students' ability to complete school (Suárez-Orozco, 1989). Rarely did these counselors give students information about post-secondary schooling.

One way to ensure that immigrant students receive high-quality, consistent counseling is to have a bilingual counselor advise all recent-immigrant students and follow their progress instead of distributing them among various counselors.

Students are more likely to succeed when teachers and counselors have high expectations for them and when they are in courses that build on their past learning experiences. A counselor who can readily communicate with these students and who understands the dynamics that affect students' success can greatly facilitate students' mastery of academic standards. This relationship also can help improve communication with students' families, because they may be able to interact more easily with a bilingual counselor.

School staff must be able to explain, in the students' native language, what standards are, what is expected, and what goes on in a standards-based classroom.

Some secondary-level recent-immigrant students may not understand why they have to attend school, let alone meet standards. An immigrant student, for example, may not have attended school for several years prior to entering a U.S. high school because basic education in his or her native country was considered complete at a much earlier age. Another student may have left school to help support his or her family's line of work. Many immigrant students also have difficulty understanding how U.S. classrooms typically are structured. They may be accustomed to very traditional schools that require them to memorize and restate lecture material. These students need help understanding and adjusting to performance-based classrooms where they evaluate their own work or work on collaborative projects that receive group grades.

School staff must be able to communicate with families in their native language about academic standards.

The importance of parent involvement in facilitating students' learning is a constant theme in the IASA legislation. Unfortunately, parent involvement is commonly taken from a deficit approach as evidenced by the types of topics frequently offered in parent outreach efforts (e.g., "How to Be a Better Parent"). In order for parents to support their children in a standards-based system, however, they need to understand academic standards and why they are important. In addition to explaining standards to parents in their native language, inviting parents into the classroom to observe will help them understand what is expected of their children. (For information on IDRA's valuing approach to parent involvement, see RE-CONNECT, the parent involvement resource center that serves Texas, at www.idra.org.)

Practice
An in-take process must obtain an academic history of the child apart from school transcripts and test scores.

Students should be interviewed regarding their academic background and personal learning history. These interviews also can be used to begin building collaborative relationships between home

and school. For example, an interview can be an opportunity to learn more about areas of specialized knowledge that family members possess or students' recent work experience, which many secondary students have had in their country of origin.

Framing instruction around these areas can increase students' motivation and opportunities for participation. As Moll et al. suggest, working-class families without high levels of education possess high-level knowledge associated with earning a living, which can be used as a springboard for instruction (1990). Inviting parents to demonstrate and speak about their skills in the classroom acknowledges their skills and gives them the opportunity to participate in their children's learning.

Sufficient planning time during the school day must exist for teachers to collaborate with colleagues and support services.

Due to the departmentalized nature of high schools and the large number of students that teachers see daily, teachers need school time to collaborate with colleagues about students' academic and social situations. Recent-immigrant students and their families require many services from a variety of sources, both inside and outside of the school. Students who lack food, clothes, social services, and medical services or whose families do not have electricity cannot be expected to achieve academic standards until these basic necessities are adequately met.

Relationships must exist with community-based agencies, businesses, and other organizations that give students opportunities to learn, graduate, and gain employment or pursue post-secondary study.

Community organizations have valuable resources to contribute to schools in terms of experience, personnel, and fresh ways of approaching education issues. In addition, they often have volunteers who are proficient in the languages spoken in the community and can provide connections to social services and work opportunities for students.

For the last 10 years, the reform movement has been occupied with two activities: (1) setting standards and (2) assessing progress toward them. These have been relatively easy tasks for schools and districts compared to what they must now address: providing all children with

equal opportunities to learn identified standards.

The IASA reference to "all children" must be taken seriously. All children can perform to challenging standards if they are provided the necessary opportunities to learn. Opportunity-to-learn standards *cannot* be voluntary. Recent immigrant students and other groups of students have unique circumstances that must be addressed, in part by opportunity-to-learn standards. Leadership around this issue is essential for educational excellence for *all* to become a reality.

Resources

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Pam McCollum, Ph.D. is a senior education associate in the IDRA Division of Professional Development. Comments and questions may be ed to her via e-mail at contact@idra.org.

Accountability

Accountability is one of the most prominent issues in education policy today. Accountability mechanisms create incentives for educators to focus on important outcomes. They also provide a means for allocating resources, such as instructional assistance, to schools in which performance measures indicate problems.

In designing accountability mechanisms, states and districts must first determine an adequate level of progress for schools. Measures of adequate yearly progress should include a range of indicators, including indicators of instructional quality as well as student outcomes. In addition, the criterion for adequate yearly progress should be based on evidence from the highest-performing schools with significant proportions of disadvantaged students.

Accountability should follow responsibility: teachers and administrators – individually and collectively – should be held accountable for their part in improving student performance. Teachers and administrators should be held accountable for the progress of their students. Districts and states should be held accountable for the professional development and support they provide teachers and schools to enable students to reach high standards.

Accountability provides a way to focus assistance to schools. Assistance should be aimed at strengthening schools' capacity for educating all students to high standards and to building the internal accountability within schools. Without developing school capacity, accountability leads to inappropriate practices, such as efforts to increase test scores without improving student learning.

Education improvement systems continually change, based on new knowledge and new circumstances. States and districts should continually monitor and review their systems to determine where improvements are needed and make the changes necessary to improve educational opportunities for all children, and particularly for the disadvantaged children Title 1 was established to support.

Recommendations

- Accountability should follow responsibility: teachers and administrators – individually and collectively – should be held accountable for their part in improving student performance. Teachers and administrators should be accountable for the progress of their students. Districts and states should be accountable for the professional development and support they provide teachers and schools to enable students to reach high standards.
- Accountability decisions should be based on multiple indictors.
- Accountability mechanisms should be based on a range of measures, including indicators of instructional quality, as well as student outcomes.
- Accountability results should be reported so that the improvements needed are clear to students, teachers, and parents.
- Accountability mechanisms should encourage schools to improve all students' performance.
- Assistance should be aimed at strengthening schools' capacity for education all students to high standards and to building the internal accountability within schools.

Source: National Research Council. *Testing, Teaching, and Learning: A Guide for States and School Districts* (Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1999).

Resources on Accountability

Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs in Texas –
What Is Known; What is Needed
Albert Cortez, Ph.D., and Maria Robledo Montecel, Ph.D.
> These programs manage more than 90,000 pupils a year in Texas and cost millions of state taxpayer dollars. But we know very little of what they do, much less how (or how well) they do it. This brief includes policy recommendations, findings at a glance, the national picture, an overview of the Texas policy, findings examined, and a closer look at one school (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 1999; $7; free online at http://www.idra.org/Research/alted.htm).

Ensuring Accuracy in Testing for English Language Learners
Rebecca J. Kopriva
> This resource provides guidance to states, districts, and test publishers about developing, selecting, or adapting large-scale, standardized assessments of educational achievement that are appropriate and valid for English language learners (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2000).

Failing Our Children – Finding Alternatives for In-Grade Retention
Pam McCollum, Ph.D.; Albert Cortez, Ph.D.; Oanh H. Maroney, M.A.; and Felix Montes, Ph.D.
> This policy brief presents an in-depth look at the issue of in-grade retention (particularly in Texas), reviews research that finds this practice to be ineffective, and outlines alternatives to both retention and social promotion. It includes policy recommendations, findings at a glance, the national scene, a look back at Texas, findings examined (including alternatives to retention), and interviews of school personnel (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 1999; $7; free online at http://www.idra.org/Research/ingrade.htm).

Guidance on Standards, Assessments, and Accountability
http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/StandardsAssessment
> This is a document from the U.S. Department of Education to state education agencies, school districts, and schools regarding the new provisions on standards and assessments, adequate yearly progress, and accountability in Title I. It also discusses the transition period during which a state may use transitional assessments while it moves toward its final system of assessments.

Handbook for the Development of Performance Standards:
Meeting the Requirements of Title I with Council of Chief State School Officers
> This handbook describes the best practices and current research on the development of academic performance standards for K-12 schools (Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, 1998).

High Stakes: Testing for Tracking, Promotion and Graduation
Jay P. Heubert and Robert M. Hauser eds.
> Discusses how tests should be planned, designed, implemented, reported and used for a variety of educational policy goals. Focuses on the uses of tests that make high-stake decisions about individuals and on how to ensure appropriate test use (Washington, D.C.: National Research Council, National Academy Press, 1999).

Missing: Texas Youth – Dropout and Attrition Rates in Texas Public High Schools
Josie Danini Supik, M.A., and Roy L. Johnson, M.S.
> This policy brief presents an in-depth look at the dropout issue in Texas: More than 1.2 million students have been lost from Texas public schools to attrition from 1985-86 to 1997-98; The state of Texas loses $319 billion in foregone income, lost tax revenues and increased criminal justice, welfare, unemployment and job training costs. This brief includes policy recommendations, findings at a glance, the national picture, a look back at Texas, findings examined, and a profile of the IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 1999; $7; free online at http://www.idra.org/Research/dropout.htm).

Myths and Tradeoffs: The Role of Tests In Undergraduate Admissions
Alexandra Beatty, M.R.C. Greenwood and Robert L. Linn eds.
> Four recommendations regarding test use for admission are made to colleges and universities, including a warning to schools to avoid using scores as more precise and accurate measures of college readiness than they are (Washington D.C.: National Research Council, National Academy Press, 1999).

Students for Sale – The Use of Public Money for Private Schooling
Albert Cortez, Ph.D.; Josie D. Supik, M.A.; Anna Alicia Romero; and Christie L. Goodman, APR
> This policy brief examines the dangers of public-funded voucher programs for children and neighborhood public schools. It includes policy recommendations, findings at a glance, the national picture (including an overview of litigation), findings examined, and interviews of parents (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 1999; $7; free online at http://www.idra.org/Research/voucher.htm).

Testing, Teaching and Learning:
A Guide for States and School Districts
*Richard F. Elmore and Robert Rothman eds.*
> This practical guide assists states and school districts in developing challenging standards for student performance and assessment as specified by Title I. It discusses standards-based reform and specifies components of an education improvement system, which are standards, assessments, accountability and monitoring the conditions of instruction (Washington D.C.: National Research Council, National Academy Press, 1999).

A Toolkit for Using Data to Improve Schools: Raise Student Achievement by Incorporating Data Analysis in School Planning
> The resources in this toolkit enable school and district personnel to collect, understand, and use data for creating and revising school action plans designed to increase student achievement. Special emphasis has been placed on schoolwide planning and raising achievement for traditionally low performing students. Hard copy available for $22 to high poverty schools and districts in New England, and for $35 to all others. Cost includes guide and data discs for both PC and Mac (New England Comprehensive Center, 1998; 800-332-0226).

For additional resources, Internet links, etc., visit the IDRA Field Trip

www.idra.org
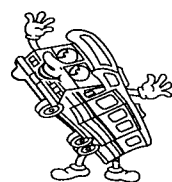
Selected Articles in the *IDRA Newsletter* on Accountability

"Analysis of Educational Equity: Community Seeks Direction for Diversity," by Dr. María Robledo Montecel (March 1997)
http://www.idra.org/Newslttr/1997/Mar/Cuca.htm#Analysis

"Bilingual Intelligence Testing," by Dr. José A. Cárdenas (January 1995)
http://www.idra.org/Newslttr/1995/Jan/JAC.htm#Art8

"Education Reform: Schools Need a New Attitude," by Dr. José A. Cárdenas (November-December 1993)
http://www.idra.org/Newslttr/1993/Nov/JAC.htm#Art3

"Improving Student Performance: Study Identifies Better Approach," by Dr. María Robledo Montecel, Josie D. Supik and José A. Cárdenas (October 1994) http://www.idra.org/Newslttr/1994/Oct/Cuca.htm#Art1

"Issues in Accountability Testing on LEP Students: Reflections on the Policy Making Process," by Dr. Adela Solís (June-July 1995)

"Program Evaluation and Title VII Programs: Some Guiding Ideas," by Dr. Adela Solís (January 2000)
http://www.idra.org/Newslttr/2000/Jan/Adela.htm#Art6

"School-Student Performance and Accountability," by Dr. José A. Cárdenas (October 1998)
http://www.idra.org/Newslttr/1998/Oct/JAC.htm#Art1

"Significant and Worthwhile Changes in Educational Evaluation: Putting Value in Education," by Josie D. Supik (September 1999) http://www.idra.org/Newslttr/1999/Sep/Josie.htm#Art2

"Why Better Isn't Enough: A Closer Look at TAAS Gains," by Dr. Albert Cortez (March 2000)
http://www.idra.org/Newslttr/2000/Mar/Albert.htm#Art1

HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT IDRA ACTIVITIES

In November and December, IDRA worked with **12,854** teachers, administrators, parents, and higher education personnel through **118** training and technical assistance activities and **276** program sites in **18** states plus the United Kingdom and Brazil. Topics included:
+ Goals of Equity
+ Integrating Technology into the Classroom
+ Assessing Racial and Gender Bias in Curriculum
+ *Starting Today... Steps to Success for Beginning Bilingual Educators*
+ How Families Help Student Success

Participating agencies and school districts included:
◇ Jemez Mountain Schools, New Mexico
◇ Midland Independent School District (ISD), Texas
◇ Texas Education Service Center, Region XIV
◇ New Orleans Parish, Louisiana
◇ New Braunfels ISD, Texas

Activity Snapshot

The Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) has been working with several schools to redesign and re-energize their reading programs to be more responsive to the characteristics of their diverse learners. In this three-year IDRA reading program, known as **FLAIR** (Focusing on Language and Academic Instructional Renewal), IDRA provides technical assistance that includes classroom demonstrations and observations of effective teaching strategies, coaching for success, nurturing of innovations, and guidance for finding funding options. FLAIR capitalizes on each school's strengths to increase reading scores, weave reading throughout the curriculum and recapture students' love of reading. The participants have become reinvigorated by this new instructional method that is based on three principles: active involvement, validating students and guidance.

Regularly, IDRA staff provides services to:
+ public school teachers
+ parents
+ administrators
+ other decision makers in public education

Services include:
◇ training and technical assistance
◇ evaluation
◇ serving as expert witnesses in policy settings and court cases
◇ publishing research and professional papers, books, videos and curricula

For information on IDRA services for your school district or other group, contact IDRA at 210/444-1710.

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: A GENERATION OF ADVOCACY

BY DR. JOSÉ A. CÁRDENAS

This compilation includes 92 articles on multicultural education published during a 25-year period. Dr. José A. Cárdenas is the founder of IDRA, was its executive director for 20 years and now serves as director emeritus of the organization. The book provides a historical overview of his involvement in the most significant issues in multicultural education as a teacher, administrator and an active advocate of children.

Articles are organized into 10 chapters dealing with each of 10 major issues in multicultural education. Each chapter is accompanied by a bibliography and appropriate discussion questions. The book also contains five cumulative indices of authors, court cases, legislation, organizations and topics.

Multicultural Education is a reading imperative for teachers, administrators, teacher trainers and policy formulators interested in providing equal educational opportunity to all segments of the school population.

Topics Included:

- minority education
- bilingual education
- education of undocumented children
- school dropouts
- retentions in grade
- early childhood education
- science, math and technology
- standardized testing
- school reform
- a new educational paradigm

Multicultural Education
A Generation of Advocacy
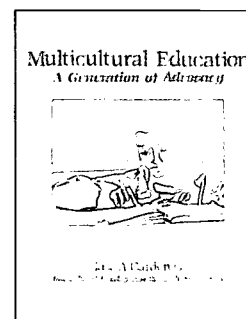
(ISBN 0-536-58760-4; 1995; 134 pages; hardback; $38)

Intercultural Development Research Association
5835 Callaghan Road, Suite 350, San Antonio, Texas 78228;
Phone 210/444-1710; Fax 210/444-1714; e-mail: contact@idra.org. *It is IDRA policy that all orders totalling less than $30 be pre-paid.*

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Inside this Issue:

Transitions from Schools to College – Getting There from Here

Albert Cortez, Ph.D.

The fact that we are still discussing and focusing on Latino student access and school completion issues – four decades after these issues came to the fore in this country – says something about how far we have come and how much further we have to go. While the data show that more Latino and other minority students are enrolling in college, this is actually a result of an ever-expanding number of Latino school-age persons who enlarge the eligible pool of college students.

Looking beyond the raw numbers to percentages, recent data suggest that the inroads that Latinos were making in college enrollment in the 1960s in Texas had begun to erode by the 1980s and remained stagnant or actually declined after that period. More recently, as a result of the anti-affirmative action *Hopwood vs. Texas* decision and Proposition 207 in California, states with high numbers of Latino and minority pupils have accelerated recent proportional declines.

Population Shift, Accountability Shift

While data have long tracked the negative trend in Latino school completion and college enrollment and graduation, few people seemed concerned about it. Schools were not rated on the basis of their minority school completion or college enrollment rates. Too often when enrollment and graduation data were collected they were not disaggregated by ethnic and racial groups and not used to hold schools or colleges accountable.

Why were such data not collected, counted and reported? Critics of the system would contend that minority student counts were not examined because, in the eyes of major decision-makers, they do not matter. If Latino college enrollment and completion did not matter before, why is it on the minds of many policymakers now?

Those close to the issue point to the growing presence of Latinos, not only in states with already high Latino concentrations such as Texas and California but also in other states around the country. As a result of these population shifts, efforts to increase Latino college enrollment and completion are now charged with a greater sense of urgency and a recognition that time is running out for any large scale efforts to change the status of these students.

Steve Murdock is a highly-regarded Texas A&M University demographer who has been analyzing Texas education and the related economic trend data. Murdock has long warned that unless we change existing kindergarten through grade 12 Latino student graduation and college completion rates, Texas and most other major states face the prospect of overall reductions in college-level enrollments. (See box on Page 15).

Beyond higher education however, he warns that this lack of attention to Latino education will lead to declines in worker skill levels and decreases in average
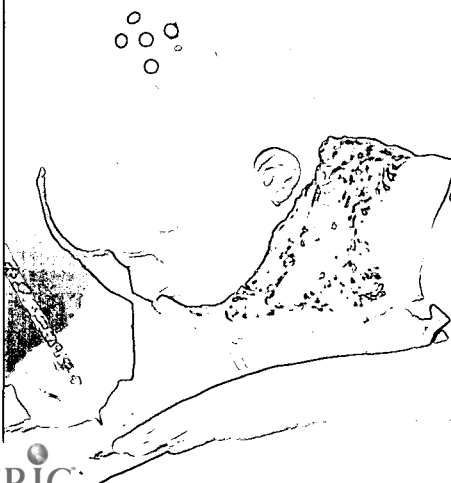
From School to College - continued from page 1

incomes – which results in reduced markets for goods and services and increased health, social and criminal justice related costs (Murdock et al., 1997). To change those projections in the upcoming decades, states, schools, colleges and local communities must begin to improve their track records now.

Major Transitional Issues

It is important that we consider what we have learned regarding Latino student high school graduation, college recruitment, admission and graduation over the last four decades. Clearly critical transition points play a key role in the process. The transition issues that confronted earlier generations are as much a challenge for today's non-traditional students as they were to students in the 1960s. These transitional issues include the following:

*   academic alignment or non-alignment across levels within the k-12 system, and between the high school and college levels;
*   high quantity and quality of information delivered on college admissions requirements;
*   high quantity and quality of communicated information about financial aid programs, application procedures and support in completion of all the related paperwork;
*   improved college recruitment efforts and coordinated k-12 to college

> *The transition issues that confronted earlier generations are as much a challenge for today's non-traditional students as they were to students in the 1960s.*

transition activities;
*   transitioning support – to include both academic and social/psychological supports to help new students persist beyond their first two semesters;
*   greater alignment and collaboration between two- and four-year institutions to facilitate and support the transition of pupils;
*   the creation of new and expanded partnerships that include k-12 schools, higher education, local business community, and community-based organizations;
*   engagement of the whole family in college enrollment and graduation efforts – recognizing that all members play a vital role in the students' ability to enroll and persist in higher education;
*   systemic strategies for monitoring student progress, which informs critical intervention points; and
*   accountability mechanisms that hold institutions and the larger community

accountable for quantifiable outcomes.

Many of these transitional issues have been the subject of extensive discussions for decades, yet remain unresolved. What accounts for this persistent recalcitrance among all levels of the educational pipeline?

Middle School to High School Transitions

Not too long ago, many first and second generation Latino students grew up in families with limited incomes, in poor neighborhoods served by under-funded schools. Older siblings did not make it past the ninth grade, and if a few managed to graduate, lacking both the money and information needed to enroll in college, they went to work, got married, and started families before they turned 20 years old. No one looked for these students when they missed a considerable number of days or did not come back to school after the end of summer. In a short time, many were too far behind to ever consider returning. Enrolled in schools that were often over-crowded and not held accountable for students lost from the system, they became *desaparecidos* – those who disappeared – at least from the school systems.

Research on causes of school dropouts has evolved over time from ascribing the problem entirely to individual student characteristics to a new socially-based construct. Unfortunately, this approach continues to attribute the root

From School to College - continued on page 12

Community and Parent Involvement in Education

Micaela Díaz-Sánchez

September 2000 marked the 50-year anniversary of Dr. José A. Cárdenas' life as a professional educator. Immediately after graduation from the University of Texas at Austin in 1950, Dr. Cárdenas started as a science teacher in the Laredo Public Schools. After a two-year stint in the U.S. Army, he resumed his teaching career in the Edgewood Independent School District in San Antonio.

Additional classroom teaching was soon augmented by various supervisory and administrative positions leading to the superintendency of the district from 1969 to 1973. Dr. Cárdenas' work in public schools was supplemented by many years of full- and part-time college teaching and almost 30 years in educational research and development.

In 1973, Dr. Cárdenas resigned as superintendent and founded the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) (formerly Texans for Educational Excellence). IDRA was founded to undertake school finance reform advocacy and now works with people to create self-renewing schools

that value and empower all children, families and communities.

IDRA celebrates these 50 years of contributions to the improvement of educational opportunities for children with a series of conversations with Dr. Cárdenas and members of the IDRA staff published in the *IDRA Newsletter*. This issue's conversation focuses on Dr. Cárdenas' experiences regarding community and parent involvement in education.

As a new member of the IDRA staff, I have been most impressed with the organization's philosophy of working with parents. Staff members have developed approaches that value and build on the contributions and strengths of parents as leaders to create excellent educational opportunities for their children.

The deficit model that views parents and families as entities that must be "fixed" as opposed to one that values them as critical leaders and decision makers continues to be a problem in many school parent involvement programs. With 50 years

in education, Dr. Cárdenas has struggled with this issue in many contexts – from parent to superintendent.

What were the general sentiments on community involvement when you began teaching?

In 1950, there was very little community involvement in the schools. As long as the parent was not called by the school, you assumed the child was doing well. If you did have a call from the school, it was bad news.

I could say that during the first five years of my professional life, I cannot remember having communicated with any of the parents of the children I taught. There may have been some more communication with the school among middle- or upper-class families, but among the lower socioeconomic class families, there was absolutely no communication other than report cards.

What were some of the guidelines of parent involvement that you were given by the school's administration?

I don't think we ever had any teacher preparation, pre-service or in-service training that dealt with parents. The administrators dealt with the parents. They did not give us any guidelines.

When you became an administrator, what were the guidelines you were given?

It was a public relations affair. Keep the parents happy, and things will go well in the school. It used to be a byline. A lot of my fellow administrators used the phrase, "Keep the parents happy and you will have no problems in the school."

Some of the administrators went to great lengths to keep the parents happy, mostly through the PTA [parent-teacher association] or some similar forum. There were some innovations tried with teacher-parent conferences. For the most part they were not very effective. Parents and teachers had a hard time communicating.

First, research shows that teachers, when communicating with parents, tend to go into very technical language and concepts

Parent Involvement - continued on page 4

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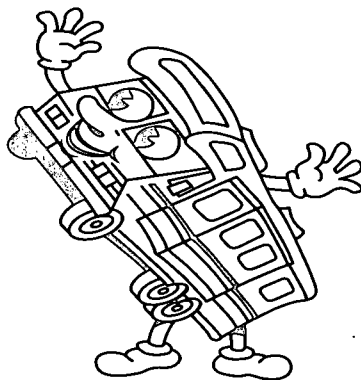✧ Internet links

Register for a special prize!

Answer the question of the month!
Each month we will ask a new question for readers online. A sample of responses will be posted online.

This month's question is...
  What policies within your school or institution are most supportive of student success?

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March 2001   IDRA Newsletter

that have very little meaning to the parents. Second, teachers are very reluctant to point out weaknesses on the part of the student, and say everything is going fine in spite of the consequences to the child. And third, there is a tendency for teachers to discuss the problems of other teachers, rather than their own problems.

The initial effort of establishing teacher-parent communication in the school system was supposed to be through the report card. These were some of the initial problems. As the school-community relations grew more sophisticated, there were more and better teacher-parent conferences.

What were some policy milestones in the development of school-community relations?

Some of the milestones were federal programs that were implemented in the 1960s, such as the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* of 1965, which included bilingual education, and Title I for the disadvantaged. In many of the federal regulations there was a requirement that there be parent involvement in the implementation of the program. So parent advisory groups were formed because they were mandatory. In fact, one of the characteristics of the civil rights movement was the involvement of parents in the administration of the school.

What are your thoughts on school change as a result of community involvement?

I don't think the biggest change came as a result of the interaction of the schools and parents. In the United States we have a very elitist system of education made up of the "haves" and the "have-nots." The "have-nots" did very poorly in school. I think there was a lot of rationalization, and we were blaming the victim for the failures. The victim in this case was told frequently by the school that the reason for the student's failure was the lack of parental interest in the school.

I think we have had an expansion in that thinking as we try to explain some of the continued failures of the school in what I call "deficit models." There are deficit models for kids, and we used these in the 1960s as the reason for minority and disadvantaged kids not being educated. The reason for the student doing poorly was attributed to the characteristics of the student. There now has been some movement away from the characteristics of the student to the

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...One of the characteristics of the civil rights movement was the involvement of parents in the administration of the school.

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characteristics of the family.

Therefore "these" people are understood to not be interested in the education of their kids, to not be willing to cooperate with the school, and to not do the things for their kids to be successful. For example, in the court case *Lau vs. Nichols*, the school district argued that 1,800 Chinese children who spoke no English being taught by teachers who spoke no Chinese did not constitute an educational problem.

When the justices of the U.S. Supreme Court pointed out to them in a unanimous opinion "Yes, you do have a problem," the school came right back and said there might be a problem but not for the school district – for the parents. The reason the Chinese students were doing so poorly in school was attributed to the failure of the Chinese parents to teach their children English. In response, the Supreme Court pointed out that the Chinese parents did not speak English and therefore had very little capability in doing the type of instruction that the school expected prior to them coming to school.

Do you see a shift in the philosophy of involving parents in raising funds for the school and a new role in taking ownership of the school?

I am of the opinion that a lot of the ineffectiveness of the relationship between the school and the parents is that the school argues lack of family input, but when the family indicates that they want to make such inputs, such inputs are neutralized. I value the PTA and understand the contribution it makes. Unfortunately many school systems have used the PTA as a vehicle for fund-raising as you have mentioned. I have sat at a PTA meeting all night where the parents argued whether they were going to sell hot dogs or hamburgers at the school carnival. They consider this to be a meaningful input into the affairs of the school.

We know one of the recent findings in community involvement research is that when there is a meaningful relationship between the school and the family the student tends to perform better. The key word is meaningful, and a lot of the PTA activities or other activities that are conducted by the school are really not very meaningful to the

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parents, even in middle-class schools. I am critical that on many occasions the school system is communicating that it wants the family to support the schools, but the schools do not reciprocate and support the families. The school looks to the community as a resource, but it does not look at itself as a resource to the community.

What changes in community involvement do you advocate?

I go back to the basics and say that primarily the school does not understand the parents and that which you do not understand you fear. Due to lack of understanding, the school and the parents may not want to get into a relationship. If the relationship is viewed as dangerous, there may be a desire to neutralize it.

For instance, the school may try to neutralize a relationship with the parents through extensive involvement in extracurricular activities, such as football, which does not constitute a meaningful relationship between the school and the parents.

The most important change in the relationship is based on the school seeing parent and community involvement as an asset rather than a liability. Schools set their own goals, do their own activities, and do their own evaluations. It is threatening to have people come in and upset the apple cart, and start asking questions that would lead to such things as accountability of the school, about the quality of education.

We have very sophisticated techniques for defusing the influence of parents – the TAAS [Texas Assessment of Academic Skills] for instance. We just say the student is doing very poorly, if he or she does not pass the TAAS. Our accountability, meaningful accountability, is sent back to the students. They are the ones who will not graduate, they will not be promoted, and the school also receives a sanction.

But the school is an intangible institution. I have never heard of the superintendent of schools having his or her salary reduced because of low performance on the TAAS. I have never heard of a superintendent who loses a job because of low performance on TAAS. We had here in San Antonio a very large school district where most of the schools could not meet the minimum standards of the TAAS. No one ever held them accountable. The superintendent finally retired. He was given the normal retirement parties and presents

and so forth, with no accountability on the basis of the very poor performance on the TAAS. The TAAS is reducing school accountability by placing it on the backs of the students.

What advice would you give educators and administrators who want to increase parent involvement?

You have to think of ways of involving parents. I could give you a list of ways in which parents should be involved. I would begin with a philosophy for schools based on the assumption that all children can learn. You can involve the parents in establishing rules and regulations that are conducive to good student performance. You can have sessions for the involvement of parents in curriculum development, student personnel services, evaluation, and other aspects of school planning and activity. Almost everything that the school does can benefit from parent and community input.

How have you personally been involved in the education of your own children?

I have been very involved in the education of my children. My being pro-active in education has led to my children and my grandchildren doing better in school.

Have you had negative experiences in your involvement in the education of your children?

I have published several stories dealing with my involvement in the education of my children. My favorite story is in a book entitled, *All Pianos Have Keys*, in which I talk about my son Mike, who was not doing well in the second grade. I knew why he wasn't doing well. He had a liability; he likes to *think* before he *speaks*. I cannot help but think about all the students in school who *speak* before they *think*. Because of Mike's habit of thinking before speaking he was slow in responding in school, and he was thought to be slow.

When my son Mike was in the second grade, I looked at samples of his work, and I asked the teacher why he was not doing better. I go back to what I said previously; teachers in teacher-parent conferences just don't have the nerve to paint a realistic picture of student performance. The teacher said that Mike was a sweet kid, everyone loved Mike, he was one of her best students. That did not answer my question about his performance. In response to my question the teacher said something nonsensical such

as, "His motivational growth has not caught up with his developmental mode."

She informed me that my son was a low achiever, he was a slow student, that I should not expect above average school performance from him, and not expect him to do better in school since he was already working within his limited capabilities. My son, Mike, is now a physician and a surgeon and did very well in high school, college and medical school.

This erroneous diagnosis on the part of the teacher has bothered me for many years. As an educator I was aware that my son was not slow and the teacher was wrong. But as I have asked myself so many times, what about parents who are not educators and do not understand and recognize their children's abilities and are told by the school that their child has limited capabilities?

If I had not known any better I might have said to my son, "Don't do your homework," "Don't try too hard." And what would have been his contribution to society? This is a personal anecdote that has bothered me for many years.

How do you rectify a situation like that? Through teacher training?

I would imagine it would come back to teacher training. Teachers have often shown very poor judgment in determining the capabilities of students. Therefore, for teachers to make statements, like "He is incapable of learning," scares me because they have never been able to demonstrate success in determining who can learn and who cannot learn.

I don't like homogenous grouping of students. One of the reasons is because it is usually erroneous. All studies on grouping show that teachers cannot eliminate more than 75 percent of the range of the original group. The erroneous placement of a student in a group of low achievers can turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

What is the role of parents in such a situation?

Parents should have the opportunity and do have the right to respond to teacher recommendations. The most effective way of doing so is to have a role for parents in decision-making processes. That is why we advocate committees for placing children into such programs as bilingual and special education. Various facets of the school and faculty, as well as parents, should be represented. Together they participate in the making of important decisions.

What are some other roles of parents?

Parents can be utilized in the implementation of the mission of the school. It is very easy to put some words together that say the mission of the school is to bring the child to maximum self-realization. That has been the mission of schools for 80 years now. It is a beautiful statement, but how do you bring this about.

Anyone can make a mission statement, the difficult thing is the conversion of the mission statement into activities and behaviors that need to be established. Parents have a responsibility to participate in the definition of the activities and behaviors that will lead to the meeting of the school's mission.

How can parents participate in the curriculum of the school?

- Parents can participate in the selection of courses that are offered, requirements for participation and prerequisites for enrollment in these courses. One thing that I would insist upon is having the parents participate in decisions for student career choices.

It has not always happened in the past. It is unbelievably bad that the school makes decisions such as that the child should be a bus driver or automobile mechanic without input on the part of the parents. I think parents should participate in all decisions on behalf of the child.

Interviewer's note: It is upsetting to realize that on many campuses little has changed from the times that Dr. Cárdenas spoke of regarding community and parental involvement. Many "fortress schools" continue to keep parents out and blame families when students do not do well. However, through the work of advocacy organizations, educators, elected officials and families, important steps have been made – and are being made – to shift general sentiments from viewing families as distant parties to viewing families as partners and leaders in educational achievement. Dr. Cárdenas' detailed accounts of his experiences help us to recognize both the progress made and the work to be done regarding parent and community involvement in education.

José A. Cárdenas, Ed.D., is the founder and director emeritus of IDRA. Micaela Díaz-Sánchez is an education assistant in the IDRA Division of Community and Public Engagement. Comments and questions may be sent to them via e-mail at contact@idra.org.

Coming of Age

Bradley Scott, Ph.D.

The discussion about educational equity and school reform has been going on for quite some time now. Many educators have given their take on what educational equity is and what it should do. My colleagues at the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) and I have quite a history in the discussion ourselves.

As I have talked to various groups around the United States about educational equity and school reform, it has become apparent to me that the notion of equity is finally coming of age.

A little more than six years ago, I described a fourth generation of civil rights and school equity (Scott, 1995). While there were many issues to be focused on in that generation, essentially the primary foci were to:

- transform school-to-work for all diverse learners;
- produce world-class skills and competencies in all learners; and
- create new and more powerful, transformative paradigms for equity, excellence, civil rights, educational reform, teaching and learning.

We have arrived at a point where now we need a broader, more compelling focus. We need to entertain a new generation of educational equity for a new millennium and a new time. Let me introduce Educational Equity – Generation Five.

The single primary focus and nine major concerns of the fifth generation of education equity are described below.

Fifth Generation Focus: Creating and Implementing Systemic Equity

Systemic equity is defined as the transformed ways in which systems and individuals habitually operate to ensure that every learner – in whatever learning environment that learner is found – has the greatest opportunity to learn enhanced by the resources and supports necessary to achieve competence, excellence, independence, responsibility, and self-ciency for school and for life.

> ...systemic equity can only be created in an environment that embraces a set of underlying assumptions about the right of every learner to receive the best possible public education.

Fifth Generation Equity Concerns

- Strategic and focused implementation of the Goals of Educational Equity.
- Transformed curriculum that is relevant, meaningful, powerful and dynamic to produce excellent outcomes for all learners regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, economic level, language, citizenship status, family affiliation, special need, exceptionality, etc.
- Reformed, expanded and targeted professional development, staff renewal and staff support systems.
- Technology equity for management, instruction, creation and development.
- Transformed views of teaching, learning, literacy, knowledge, funds of knowledge, intelligence, achievement, assessment, etc.
- Heightened educational stakeholder collaboration.
- Parental involvement and engagement.
- Safety and security in learning environments and spaces.
- Pre-kindergarten through grade 16 education and school completion.

It occurs to me that systemic equity can only be created in an environment that embraces a set of underlying assumptions about the right of every learner to receive the best possible public education. I have been able to identify seven assumptions so far. I present them here with the hope that the reader will reflect upon them, refine them and provide feedback on them.

- Assumption One – In public schools, excellence is never achieved if various groups of learners fail to succeed and achieve high standards.
- Assumption Two – Educators, parents and community members (all education stakeholders) who are committed to the national security of the United States are also committed to the Goals of Educational Equity and schools of excellence in principle and in practice.
- Assumption Three – A compelling commitment to excellence and educational equity disdains and seeks to eradicate racism, sexism, classism and the manifestations of discrimination spawned by these aberrant and pathological ways of thinking and behaving.
- Assumption Four – Just laws establish the necessary foundation for just action, and the achievement of the Goals of Educational Equity provides the sufficient force to cause appropriate action to produce the desired outcomes.
- Assumption Five – When education stakeholders see and understand what is right, just and fair for all learners, they desire to do what is right, just and fair.
- Assumption Six – People's failure to do right by all learners is a function of their failure to see or understand, not a lack of will to do right by all learners.
- Assumption Seven – When people of good faith see disparities in outcomes for learners, they immediately desire and do undertake to correct the deficiencies in systems and in individuals who operate those systems as well as the practices those systems and individuals produce.

How does one begin to create systemic equity? A good place to start is by conducting an educational equity audit. The Goals of Educational Equity and the equity issue questions are an excellent place to begin. These are provided in the boxes on Pages 8-10.

An IDRA focus group team has reworked the definitions for the Goals of Educational Equity and the equity issue questions from an earlier version (Scott,

The Goals of Educational Equity and School Reform

A good place to start creating systemic equity is by conducting an educational equity audit. The Goals of Educational Equity and the equity issue questions are an excellent place to begin. These are provided in the boxes that follow.

Goal 1: Comparably High Achievement and Other Student Outcomes
As data on academic achievement and other student outcomes are disaggregated and analyzed, one sees high comparable performance for all identifiable groups of learners, and achievement/performance gaps are virtually non-existent.

1. Are there comparably high achievement outcomes for all learners?
2. Are there comparably high social outcomes for all learners, such as responsible citizenship development, cross-cultural competence, conflict resolution, and life skills development?
3. Are school promotion and completion rates consistently high for all diverse learners?
4. How are data disaggregated?
5. What is the district using as indicators of success?
6. Is there high literacy, numeracy and technological competence for all diverse learners?
7. Are the assessment measures fair, equitable and appropriate?
8. What is the role of alternative assessment procedures?
9. Are there comparably high rates of participation in college and/or post-secondary preparation or is there competent preparation for school-to-work transition for all learners?
10. What is the role of alternative, authentic assessment measures?
11. In what ways is the school environment actively and meaningfully engaging and involving parents, guardians, and caregivers of all groups of learners supporting their children's success in school?
12. Are there appropriate monitoring, accountability, and follow up measures established to address discrimination that impedes or denies access or full inclusion and success?

Goal 2: Equitable Access and Inclusion
The unobstructed entrance and involvement in, and full participation of learners in excellent community schools, programs, and activities within those schools.

1. Do learners and their families have complete access to relevant information such as student achievement, program placement and participation in a language or form of communication that is meaningful to them?
2. Do the assessment, course selection, and placement processes and appropriate supports exist to include and sustain all learners in quality courses and programs in an equitable manner?
3. Describe an equitable manner in which the item above occurs.
4. What are the criteria for a quality program?
5. How is access ensured for all students?
6. What counseling and advisement strategies and procedures expand options and opportunities equitably for all diverse learners?
7. How are you actively recruiting parents?
8. How is access ensured for all students?
9. How do the organizational policies and practices (formal and informal) provide all learners with appropriate access and inclusion?
10. What is the access, availability, quality and use of technology by all learners, including its use in planning, managing and integrating instruction in a constructivist way and in accessing all the supports that the Internet can provide?

11. How are teachers and administrators reflecting high expectations and positive attitudes about their students' success?
12. How have these measures been institutionalized?
13. In what ways do school-parent-community partnerships exist and foster full access and meaningful engagement for parents and community people in the process of excellent education?
14. In what ways are the assets of school, home, and community, valued and integrated so that all partners become engaged from their positions of strength as equals rather than members in deficit-model school-home interactions?
15. Are there appropriate monitoring, accountability, and follow-up measures established to address discrimination that impedes or denies access or full inclusion and success?

Goal 3: Equitable Treatment
The evidence of patterns of interaction among individuals that is free from threat, humiliation, danger and disregard that also exists within a supportive, quality environment characterized by genuine acceptance, valuing, respect, support, safety and security, so that students, parents, community and staff feel challenged to risk becoming invested in the pursuits of learning and excellence.

1. What does the culture of cross-cultural interaction look like in your district?
2. How does your district/campus reflect the four conditions for positive intergroup contact including equal status, knowledge and acquaintanceship, common goal, and institutional support?
3. What assessments or surveys have been conducted to determine people's attitudes, perceptions, expectations and prejudices about learning and performance of racially and culturally diverse people?
4. How does the staff create, implement and monitor plans for decreasing isolation, separation, and segregation between and among racially and culturally diverse students?
5. What assessments are used to measure the cross-cultural competence of staff, parents and students?
6. Are education for diversity and multicultural education as well as training for justice and equality occurring for and reflective of staff, students and parents?
7. Is training provided for staff, students and parents in the elimination of personal and institutional (formal and informal) prejudice, discrimination of racism, sexism and classism?
8. What are the organizational policies, systems, procedures, and practices to address racism, sexism, and classism?
9. Is training and development being provided in areas such as conflict resolution, interpersonal and cross-cultural competence and communication?
10. How does the staff have the knowledge and expertise to apply its understanding of the four conditions across all diverse student populations?
11. Are there appropriate monitoring, accountability, and follow-up measures established to address discrimination that impedes or denies access or full inclusion and success?
12. What is the evidence that the system has institutionalized practices of inclusion and integration?
13. What does staff work do to create, implement, and monitor learning environments to ensure that they are racially and culturally inclusive and free of racial and gender bias and hostility?
14. How is monitoring for diversity curriculum development integrated into the teacher evaluation processes?
15. Do the interactions of all individuals – including administrators certified and non-certified staff, students and parents – reflect valuing and respect for the language, cultural and class differences of others?
16. What is the evidence of equitable support, treatment, assistance, and guidance given to students and parents?
17. How comprehensive is the plan for the management of equity?
18. How does the school improvement plan reflect equity and equitable treatment?
19. Are there comparably low disciplinary referrals, absenteeism rates, suspensions and expulsions for all learners?
20. Are there violence-free, safe, supportive learning environments for all learners?
21. What constitutes meaningful engagement in the teaching/learning process that is culturally, linguistically and cognitively appropriate for all learners?

Goal 4: Equitable Opportunity to Learn
The creation of challenging learning opportunities such that every child, regardless of characteristics and educational needs, is given the requisite pedagogical, social, emotional, psychological and materials supports to achieve the high academic standards of excellence that are established.

1. How is every learner presented with a high quality and challenging curriculum that is race, gender and class bias-free as well as the appropriate form of instruction and support to make that curriculum comprehensible?
2. How do the instructional methods and materials support all students' opportunity to learn and to achieve to high standards?
3. How do the instructional methods and materials vary to respond to the learning characteristics of all learners?
4. What practices are used to identify and counteract inappropriate practices and placement such as tracking and ability grouping, inappropriate assessment and placement decisions, and inadequate guidance and counseling?
5. What staff development, staffing, and organizational structure resources are in place to ensure an equitable opportunity to learn?
6. What instructional strategies and research-based practices are appropriately employed to expand or create opportunities to learn for all students? **42**
7. How are students' home languages valued, acknowledged and integrated into instruction?

Goal 4 (con't)

8. How do you ensure that every learner has access to comprehensible instruction?
9. How are learners' home languages valued, acknowledged and integrated into instruction?
10. How is technology used to enhance opportunities for all students to learn in a manner that is equitable, challenging and high quality?
11. How are new and emerging constructs for teaching and learning and promising practices being used to enhance every students' opportunities to learn?
12. What systemic processes are in place to identify and integrate new knowledge and promising practices into current curriculum and instructional practices?
13. How have opportunities to learn been extended to all places inside and outside of traditional school settings?
14. To what extent is the integrity of a high quality, high standards program preserved for all students?
15. Are there appropriate monitoring, accountability, and follow-up measures established to address discrimination that impedes or denies access or full inclusion and success?

Goal 5: Equitable Resource Distribution

The assignment of funds, staff and other resources for equity and excellence, including: qualified staff equitably and appropriately assigned; appropriate facilities and other environmental learning spaces; quality instructional technology and infrastructure; appropriate instructional materials and equipment, and all other instructional supports for learning that are also distributed in the manner required to allow all diverse learners to achieve high academic standards.

1. What practices are used to ensure equitable resource allocation, distribution, sources of funding (i.e., hard or soft; local or state and federal), timeliness and appropriateness of funding (i.e., resources when they are needed, where they are needed)?
2. How are you monitoring the use of maximum and appropriate use of resources?
3. How are facilities, their maintenance, care, rejuvenation, upkeep, and access utilization patterns established and implemented and monitored to equitably support all learners?
4. How is the issue of resource acquisition and sustainability addressed to ensure equity in those effective programs and activities that address the special characteristics of learners (i.e., language characteristics, special programs for girls in math and science, supplemental support for low-income learners)?
5. How are decisions made about staff allocations and assignments, and human resource development to ensure equity for all students?
6. What incentives are provided to attract, retain and sustain quality teachers to deliver high quality services to all students?
7. How are parents and the community made aware of and involved in decision-making regarding resource and alternative instruction?
8. What mechanisms are in place to ensure that the community and parents of all students have meaningful opportunities to participate in the local budget development and resource allocation process?
9. What strategies do you implement to ensure adequate and equitable participation of all stakeholders in the resource allocation process?
10. Are there appropriate monitoring, accountability, and follow up measures established to address discrimination that impedes or denies access or full inclusion and success?

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association. "Coming of Age," *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, March 2001).

Coming of Age - continued from page 6

2000). As a district answers each equity issue question, by disaggregating the responses for students and families across race, gender and national origin, it can begin to determine where it falls on the equity ranking scale. The scale is four points with 1 representing the lowest level of equity implementation and 4 representing the highest level of systemic equity implementation.

It has been suggested to me that a series of rubrics would be helpful for assisting districts to place themselves properly on the equity ranking scale. I agree, and that request sounds like another idea whose time has come.

Resources

Scott, B. "The Fourth Generation of Desegregation and Civil Rights," *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, January 1995).

Scott, B. "We Should Not Kid Ourselves: Excellence Requires Equity," *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, February 2000).

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Mark your calendar

April 24-26, 2001

Pre-institute: April 23, 2001

San Antonio Airport Hilton

Eighth Annual

IDRA *La Semana del Niño*
Early Childhood Educators Institute™

> "Valuing and Capitalizing on the Linguistic and Cultural Assets of a Diverse Student Population"

The popular Eighth Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Early Childhood Educators Institute offers a valuable series of information-packed professional development sessions that are customized to capitalize on the linguistic and cultural assets brought forth by a diverse student population. This year's event will focus on building reading concepts and skills of young learners. Topics include: literacy, technology, social development, curriculum, and dual language. Ms. Cami Jones, director of early childhood education at the Texas Education Agency, will be a featured speaker focusing on the pre-kindergarten curriculum guidelines in Texas. Another featured speaker, Ms. Margarita Robledo, is the author of more than 50 children's books and recipient of national awards in Mexico and the United States.

You can also take this opportunity to visit model early childhood centers. These visits provide you with the opportunity to share ideas while seeing them in action. Institute participants will travel to high-performing, high-minority sites in the San Antonio area that are effectively working with diverse learners. Two school visits (one each on Wednesday and Thursday) are available to paid institute registrants on a first come, first served basis. Transportation will be provided. You also will have the opportunity to interact with parents to discuss ideas to form effective learning partnerships.

The action-packed schedule begins at 8:00 a.m. each morning and continues through 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, and 2:30 p.m. on Thursday. The institute includes luncheon sessions on Tuesday and Thursday.

Special Activities

Pre-Institute on Reading and Dual Language Programs - Monday, April 23
IDRA will convene a panel of reading experts to provide teaching and classroom management ideas designed to strengthen your approach to developing literacy in more than one language. Dr. Josefina Villamil Tinajero, associate dean of the College of Education at the University of Texas at El Paso, will present the keynote at the luncheon. She is a noted author and leader in the field of bilingual education. This one-day pre-institute takes place on Monday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and includes a luncheon session.

Parent Institute - Thursday, April 26
This one-day event will concentrate on the challenges in early childhood education and how to maximize parent leadership. Parents and educators will dialogue on ways to focus their leadership to enhance early childhood learning.

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Eighth Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Early Childhood Educators Institute™

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YES I will attend the Eighth Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Early Childhood Educators Institute.
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$_____ Total enclosed   PO # _____

Fees Before March 15	Fees After March 15
___ $175 institute registration, April 24-26, 2001*	___ $195 institute registration, April 24-26, 2001*
___ $75 pre-institute registration, April 23, 2001**	___ $95 pre-institute registration, April 23, 2001**
___ $225 discounted institute and pre-institute registration	___ $240 discounted institute and pre-institute registration
___ $15 parent institute registration, April 26, 2001	___ $15 parent institute registration, April 26, 2001

Register **on-line** with a purchase order number at *www.idra.org*

Mail form with a check or purchase order to IDRA at 5835 Callaghan Road, #350 San Antonio, Texas 78228-1190 Attention: Carol Chávez

Fax form with a purchase order to IDRA at 210-444-1714 Attention: Carol Chávez

* Includes institute sessions, Tuesday and Thursday luncheons, two school visits [for first paid registrants], and materials.

** Includes pre-institute sessions, luncheon and materials.

Make payable to: Intercultural Development Research Association. A purchase order number may be used to reserve space. Full payment prior to the institute is expected.

Video Conference on Family Issues – Wednesday, April 25

Parents, community liaisons and community resource personnel across the state will come together to celebrate the International Week of the Young Child with a long distance conversation focusing on parent leadership and outreach. The video conference will be held at participating Texas regional education service centers. If you are interested in attending at your local video conference site and cannot attend the institute, contact Yojani Hernández at IDRA (210/444-1710) for details.

Hotel Information

The institute will be held at the San Antonio Airport Hilton. The hotel is offering a special rate of $96 per night for a single or double room, $106 per night for three to a room and $116 per night for four to a room (plus state and local taxes), based on availability. The hotel reservation deadline for the reduced rate is April 13, 2001. Call 1-877-377-7227 to make reservations. Be sure to reference the Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Early Childhood Educators Institute in order to qualify for the special rate.

Institute Sponsors

IDRA is pleased to bring you this Eighth Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Early Childhood Educators Institute. Supporting IDRA projects include:

- IDRA *South Central Collaborative for Equity* (the equity assistance center that serves Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas),

- *RE-CONNECT* (the parent information resource center at IDRA that serves Texas), and

- *STAR Center* (the comprehensive regional assistance center that serves Texas via a collaboration of IDRA, the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin, and RMC Research Corporation).

Each of these IDRA projects provides specialized training and technical assistance to public schools. Information on how your campus can use these resources to improve instruction and assessment will be available at the institute and may also be obtained by calling IDRA at 210/444-1710 or by visiting IDRA's web site (www.idra.org).

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causes to perceived deficits in the student's social environment – including the home, community and "cultural" factors – failing to consider the inadequacies in the school settings that caused students to dropout. It is this failure to examine inadequate schooling as a root cause that has led to and continues to contribute to our collective failure to improve Latino dropout rates (Supik and Johnson, 1999).

Research shows the move toward dropping out begins by late elementary school when inadequate instruction leads to under-achievement (Robledo, 1989). As students lag behind, schools devote little or no effort to getting them back up to level. Until the mid-1980s, Texas and many other states did not require that schools keep records of or report on high school dropouts. If dropping out mattered, someone would have asked. And no one asked, in part because until recent decades, local economies required uneducated and unskilled workers, and dropouts provided that work force. This changed when our economic demands for educated and skilled workers changed.

Middle School to High School Transition Issues

IDRA's research on school leavers suggests that, by middle school, students who lag in elementary school continue to fall behind (Johnson, 2000). Complicating the transition from elementary school to middle school was a school organizational scheme that focused on *teaching content* rather than on *teaching students*. Familiar elementary school teachers who had taught all subjects and had really gotten to know individual students are replaced by "advisors," or "home room" teachers who are supposed to counsel and keep track of large numbers of pupils. Each middle school student becomes one of more than 100 students taught by different subject matter teachers over the course of six or seven class periods.

Because of these changes and a new anonymity, many middle school students find themselves languishing further behind as they move up the grades, and they eventually give up on the system, usually preceded by the recognition that the system has given up on them. The effects of in-grade retention at the elementary school level becomes more pronounced in middle school as over-age students are 14, 15 and sometimes 16 years old.

These over-age students note that they have the option of an early exit to the workforce and that the state compulsory attendance laws do not require them to be in school after a certain age – often 15 or less.

Students should not be subjected to Darwinian-type "survival of the fittest" philosophies. Middle school to high school is a critical transition point – but few schools have large scale efforts to help ease those transitions. Too often, the various school levels engage in finger-pointing about school leavers – high schools blame middle schools; middle schools blame elementary schools; and all three blame parents and families.

While there are emerging examples of middle school and high school collaborations, they are often exceptions rarely replicated on any large scale in any state. Strengthening middle school support systems and school transitions through enhanced academic alignment, providing "bridging" opportunities across both levels, and strengthening counseling and support systems at middle schools may be a good start. Similar specialized efforts must be maintained at the high school level as well.

High School Transitions – Information and Support

Many Latino high school students are not sufficiently informed about college options. Perhaps if a Latino student ranks at the top of the senior class or is seen as having a promising athletic future, special assistance may be forthcoming – but not guaranteed even in those instances.

Many non-traditional students begin thinking about college in their junior year in high school. By that time it is often too late because they have not taken college enrollment prerequisites or did not maintain an adequate grade point average. By the senior year, too many of these students think their only options are minimum wage jobs, or at best a two-year community college, never having known the range of options that are actually available.

A few lucky or chosen ones sometimes get special attention, but they are too few. Who helps all the other students and families who need information about college admissions requirements and financial aid issues? Obviously counselors and teachers could play an expanded role, but why do so if there is nothing in the school systems that encourages this type of engagement with pupils.

Existing enrollment support systems used in many public schools are built on misguided assumptions that all students come from middle-class, English-speaking homes with at least one adult with post-secondary educational experiences. In such a model, the schools do not need to play a major support role, since the family history provides both a role model and a support system to foster the student through the complex college enrollment and completion process.

Many Latino and minority families do not fit that middle-class profile. They need specialized support systems at all levels in the educational pipeline to foster their transitions through all the critical points in the system. Lest one assumes a deficit perspective of Latino families, it is important to note that studies of Latino family values have shown that, as a group, Latinos place great weight on education, recognizing its role in social and economic mobility.

What has been consistently lacking is the existence of large pools of Latinos who have successfully navigated all levels of the educational system. These Latino graduates could act as an internal support system. This system has long been available to other groups – including African Americans who have benefitted from the existence of historically Black institutions of higher education.

Until the number of Latino college graduates approaches critical mass, specialized support programs will be key to creating and expanding equitable post-secondary educational opportunities for the nation's fastest growing minority group. Exclusive reliance on federally-funded programs however is ill-advised, in part because it relieves states of responsibility to create their own state-funded efforts in these areas.

For many students, whether or not they enroll in post-secondary institutions is often determined by the luck of the draw or where they happen to live. If students are enrolled in a school served by a specialized program or provided the support needed by a caring education professional or other family or community member, they might have the opportunity to attend college. For others, the lack of such assistance provides more limited options after high school.

In order to strengthen the support systems we must create specialized personnel positions based at the middle

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schools and high schools. These individuals must have the time and expertise to guide students through the admissions and financial aid applications processes. Included in these systems should be mechanisms for ensuring that *all students* become familiar with college admissions requirements – not merely entrance exam provisions but high school course work requirements that require critical decisions as early as one's freshman year. Academic support systems that accelerate instruction for students who have lagged behind and opportunities for advanced placement for those students who are further along are also important parts of the intervention strategy.

In addition to expanding existing support systems, high schools must set up tracking systems that provide status data on students after they have graduated. This system would include how many pupils applied for admission, the number of pupils admitted, the number of pupils who enrolled, and the number of pupils who remained in college.

For it to be considered important, some of the data should be integrated into a high school accountability system, especially the number applying and being admitted into college. History relating to school accountability systems demonstrates that notable change occurs only when policymakers attach consequences to an unacceptable condition.

High School Focused College Recruitment

Research suggests that we fail to enroll and graduate Latino pupils because we fail to actively and effectively recruit them. Colleges that do recruit often spend disproportionate time and resources recruiting the few exceptional graduates, to the detriment of all those who were not the class valedictorians or salutatorians – obviously, too small a pool to fill up the college classes.

College recruitment efforts are assumed to provide opportunities for many students who might not have been considering post-secondary education. Conventional college recruitment efforts offer options for those *already considering* college but do little to encourage students who have not considered college.

Traditional college recruitment efforts are often limited to "college nights" at the high school and are attended only by

> **It is not enough to recruit and enroll Latino pupils. One must ensure that these students have financial, academic, and psycho-social support mechanisms.**

students who are already seriously involved in the college application process. Students who work after school have no opportunity to attend such events.

Even when such presentations are provided during regular school hours, the "outreach" too often involves an auditorium full of students. Contrast this approach to the recruitment of a prized-athlete who is treated to numerous phone calls, home visits and other one-on-one exchanges with recruiters, and you get a sense of the difference in recruitment priorities. While one can argue that intensive one-on-one recruitment efforts may be difficult to implement on a large scale, it is important to recognize that recruitment of non-traditional Latino students will require something other than the conventional approaches that have been available to date.

These old models of recruitment leave too many questions unanswered and issues unaddressed. For Latino families, the emphasis on the whole family is important. In the Latino culture, the individual is an extension of the whole. All decisions affect everyone and merit discussion by the family, or at least the parents.

Examples of creative recruitment strategies are available. The question is whether or not the will and commitment to change traditional recruitment methods exist in many institutions.

Part of the challenge to changing college recruitment practices lies in the conventional criteria used to identify prospective students. In many cases, the primary criterion is the student's grade point average or score on a college entrance exam. Seldom are colleges involved in looking at multiple indicators of student potential.

Few colleges take into account whether pupils worked during high school or whether they are the first in the family to graduate or seek a post-secondary education. Both of these situations are indicators of perseverance, a quality probably as important in college as past

academic preparation (Cortez, 1997).

Certain information should be reported to local communities served by those schools or colleges, policymakers who provide state and federal funding, and foundations that support these institutions. This information includes where and who colleges are recruiting and, more importantly, what success they are having. If we do not compile and disseminate this school and student recruitment information, how do we know what we have done and how well we are doing it?

Most existing recruitment models are not set up to be inclusive. This may again be reflective of a model that is based on the assumption that once a student graduates from high school and goes on to college, persistence becomes exclusively the student's concern, a model incompatible with Latino family values. Creation of new approaches requires extensive input from local community leaders and parent representatives.

Support System and Financial Aid

It is not enough to recruit and enroll Latino pupils. One must ensure that these students have financial, academic, and psycho-social support mechanisms. For middle-class students, support in negotiating one's way through post-secondary education may be available from the parent or a sibling. For first-time Latino enrollees, support and advocacy may need to be provided by support structures based at the post-secondary institution.

Work study programs provide students an opportunity to connect with the local community in either school-based internships or as part-time staff.

But the need to work also creates tension between intensified study and employment. While some Latino pupils may have had to balance school and part-time employment to get through high school, the challenges are compounded at the college level. Add to this the pressure that comes from needing money to pay basic college expenses like tuition and related costs such as books and fees, and the college part-time work experience quickly becomes indistinguishable from the high school job that generated weekend spending money. For many Latino students, the answer to the financial aspect of college is a combination of earned money and financial aid.

An important consideration in

crafting financial aid packages is to recognize Latino families' perceptions regarding long-term debt – a key feature of state and federal student loan programs. Latino families as a whole are reluctant about accumulating large or long-term debt to support college enrollment.

While the middle-class family may see it as an investment and may not be threatened with assumption of large-scale, long-term debt, many Latino families do not share this attitude. Middle-class families have experience with home mortgages, and new car debt and payment.

Many poorer families by contrast pay rent from month to month. If they purchase a car it is often a less expensive one paid for in cash or over a short repayment period. They have limited experience with credit; and in some cases bad experiences where unforeseen expenses led to credit-related problems. All this is said to stress the importance of families' perspectives about loans in modifying or adapting traditional financial aid strategies.

This is not to say that loans should not be part of financial aid packages, but that packages that are heavily weighed toward loans may be reacted to in different ways by different groups. Success in having some Latino families accept such packages may require additional work that points out to the families how that loan note will be manageable within a larger income produced by being a college graduate.

Two- to Four-Year College Transitions

Research conducted about Latino students who enroll in college shows that approximately 50 percent enroll in two-year colleges. For those students who prefer to limit their post-secondary education, the two-year option addresses that preference. The data also indicate that for many Latino students the decision is based on an intent to begin their college enrollment at a two-year institution and transfer to a four-year college.

Research reveals however that too many community college pupils intending to transfer never achieve a successful transition. One observation suggests that many students are discouraged from remaining enrolled at the two-year college because of the remedial courses required that, after years of enrollment, result in limited transferrable credit.

The fact that many first time college attendees have sacrificed short term improvements (often including such perceived basics as a first car, or a first apartment of one's own) may be overlooked by universities that have built their intervention strategies for moderate income youth whose "hard" choices may involve delaying the purchase of the new car or moving to luxury condominiums. Collaborative efforts where community colleges can begin remediation efforts while students are still enrolled in high schools have shown potential to deal with this issue.

A second problem is a lack of articulation agreements between two- and four-year colleges, which compound the credit transfer issues. According to research of college graduation rates, two-year college students who transfer have

HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT IDRA ACTIVITIES

In January, IDRA worked with **9,540** teachers, administrators, parents, and higher education personnel through **89** training and technical assistance activities and **276** program sites in **14** states plus the United Kingdom and Brazil. Topics included:

✦ Kindergarten Reading Readiness
✦ Parent Leadership in Education
✦ Assessment for LEP Students
✦ FLAIR (Focusing on Language and Academic Instructional Renewal)
✦ Making a Smooth Transition Between Grade Levels

Participating agencies and school districts included:

✧ Chicago Public Schools, Chicago, Illinois
✧ Eagle Pass Independent School District (ISD), Texas
✧ New Mexico Education Service Center, Region IX
✧ St. Mary Parish, Louisiana
✧ Temple ISD, Texas

Activity Snapshot

After being found in violation of the law related to racial harassment, one district faced having $250,000 in federal funds withheld from it. The IDRA South Central Collaborative for Equity provided technical assistance to the district in board policy development and training in prejudice reduction for the board, staff, students and parents. A model is being developed and refined for use with other districts experiencing similar problems. The South Central Collaborative for Equity is the equity assistance center funded by the U.S. Department of Education to help schools in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Texas to provide equitable school settings that ensure full inclusion and participation by all students and their parents regardless of race, sex or national origin.

Regularly, IDRA staff provides services to:
✦ public school teachers
✦ parents
✦ administrators
✦ other decision makers in public education

Services include:
✧ training and technical assistance
✧ evaluation
✧ serving as expert witnesses in policy settings and court cases
✧ publishing research and professional papers, books, videos and curricula

*For information on IDRA services for your school district or other group, contact IDRA at 210/444-1710.*

Aggregate Household Income in Texas by Race/Ethnicity of Householder and Average Household Income in 1990, with Projections to 2030 under the Assumption of 1980-90 Rates of Net Migration

Year	Anglo	Black	Hispanic	Other	Total	Average Household Income
1990	$168,580,195,547	$15,778,940,737	$27,799,408,335	$4,375,939,824	$216,534,484,443	$35,667
2000	187,804,738,410	19,255,599,215	43,264,532,160	8,768,812,784	259,093,682,569	34,789
2010	205,513,257,848	22,974,421,767	64,126,487,609	15,999,029,816	308,613,197,040	33,930
2020	221,679,245,813	26,892,345,007	91,775,737,224	27,017,282,115	367,364,610,159	33,110
2030	230,705,542,353	30,398,948,379	127,082,913,507	43,000,422,618	431,187,826,857	32,299

When aggregate household income is examined, the results show total aggregate income increasing from $216.5 billion in 1990 to $431.2 billion in 2030. This represents an increase of 99.1 percent, compared with a 119.9 percent increase in the number of households. As a result, average household income would decline from $35,667 in 1990 to $32,299 in 2030 (in 1990 dollars).

Source: Murdock, S.H., N. Hoque, M. Michael, S. White, and B. Pecotte. *The Texas Challenge: Population Change and the Future of Texas* (College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 1997) p. 63; p. 101.

Projected Percent of Public Elementary and Secondary Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity for 1990 to 2030 (1.0 Scenario)

Source: Murdock, S.H., N. Hoque, M. Michael, S. White, and B, Pecotte. *The Texas Challenge: Population Change and the Future of Texas* (College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 1997) p. 148; p. 156; p. 158.
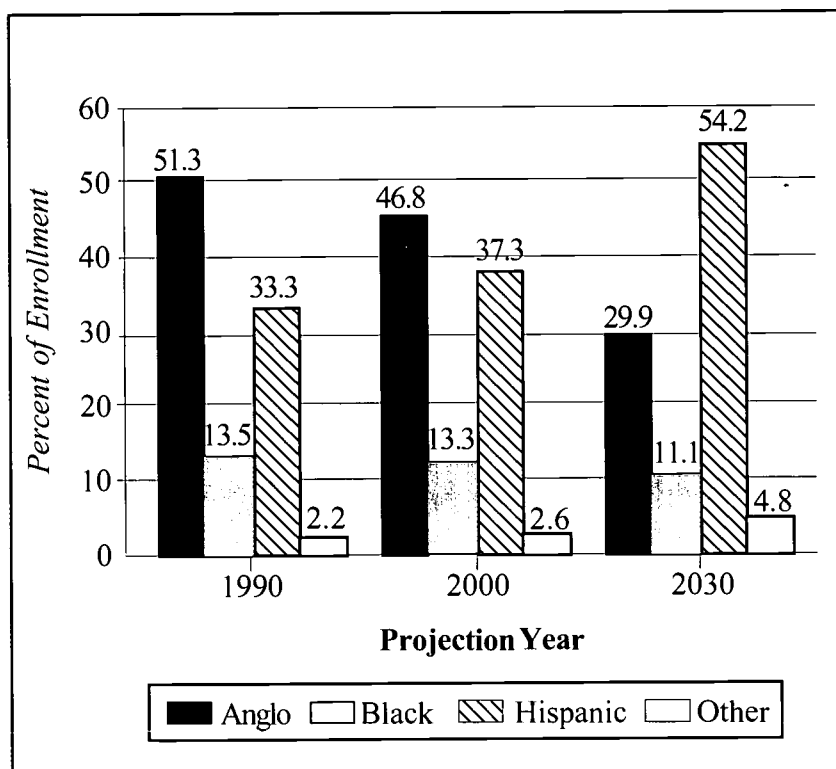
The number of Texas residents enrolled in school (public and private) at both the elementary and secondary and the college levels will be extensive. Under the 1.0 scenario, which assumes a continuation of 1980 to 1990 levels of net migration, the number of elementary and secondary students will increase from 3,571,937 in 1990 to 5,738,843 in 2030, an increase of 60.7 percent from 1990 to 2030.

These results suggest that education will remain a major component of growth in Texas government in the coming years. Although this growth will be less at both the elementary and secondary and the college levels than the growth in total population, it will nevertheless be extensive. It will also increasingly involve minority students and growing numbers of participants in need-based programs. Although the overall growth in enrollment may be less than that in population, the total demand on resources may grow substantially. The results thus indicate that Texas will need to employ careful planning in elementary and secondary and in higher education to ensure that it can adequately address the needs for such services. Provision of adequate educational opportunities for all Texans is likely to continue to require extensive attention by the state in the coming years.

substantially lower graduation rates than students who enroll only at four-year institutions. Analysis of factors that impact two year transfer students also suggests that the absence or inadequacy of transition support significantly impacts college transfer success.

Data on numbers of successful two- to four-year transfers and levels of graduation are seldom reported in most institutions. They are rarely if ever considered in states' higher education accountability systems. As is the case in other areas of education, what is not counted is not reported and what is not reported does not matter.

Expanded Collaboration

Emerging research on inclusion of diverse students suggests that the challenges associated with increasing the success of Latino and other non-traditional students requires involvement by an expansive collaborative that includes the broader community.

For Latino and other minority pupils the need to include and involve community organizations is particularly critical in view of the lack of diversity often reflected in many institutions. Lacking grounding in the experiences and world views of the Latino populations, colleges and universities can benefit from the insights and contributions brought to the table by community representatives.

As importantly, the inclusion of community collaborators in Latino enrollment and completion efforts affords students the opportunity to connect with and provide a contribution to that community. This can contribute to the student's sense of belonging and integration at both the college and local community levels. Additionally, the opportunity for students to connect with the realities of local community work requirements lend greater credence and relevance to the school and career connections.

Greater coordination and collaboration among the various levels in education, from elementary school through college graduation must occur. Creation of a seamless system that provides both academic and other ongoing transitional support offers the best hope for increasing Latino and other minority enrollment and graduation at the post-secondary level.

Although progress has been made, the data clearly shows that we have far to go before one can say that Latinos have achieved a level of parity in higher education. So long as public money is used to fund the majority of post-secondary institutions, it is appropriate to question the extent to which those institutions offer equitable and excellent educational opportunities to all of their constituencies.

Not until the numbers are reported and consequences are attached will the inclusion of minority pupils at all levels of the educational system rise above the level of platitudes and rhetoric. Isolated instances indicate that equitable access and completion are possible but not yet widespread. Continuation of that trend will be catastrophic for all of us.

Resources

Cortez, A. "Criteria for Diversity: THEC's Advisory Committee Suggests New Criteria," *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, February 1997).

Johnson, R. "TEA's School Leaver Codes: The Rest of the Story," *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 2000).

Murdock, S.H, and N. Hoque, M. Michael, S. White, B. Pecotte. *The Texas Challenge: Population Change and the Future of Texas* (College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 1997).

Robledo, M. *The Answer: Valuing Youth in Schools and Families* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, Summer 1989).

Supik, J.D. and R.L. Johnson. *Missing: Texas Youth – Dropout and Attrition Rates in Texas Public High Schools* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, January 1999).

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IDRA Newsletter

My Magnificent Twenty

José A. Cárdenas, Ed.D.

Inside this Issue:

- Early Childhood Education
- Brain development and language
- Play and learning
- Overview of bilingual education

The following article is excerpted from "All Pianos Have Keys and Other Stories," by Dr. José A. Cárdenas.

Every educator dreams of the opportunity to work in an educational Utopia, a school situation in which the concern for the student overshadows all other considerations, a place where all staff is dedicated to providing improved learning opportunities for all students, a place of harmony, hard work and success.

Certainly my assignment as superintendent of the Edgewood Independent School District in San Antonio in 1969 was anything but utopian experience. Edgewood was the poorest of 1,600 school districts in Texas prior to school finance equity becoming a state court mandate. Over one-half of the instructional staff did not meet minimum requirements for state certification, and a teacher turnover rate of over 33% made staffing a perennial problem.

For many years prior to my superintendency in Edgewood I had been a strong advocate for early childhood education. Working for the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) in Austin from 1967 to 1969, I had the opportunity to develop a proposal for an Edgewood pre-school program for submission as part of the San Antonio Model Cities Program. The school district had decided not to include early childhood education as part of the Model Cities program, but upon becoming superintendent, I resurrected the plan and included it in the proposal.

In 1969 the Texas Foundation School Program did not provide for kindergarten or other pre-school age programs, therefore, there was no available pool of trained teachers for employment in the pre-school Model Cities program when approved for the 1969-70 school year.

That same year, the Texas Education Agency (TEA), in an attempt to upgrade teacher competency, had issued new regulations which prohibited the use of emergency certified teachers with less than 90 semester hours of college work. The previous minimum requirement had been 60 semester hours, and the personnel office had already hired a number of prospective teachers with at least 60 but with less than 90 hours of college work.

The personnel office contacted TEA and requested that 20 of these newly hired teachers with between 60 and 90 semester hours of college be allowed to teach in the Model Cities early childhood education program. TEA responded in the affirmative, stating that the program was not state funded nor of much importance in terms of teacher preparation.

So it happened that in September 1969, the early childhood education program was initiated with 20 teachers with less than three years of college. Since state regulations demanded that education courses be offered in the upper-division program, none of the teachers had taken a teacher education course.
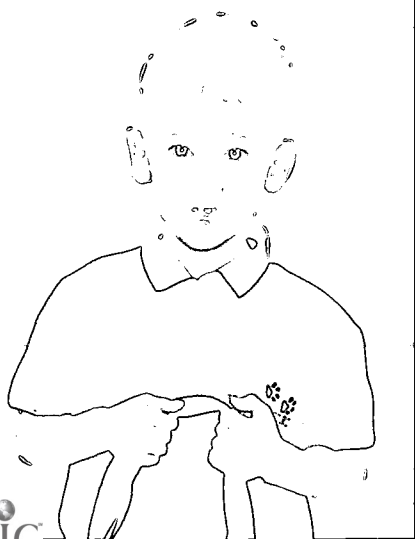
It is surprising, therefore, that these 20 teachers became the best group of teachers it has been my privilege to work with in my more than 40 years as a professional educator. Along with the program director, they created the Utopia which every educator dreams of. The Early Childhood Center for 3, 4 and 5 year-old economically disadvantaged children became the place where concern for the student overshadowed all other considerations, a place where all staff was dedicated to providing improved learning opportunities for the students, a place of harmony, hard work and success.

The 20 teachers worked with SEDL in the development and pilot testing of a prototype early childhood curriculum for economically disadvantaged, minority and limited-English-proficient children. The teachers developed a relatively unstructured, warm, loving, nurturing environment that was a joy to behold. Parents were not only welcomed at the school, but few parents ever visited the school for any purpose without finding themselves in teacher aide roles, participating in educational activities with their children.

Parents reluctant to visit the school were enticed by the 20 teachers. They managed to get the cosmetology classes from all three of the district high schools to offer free hairstyling and manicures which brought out many of the mothers. The

> For many years prior to my superintendency in Edgewood I had been a strong advocate for early childhood education.

teachers issued them a number, and while waiting for their number to be called, the mothers were hustled into their children's classrooms where they performed as teacher aides. Fathers were brought to the school to assist in the building and maintenance of playground facilities and in the building of the hundreds of educational toys and manipulatives used in pre-school programs.

Visitors to the Center usually found themselves similarly involved in instructional activity. We had visitors from over one-half of the 50 states, and the never-ending stream was becoming a problem until the 20 teachers requested that visitors provide instructional assistance, rather than sit in the rear of the room as non-participating observers.

In addition to instruction and curriculum development, Center personnel conducted research and training activities. Innovative practices included extensive staff participation in school management, a precursor of the site-based management which was to become universally accepted

almost 25 years later. Other innovations included the employment of a social worker, the use of outdoor language development activities, flexibility in student assignments with extensive exchange of individual students and groups, a community employment agency, pre-natal parent training, infant stimulation and comprehensive medical and dental services.

The most amazing characteristic of these 20 teachers was their creative capability. There was no student, instructional or administrative problem that they could not solve in their daily staff meetings, although I frequently had to spend hours putting out brush fires ignited by their creative genius.

All 20 teachers participated in the design of the José A. Cárdenas Early Childhood Center, built in 1972 with Model Cities funds. The facility was unique in many ways. It was designed for pre-school age children with hardware and fixtures easily accessible to a three-year-old child. There was an emphasis on de-institutionalization with individual rest rooms rather than the traditional gang facilities common to schools. The Center did not include a cafeteria. Meals prepared in the kitchen were served in a home setting in each classroom in order to make the meal part of the instructional activity. The building had ample provisions for research, staff training and curriculum development.

My main contribution to this

In This Issue...

Boosting Our Understanding of Bilingual Education: A Refresher on Philosophy and Models

Adela Solís, Ph. D.

Bilingual education is a simple label, its formal definition not difficult to understand. However, it is not an education program that is easy to operationalize. A school that has not implemented a bilingual program before, or wants to improve its current bilingual education offerings to students, may engage in a search of the literature for a sensible-sounding, well-articulated model to adopt. Another school may actually visit program sites in search of the same. Both endeavors often yield frustrating results. The probable reason? The model is not understood or schools discover that its settings are not compatible.

A better approach to establish an appropriate program would be for educators to first engage in careful study of the key

> In the United States, and other parts of the world, there has always been some form of bilingual, even multi-lingual, education.

features and underlying principles of bilingual education models, noting specifically the non-negotiable aspects that must be in place in order to achieve the stated outcomes of the model.

Second, it would be useful to carefully assess and become very familiar with the

local circumstances (requirements and aims of the school and community, resources, etc.) to determine which model would be most effective.

Finally, a model must not only be *adopted* but also *adapted* to the unique characteristics of the school. The challenge of this step is to shape a local program that is appropriate and observes faithfully the non-negotiable or critical features of the model. This latter process is indeed a challenging one, as it involves bringing together diverse perspectives and understandings, but it must be accomplished in order to implement an appropriate, context responsive model of bilingual education.

This article presents a refresher of bilingual education philosophy and models and, most importantly, lists resources that provide a more detailed and useful discussion of these models and their implementation. This can help educators who need a boost in understanding so as to facilitate better choices in planning for bilingual education.

Basically, bilingual education is an education program offered in two languages; it is also referred to as dual language instruction. In the United States, and other parts of the world, there has always been some form of bilingual, even multi-lingual, education.

In this country bilingual education programs typically serve language-minority students, but in the past several years the trend has changed so that now there are programs serving all types of students. Even native English-speaking mainstream students, upon request or with approval from parents, are joining language-minority students in learning via two languages and developing or strengthening their bilingual skills.

Early descriptions of bilingual education portrayed a range of instructional models which were possible depending on such things as language teaching resources available in schools, the languages spoken in communities, and the status of the target languages (Mackey, 1970). Currently,

Bilingual Education - continued on page 4

Comparative Features of Two Bilingual Education Programs and their Philosophies

Transitional Bilingual Education	Maintenance Bilingual Education
Teaching through the home language (Spanish) until student is proficient enough in the majority language (English) to cope with all-English instruction.	Teaching the curriculum through both majority and minority language (English and Spanish).
Intensive instruction in the majority language (English) using second language methodology.	Intensive instruction in the majority language (English) using second language methodology.
Amount of time in home language (Spanish) instruction is determined by level of proficiency in the majority language (English), until a "threshold" level of proficiency is acquired which predicts success in all English instruction.	Strengthening the home language (Spanish) through strong language arts instruction. Equal amounts of majority and home language continues throughout elementary school years or longer.
Aim is to increase use of the majority language (English) while proportionally decreasing the use of the home language (Spanish).	Aim is maintenance of high levels of language skills in both languages. Home language (Spanish) is equally protected and developed.
Ultimate goal is monolingualism.	Ultimate goal is bilingualism.
It is a process of subtractive bilingualism.	It is a process of additive bilingualism.
Considered "assimilationist".	Considered "pluralistic".

descriptions and definitions of bilingual education are based specifically on the philosophy of or rationale for offering bilingual education.

Maintenance and Transitional Philosophies

Essentially, there are two philosophies of bilingual education: *maintenance* and *transitional*. The maintenance philosophy promotes developing, enriching and preserving the two languages and, as such, promotes additive bilingualism. This process involves adding second language skills to a person's linguistic repertoire in a context where both the two languages and cultures are equally valued.

The transitional philosophy, on the other hand, allows the development and strengthening of the home language so that it can serve as a vehicle for learning subject matter, but the home language is de-emphasized and eventually abandoned as English skills are mastered. As such, transitional bilingual education promotes subtractive bilingualism, where only the dominant language and culture have prominence (Baker, 1993, Lessow-Hurley, 1990).

The bilingual skills that a person possesses in instances of subtractive bilingualism often are limited and not useful for either communicative or learning purposes. The box on Page 3 summarizes the essential premises of these two programs and their inherent philosophies using Spanish and English as example languages.

Schools operate a variety of bilingual education programs; this variance has to do with the specific needs, goals, perspectives and resources that are available in the districts and communities. **All varieties of bilingual education espouse either a maintenance or transitional philosophy.**

Types of Bilingual Education Models

The table on Page 6 delineates the most recent salient models of bilingual education that are possible and, in fact, functioning in schools. The design and philosophy of the program and the outcomes that can be expected from its implementation can also be discerned here (Baker, 1993, Genesee, 1987).

Why Bilingual Programs Look Different

Although, the definition and description of bilingual education seems straightforward, implementing the models is complex, as there is great variation in the

In this country bilingual education programs typically serve language-minority students, but in the past several years the trend has changed so that now there are programs serving all types of students.

manner in which the instruction is actually carried out.

Variation exists in such areas as classroom organization and scheduling, number and type of students served, staffing patterns, curriculum materials, methodology, and management style. **Programs look different primarily because of differences in the philosophy and directives that govern the programs.**

Consider these two scenarios. School A enrolls a majority of LEP students and thus, per statute, must implement a bilingual education program. Because school leaders in this school espouse an "English only" philosophy, they will commit to a Transitional Bilingual Education model. Faculty and parent support for the program, and available resources will further dictate whether this will be an early-exit or late-exit program.

The model in this school will focus on English learning. It will implement a specific schedule, use specific staffing patterns and specific materials as dictated by their specific circumstances.

School B, on the other hand, enrolls equal numbers of LEP and mainstream students. The mainstream students' families value the language and culture of the minority (LEP) students and aspire for their children to learn a second language. This school has leaders and faculty that similarly value the language of the minority students and English. Furthermore, the school has resources, or knowledge of where to acquire resources, to implement a bilingual program for both student groups.

This model will focus on bilingualism aiming at full literacy development of English and the second language. Faculty and parent support for the program and available resources will determine whether this will be a bilingual immersion or a two-way bilingual model and whether this program will initially employ a 90/10, 80/20, 60/40 or 50/50 language

use formula. The program time frame, schedule, staffing, curriculum materials and methodology also will be dictated by the characteristics in this school.

Which Models Should My School Use?

At a minimum, Texas, and other states, require that schools provide transitional bilingual education to elementary school students who have been assessed as being limited in their English skills. The use of the home language as a vehicle for learning the school curricula and intensive specialized instruction in English (English as a second language), is the *minimum* that schools can offer LEP students to be in compliance with the federal civil rights regulations and state statutes that protect the education rights of these students (IDRA, 1995). However, **in many cases, schools are not prohibited, and in some cases, are even encouraged to go beyond this minimum bilingual education program.**

State regulations in Texas, for instance, permit schools to submit "local plans" that incorporate what the law requires but that further employ "innovative approaches" to meet the "affective, linguistic, and cognitive needs of limited English proficient students" (Texas Register 5700, 1996). Furthermore, Texas permits and supports the bilingual learning of mainstream students who are placed within the district's state-mandated bilingual program.

In this context, schools in Texas can and do implement a range of program models. A growing number of schools across the state have been implementing voluntary programs that educate and develop bilingual skills in native English-speaking students that clearly go beyond what the state requires.

Some schools may separately operate the required programs for LEP students and the voluntary programs for other students. Others creatively combine all students in one bilingual program, usually a two-way dual language program. **This flexibility in program options also exists in a number of other states and should be explored further by schools desiring to exercise these options.**

Resources on Bilingual Education Models

The list below identifies some key resources providing a more detailed and useful discussion of these models and their implementation which can aid educators' understanding and use of bilingual education.

Bilingual Education - continued from page 4

Books and Web Sites

Colin Baker. (1993). Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism. Clevedon, Avon, England, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA: Multilingual Matters.

James Crawford. (1999, 4th ed.). Bilingual Education: History, Politics, Theory and Practice. Los Angeles, California: Educational Services, Inc.

Cheryl A. Roberts (1995). Bilingual Education Program Models: A Framework for Understanding. The Bilingual Research Journal, Summer/Fall, Vol. 19 nos. 3&4, pp. 369-378.

J.D. Williams and Grace C. Snipper, (1990). Literacy and Bilingualism. New York: Longman.

National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu

Intercultural Development Research Association http://www.idra.org

Center for Applied Linguistics http://www.cal.org

Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence http://www.crede.usc.edu

Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs http://www.ed.gov/offices/OBEMLA/index.html

Texas Center for Bilingual and ESL Education http://www.tcbee.org/BilingualHomePage.htm

Resources

Baker. C. *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* (Clevedon Avon, England, Philadelphia, PA, USA: Multilingual Matters, 1993).

Subchapter BB. Commissioner's Rules Concerning State Plan for Educating Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students, (19TAC Sect. 89-1201-89.1265) 1996.

Genesee, F. *Learning through Two Languages: Studies of Immersion and Bilingual Education* (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1987).

Intercultural Development Research Association. Federal Statutes and Directives Regarding National Origin Students (Technical Assistance Module). (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 1995).

Lessow-Hurley, J. The Foundations of Dual Language Instruction. (New York: Longman, 1990).

Mackey, W.F., (1970). "A typology of bilingual education," *Foreign Language Annals* 3, 596-608.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT IDRA ACTIVITIES

In February, IDRA worked with **9,517** teachers, administrators, parents, and higher education personnel through **72** training and technical assistance activities and **276** program sites in **14** states plus the United Kingdom and Brazil. Topics included:

+ Strategies for teaching bilingually
+ Teaching math to second language learners
+ Creating effective schools for all adolescents
+ Instructional support for teachers of Kickapoo students
+ Accelerated schools

Participating agencies and school districts included:
✧ Corpus Christi Independent School District (ISD), Texas
✧ Washington, D.C., Public Schools
✧ Guymon Public Schools, Oklahoma
✧ Houston ISD, Texas
✧ Jefferson Parish, Louisiana

Activity Snapshot
Evaluation is crucial to implementing a program and to making it better as it goes along. IDRA's Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program has a 16-year track record of success that has been supported by rigorous evaluation. Evaluation consists of quantitative and qualitative measures – including school life scores; grades in mathematics, reading and English; achievement test scores; disciplinary action referrals; and absenteeism rates. A pre-test and post-test design measures the program's affect on tutor's perceived self-concept, language proficiency, aspirations and expectations, feelings of belonging in school, and relationships with family members. Data is collected throughout the school year through surveys, formal observations and in-depth interviews. This school year, the program has 241 participating schools. During the summer, IDRA will process more than 25,000 surveys and evaluation forms. End-of-year evaluation reports will be provided to all program sites to inform them of the program's effect on students and to assist them in making any needed improvements in implementation for next year.

Regularly, IDRA staff provides services to:
+ public school teachers
+ parents
+ administrators
+ other decision makers in public education

Services include:
✧ training and technical assistance
✧ evaluation
✧ serving as expert witnesses in policy settings and court cases
✧ publishing research and professional papers, books, videos and curricula

For information on IDRA services for your school district or other group, contact IDRA at 210/444-1710.

Salient Bilingual Education Models

Type of Model	Description	Language Learning Outcome
Transitional Bilingual Education	Primary language is used as the medium of instruction until such time as students sufficiently master English. Focus is on English proficiency.	
Early-exit	*Early-exit* offers initial instruction in primary language, usually limited to initial reading instruction and used as support for clarification of English. All other instruction is in English. Primary instruction is phased out and mainstreamed into English – usually at the end of two years.	*Early-exit*–English literacy. Subtractive bilingualism occurs, as it does not permit complete development of primary language literacy;
Late-exit	*Late-exit* offers a minimum of 40 percent of their instructional time in the primary language in language arts, reading and core subject areas – math, science, social studies. Sixty percent of English instruction students typically are offered bilingual instruction through grade six unless the English proficiency goal is met before then.	*Late-exit*–English literacy, but supportive of additive bilingualism if students' home language skills are fully developed to the level of English by grade six.
Maintenance	Program offered to support and encourage learning in two languages and to develop proficiency in both languages. Bilingualism, including biliteracy, is the goal and both languages are valued. Some consider the program to be maintenance only when there is a K-12 program in place. Others consider it a maintenance program if it affords full development of bilingual skills – literacy in both languages at any reasonable point.	Additive bilingualism; Biliteracy
Bilingual Immersion	Dual language instruction that promotes biliteracy by immersing second language learners into content instruction in the two languages. Typically a minimum of 50 percent of the school day is devoted to each of the two languages, for example, Spanish immersion occurs in the morning and English immersion in the afternoon. Some models vary the balance of language use to primary language/English (Spanish/English) ratios of 90/10, 80/20, and 60/40.	Additive Bilingualism and Biliteracy. It allows for fully developing literacy in both languages.
Two-Way Dual Language	This model resembles bilingual immersion but differs in that, instead of student groups learning separately, classes have mixed enrollment of native speakers and second language learners. For example, the class may be made up of LEP students who are native speakers of Spanish and native English speakers who are learning Spanish as a second language. The design calls for students to be language models for each other and engages them in helping the other master the language. LEP students who participate in two-way programs received structured intensive ESL instruction; native English speakers receive the typical English language arts.	Bilingualism and Biliteracy, in both groups of learners. It allows for fully developing literacy in both languages

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"Recess" Provides Cognitive, Social and Psychomotor Opportunities for Growth

Yojani Fatima Hernández

As a child in elementary school I looked forward to recess with excitement. I wanted to play tether ball, hopscotch, jump rope, freeze tag and I loved to climb the monkey bars. I wanted to be with my friends and be outside in the open air away from the confines of the classroom. I wanted to play. I did not realize I was learning socialization and motor skills while I was having fun.

During recess children practice and apply the things they may have learned in class or at home. According to Pellegrini and Glickman, "Recess is one of the few times during the school day when children are free to exhibit a wide range of social competencies – sharing, cooperation, negative and passive language – in context that they see meaningful. Only at recess does the playground become one of the few places where children can actually define and enforce meaningful social interaction during the day. Without recess, children lose an important educational experience" (1989).

Debate over playtime

Some believe that time in the classroom is more important or valuable than time on the playground. According to Benjamin O. Canada, the superintendent of Atlanta schools, "We are intent on improving academic performance and you don't do that by having kids hang on monkey bars" (Johnson, 1998).

Although this is a rigid view of education, Superintendent Canada is not alone in his ideas. Many educators feel that academic achievement would be more easily achieved if students spent the entire day focusing on that specific goal. I suggest recess serves the physical, educational and social needs of children and therefore fosters academic success.

It is almost impossible to keep active, curious and exuberant elementary school children focused specifically on one goal

> Play allows children to express ideas and feelings, obtain new knowledge and develop oral language skills as they interact with objects and the people around them.

for an entire seven-hour period. In fact, to any child, it would be considered torture to keep them in a classroom all day only to be released at lunch and the end of the school day.

Dr. Anthony Pellegrini, a professor of child development at the University of Georgia, argues that prolonged periods of confinement in elementary school classrooms can lead to increased fidgeting, restlessness, and a subsequent inability to concentrate (Pellegrini and Davis, 1993).

That is not to say that the sole purpose of recess is to let children blow off steam. It is essential that children be given the opportunity to expend energy and interact with one another in meaningful ways. Recess is incredibly valuable to students and to teachers. Play allows children to express ideas and feelings, obtain new knowledge and develop oral

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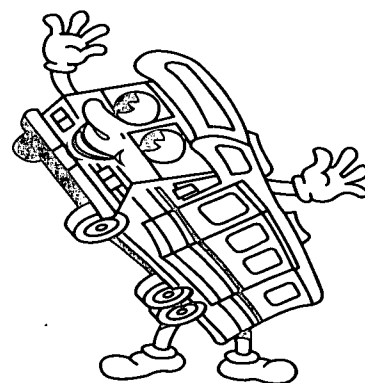
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Answer the question of the month!
Each month we will ask a new question for readers online. A sample of responses will be posted online.

This month's question is...
> *Name one event that most influence your decision to become an educator. Why?*

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language skills as they interact with objects and the people around them.

Play as a vehicle for learning

The work of Piaget and Vygotsky asserts that development occurs as a result of the child constructing meanings through interaction with their environment (McCollum, 1994). Play is the vehicle for learning and through play children are able to answer their own questions and test their own limits in ways that are important to them. Consider the girl who ventured to the top of the monkey bars. She calls to you "*Mira que alto llegué!* [Look how high I got!]" She questions herself on whether she can do it, she starts climbing to test this and finally she finds her answer: She does it! (Bauer, 1996).

During recess children are able to develop their cognitive skills and learn to deal with social situations. For example, during a game of tag children learn cooperation. Pellegrini and Glickman assert: "to the extent that the play requires cooperation they learn to solve problems in such forms of play. They realize that in order to sustain their chase play with peers, they must take turns being the chaser or the chased. If they refuse to change roles, the game ends. This reciprocating role is a powerful predictor of the ability to cooperate and view events from different perspectives" (1989).

We also have to keep in mind that children resort to physical means of communication sometimes because they do not have the verbal skills to express frustration and other feelings. Thus, playing is an important part of children's learning how to interact with their environment and with their peers (Hernández, 1998).

According to the Texas Education Agency's *Pre-kindergarten Guidelines: Physical Development*, children also develop and foster fundamental gross and fine motor skills during play. Movement is essential to a young person's life, especially in developing necessary skills to function throughout life.

Through movement and activity, children become aware of their physical space and begin understanding how their bodies function in space. Later, through practice, children develop greater control of their gross-motor manipulative skills, such as throwing, catching, bouncing, and g. As development progresses,

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Recess benefits both teachers and students and is essential to the healthy development of all children.

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children become more adept in fine-motor skills, including object-handling activities, using a computer mouse, cutting with scissors, and drawing (1999).

Play benefits educators

During recess teachers can observe children on the playground and assess patterns of behavior, development of gender roles, and social interactions. This is an extraordinary opportunity to see children outside the confines of the classroom and observe how they interact with one another in an unstructured environment. "What the teacher learns through careful observation of the children playing during free times could prove invaluable for curriculum enrichment and give teachers insight into children's socio-emotional and psychological needs" (Johnson, 1998).

Not only does recess offer teachers a view of the whole child but it also assists teachers in keeping children focused in a healthy and educational way. The National Association for the Education of Young Children maintains that unstructured play is a developmentally appropriate outlet for reducing stress in children's lives and research shows that physical activity improves children's attentiveness and decreases restlessness (1997).

Recess has never been a waste of time. It benefits both teachers and students and is essential to the healthy development of all children. When I think back on my educational experiénces, both good and bad, the most profound experiences were during recess. I learned how to deal with difficult situations, I learned how to tie my shoes, I learned how to count to 20, and I learned how to make friends.

These experiences were not the extent of my learning but they were a very important beginning. I remember being asked by my second grade teacher "What do you like best about school?" and I remember shyly answering "recess."

I was curious as to how much things may have changed since I was in elementary school so I asked my nephew, "What do you like best about school?" And without so much as a hesitation or a

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pause he announces in a loud clear voice "Recess!" Children love to play and it is in their best interest and ours to allow them the space and time they deserve to express themselves.

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Brain Development and Mastery of Language in the Early Childhood Years

Elaine Shiver, M.S.S.W.

Parents of young children and professionals working with young children watch with anticipation the developmental milestones indicating a child is picking up the skills expected at a certain age. In the first year of life that focus is typically on motor skills, in the second year attention shifts to language development.

The development of communication through language is an instinctive process. Language is our most common means of interacting with one another, and children begin the process naturally. Neurobiologist Dr. Lise Eliot writes: "the reason language is instinctive is because it is, to a large extent, hard-wired in the brain. Just as we evolve neural circuits for eating and seeing, so has our brain, together with a sophisticated vocal apparatus, evolved a complex neural circuit for rapidly perceiving, analyzing, composing, and producing language" (Eliot, 1999).

We also know, however, that the experiences provided in a child's environment are critical for the development of language. It is this interplay of nature and nurture that results in our ability to communicate, but the process of learning language begins with how the brain is structured.

The brain is structured for language

Neuroscientists tell us that a baby is born with millions of brain cells, all he or she will ever need. Each brain cell has branching appendages, called dendrites, that reach out to make connections with other brain cells. The places where brain cells connect are called synapses. When electrical signals pass from brain cell to brain cell, they cross the synapse between the cells.

When synapses are stimulated over and over, that pattern of neural connections is "hard-wired" in the brain. It becomes an efficient, permanent pathway that allows signals to be transmitted quickly and accurately. Advances in brain-imaging technology in recent years have confirmed this process.

New technology has allowed us to see that there are physical differences in a child's that has been appropriately stimulated,

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> New technology has allowed us to see that there are physical differences in a child's brain that has been appropriately stimulated, versus one that has suffered lack of stimulation.

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versus one that has suffered lack of stimulation. Connections that are not stimulated by repeated experiences atrophy, or fade away. It is truly a "use-it-or-lose-it" situation.

We know that reorganization of the connections between brain cells after birth is highly impacted by experiences provided by the child's environment. Parents play an invaluable role in influencing the child's cognitive, language, motor, and social emotional development. It is through providing repeated, positive experiences for their child that parents have a lasting impact on his or her child's brain development.

Beneficial habits

Good nutrition and healthy routines are important to the brain's developmental process. Brain cells are covered with a fatty substance called myelin that insulates the neural pathways to provide for efficient signal transfer. Infants must receive sufficient fat in their diets provided by breast milk or formula prepared in the proper strength.

Also, babies need a lot of sleep, because their brains need to experience both deep sleep and rapid eye movement sleep for proper development. Establishing routines for eating and sleeping are among the most important things parents can do to assist healthy brain development in their child.

Critical periods for learning language

Critical periods in brain development accommodate the development of specific skills, language being one of these. During certain times in the child's life, the brain is

active in forming connections for specific abilities.

While critical periods are prime times for the development of specific neural synapses, skills can still be learned after a window of opportunity has closed, but with greater time and effort. It is during these critical periods that lack of stimulation or negative experiences can have the most impact.

Parents can support their child's brain development for language during these times by providing experiences that allow the child to practice emerging skills. Opportunities during the course of the day to engage in face-to-face interaction, hear language being spoken, listen to the written word read aloud, and practice associating objects with words provide language experiences without undue stress or overstimulation.

One of the first windows of opportunity for language comes early in life. We know that infants start out able to distinguish the sound of all languages, but that by six months of age they are no longer able to recognize sounds that are not heard in their native tongue. As infants hear the patterns of sound in their own language, a different cluster of neurons in the auditory cortex of the brain responds to each sound. By six months of age, infants will have difficulty picking out sounds they have not heard repeated often.

Windows of opportunity for language development occur throughout life. The window for syntax or grammar is open during the preschool years and may close as early as five or six years of age, while the window for adding new words never closes completely.

Language development begins early

Researchers now tell us that an infant is able to respond to sound 10 weeks before birth, learning the mother's voice and the sound pattern of the language she speaks prenatally through bone conduction. A baby takes comfort in hearing his mother's voice after birth, therefore a mother's lullaby can be very calming, especially if the mother sang to the baby during pregnancy.

While a newborn does not use words, he is definitely able to communicate. He can look into his father's or mother's face in a way that tells them he wants to hear their voices. By crying he is able to let them know when he is hungry, cold, needs a diaper change, or has other needs to be met.

An infant's brain responds best to a type of speech called "parentese," which adults use naturally when speaking to babies. Parentese uses short, simple sentences, prolonged vowel sounds, more inflection in the voice, and a higher pitch than the speech used when talking to another adult. Studies have shown that when parents spoke parentese, the baby was able to connect words sooner to the objects they represent.

Parents provide the means of learning language

Brain development information simply reinforces much of what early childhood experts have been suggesting for years. The development of language is tremendously influenced by parent-child interactions. In the first year, it is important to talk, sing, and read to the baby often so he can learn the sounds of his native language.

In addition to learning the sounds of speech, during the first six months a child's brain begins to learn which mouth movements go with the sounds. That is the reason it is important to have lots of face-to-face conversations with the baby as the parent interprets the world around him.

Cooing, and then babbling are milestones in language acquisition. Babies like to mimic what they hear. By speaking to the child and imitating the child's sounds, a parent not only teaches the child sound patterns but encourages taking turns, a process necessary for conversation. Studies have shown that children whose parents spoke to them more often know many more words by age two and scored higher on standardized tests by age three than those whose parents did not.

In the second year of life, the brain organizes the connections for language when the child sees pictures in a book and hears the parent give names for the pictures simultaneously. Parents and other primary caregivers can help language development at this age by reciting nursery rhymes, songs, and poems throughout the day. Activities such as using a mirror to point out and name facial features are also helpful at this age. Ideal times for story telling and reading are relaxed moments before naptime or bedtime.

Between 24 and 35 months of age the brain is getting better at forming mental symbols for objects, people, and events. This is directly related to the growing ability to use many more words and short sentences.

Delays in language can have a variety of sources. When parents suspect such delays it is always prudent to check with a professional. Repeated ear infections in the first few years delay expressive language. It is always important to watch for signs of ear infections in a young child, such as not reacting to sound, pulling one's ears, reluctance to suck, resistance to laying down, or having an upper respiratory infection.

Speaking two languages at home

Hearing two languages spoken at home is a real advantage to the child. If a child hears two languages from birth, he or she will maintain the ability to hear the sounds of both and be able to speak each language with the accent of a native speaker.

If parents each speak a different language, it is helpful if the child hears the same language consistently from the parent who is its native speaker. If, for example, the mother is a native English speaker and the father a native Spanish speaker, it will be less confusing for the child to hear each parent speak in his or her native language.

The child may mix the languages in his or her own speech initially, but will typically sort it out by approximately two and one-half years of age. Then he or she will separate the words belonging to each language and know which language to use with which parent. By seven years of age, the child is likely to be able to cope with the two language systems without a problem, using both vocabulary and grammar appropriate for his age.

If a child enters a pre-school and is first exposed to a second language after the age of three, she will still be able to acquire the second language easily because she knows the rules of communication. In three to seven months the child will begin to understand the second language. After about two years she will be able to carry-on a fluent conversation.

Young children learn a second language more easily than adults because the window of opportunity for learning language is still open for them. Helping the child build her self-confidence during the time she is learning a second language is very important.

Music is a great way to help the child learn words and phrases in the new language.

Talking slowly, clearly, and simply is also helpful. It is also important for parents to continue speaking to the child at home in her native language because it continues to lay the foundation for the second language by providing the basic rules of communication. Also, the parent-child interaction might suffer if the parents speak less to the child in an attempt to use the second language.

Support for parents

Parents play a key role in helping their child learn language. Programs that give parents child development information can help parents understand how to nurture their child's growing language skills. They offer research-based suggestions for parents at each stage of development. Parents as Teachers is an example of a parent support and information program, and is one of the models supported by IDRA's Project RE-CONNECT. Parents and professionals can visit the Parents as Teachers web site at http://www.patnc.org for more information about the program and suggestions for supporting their child's language development.

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prototype pre-school program was fiscal management. Since the program was located in the poorest school district in Texas, local funds were too scarce to augment the core funding by the San Antonio Model Cities Program. The entire Center was partially supported by funds from Title I and Title I - Migrant from the federal Elementary and Secondary School Act of 1965, Career Opportunities, Urban/Rural, Experimental Schools and National School Lunch programs. Additional funds came from the Handy Andy food store chain and from various foundations.

I have always believed that the main reason for dismantling this most successful program after I left Edgewood schools was the inability, or unwillingness, of subsequent administrators to do the innovative financial juggling necessary to support the program from more than a dozen sources of funds.

As early as 1970, the Edgewood Early Childhood Education Center staff had identified the three essential components of all successful innovative school programs: the valuing of children, the provision of support services and forming unique interrelationships among the home, the community and the school.

The success of this program raises some interesting educational issues. Foremost is the assumption that the existence of the three essential components, valuing of children, support services and home relationships, can provide the elusive success so drastically absent in regular and traditional school programs. Since my experiences in Edgewood, I have maintained that the presence of these three characteristics of successful innovative programs in the regular school program can bring about an immediate solution to the education of children from atypical populations.

A second issue is the conspicuous absence of teacher preparation among the Center staff. Can one assume that teacher preparation is a liability and its absence an asset for teaching personnel? I don't believe so. I believe that my magnificent 20 were successful in spite of a lack of preparation and experience, rather than because of it. The most that I am willing to concede is that no preparation and experience is preferable to poor preparation and experience.

A third issue is the extent to which school governance and tradition constrain teacher creativity. I believe that the unusual creativity of the pre-school group was related to the complete absence of experienced personnel that have already learned the boundaries of teacher behavior imposed by the school. If each of these 20 teachers had been assigned to the various elementary schools, I doubt that even a small fraction of their creative potential would have ever surfaced.

A fourth issue is the obvious existence of a "tipping" factor. A group establishes the norm for the behavior of its members. When a majority of the group holds a specific view or value, all members of the group are expected to share the view or value, or at least behave in ways consistent with the majority view.

At the Cárdenas Center, unlike other district schools, corporal punishment was deemed unprofessional and unnecessary. When a problem teacher was transferred to this school and the whipping of pre-school children became routine in her classroom, she was professionally and socially ostracized by Center staff, until she requested a transfer from the Center.

School personnel commonly adhere to the "deficit" model, that is, that the poor school performance of atypical children can be attributed to deficit characteristics of such populations. This accounts for the low levels of expectancy which is the most formidable barrier to the successful educational performance of minority and other atypical children. Efforts of individual teachers to improve educational opportunities are fruitless as long as these teachers constitute a minority in the school. Success will remain elusive until such a time as school personnel believing

All Pianos Have Keys and Other Stories

by Dr. José A. Cárdenas

In a way, this small, 134-page book complements Dr. José A. Cárdenas' larger *Multicultural Education: A Generation of Advocacy* published by Simon and Schuster. The multicultural education book is an anthology of 92 professional articles resulting from his 45 years as a professional educator. *All Pianos Have Keys* represents the lighter side of these 45 years.

"The seriousness of my professional life has been paralleled by extensive humor in my personal life. I enjoy a funny story and a good joke," writes Cárdenas in the Preface.

The first eight articles deal with the lighter side of his life. They include personal anecdotes from childhood to adulthood. The second section consists of 12 anecdotes where humor and professional seriousness have intersected. The last section consists of nine articles on a variety of professional topics addressed in a lighter context than is possible in professional publications.

All Pianos Have Keys is distributed exclusively by the Intercultural Development Research Association ($12.70). Contact IDRA at 210-444-1710 or 5835 Callaghan Road, Suite 350, San Antonio, Texas 78228; Fax 210-444-1714. Shipping and handling is 10 percent of the total price of the order. Orders must be prepaid. Purchase orders for orders totaling more than $30 are accepted. Overstock returns are not accepted unless by prior written agreement.

that atypical children have positive qualities for successful school performance become the majority in the school and dictate educational policy favorable for successful performance. Their advocacy for atypical children is now often deemed unacceptable behavior by the professional group. If the number of school personnel with a positive perception of such children increases to the point that they constitute a majority of the school personnel, then it can be expected that "tipping" will take place, with a group value reversal, and student deficit perceptions will become the unacceptable perspective.

A fifth issue which surfaced early in the Center and 25 years later became a state-wide issue is the emphasis and content of the pre-school program. The primary value of pre-school education for economically disadvantaged children should be the provision of enriching experiences for physical, mental, social and emotional development. This development subsequently enhances student performance in the academic content of the first grade. Unfortunately, school personnel have a tendency to view pre-school programs as an opportunity to present academic content at an earlier age. According to evaluation reports, this "pushdown" curriculum is prevalent in the new state pre-school program, with disastrous results. The curriculum that six-year-old atypical children found difficult is now being presented to three-year-old children with a lower level of development. Such academically oriented pre-school programs increase the propensity for failure and brings about failure and the accompanying negative concepts of self at an earlier age.

Pre-school program staff are pressured by the regular staff to introduce academic content, hoping that the early exposure will enhance academic performance in the regular grades, with an accompanying improved performance on the state-mandated competency tests. The location of the Cárdenas Center in a separate and isolated facility provided a buffer from regular program staff in the various elementary schools. The decentralization of the early childhood program and the assignment of participating children to individual schools eliminated this buffer. It is therefore not surprising that pre-school programs were pressured into the "pushdown" curriculum with a substantial decline in student performance.

The four years that I worked with the staff of the Edgewood early childhood education center are by far the most rewarding in my professional career. The unbelievable success of the program can be attributed to the caring, hard work and dedication of 20 magnificent teachers that created their own mold for a school and its educational program.

The group was dispersed shortly after my leaving the district. The relationships among staff have persevered over the years and many of the teachers still communicate and interact with each other. Some of them I haven't seen in many years. Others, I see regularly. And one of my magnificent 20, Laura Tobin, I see every day. We have been married since 1972.

José A. Cárdenas, Ed.D., is founder and executive director emeritus. Comments and questions may be directed to him via e-mail at contact@idra.org.

Creating schools that work for all children,
through research ◦ materials development ◦ training ◦ technical assistance ◦ evaluation ◦ information dissemination

IDRA Newsletter

Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program Addressing the Digital Divide

Linda Cantu, M.A.

The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is an internationally recognized cross-age tutoring program developed by the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) in 1984. In the program, secondary school students who are considered to be at-risk of dropping of school out of school are placed as tutors of elementary school students, enabling the older students to make a difference in the younger students' lives. With a growing sense of responsibility, pride and support, the tutors stay in school and do better.

Currently the program has more than 241 schools participating in Brazil, England and seven U.S. states – Arizona, California, Illinois, New Mexico, New York, Texas and Washington, D.C. There are more than 5,200 students, (1,300 secondary school students and 3,900 elementary school students), participating in the program.

The Digital Divide

IDRA is working through the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program to overcome the digital divide by encouraging the use of technology as a way for students to communicate with each other, prepare presentations that highlight the work they, as tutors, do and explain what the program is about.

The term *digital divide* refers to the gap between those groups in the United States who have access to technology and those who do not. A report released by the National Telecommunications Information Administration, *Falling Through the Net: Defining the Digital Divide*, found that if

you are poor, older, less-educated, African American, Hispanic or Native American and live in a rural area you are less likely to have access to technology (Green, 2000).

Many of the students who participate in the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program are African American, Hispanic and Native American, come from low socioe-conomic communities and come from rural communities.

The students in the program often do not have good access to the technology that exists in their schools. Often the hardware exists, but the expertise to use it is limited or non-existent.

PowerPoint Presentations

Tutors in the program and the teacher coordinators who work with them are learning to use and are becoming experts in computer software, such as Microsoft Word and PowerPoint. They are using digital cameras and inserting digital photographs into their presentations; they are using projection systems, e-mail, the Internet and video conference equipment as communication tools.

At the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program International Teacher Coordinators Meeting held in San Antonio in February 2001, teacher coordinators gave PowerPoint presentations to highlight their programs. These presentations were joint creations of the teacher coordinators and tutors.

One teacher coordinator said that his students prepared the entire presentation including the use of digital photographs
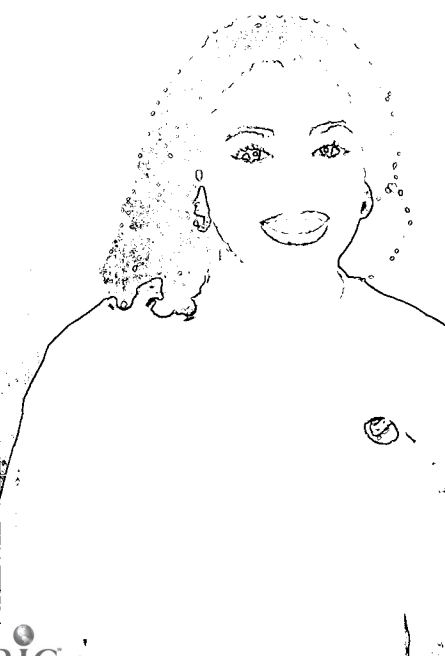
they had taken of themselves tutoring, on field trips and with guest speakers. Just before he left, the students showed him how to use the equipment and asked him if he was sure he would be able to work the equipment on his own. The tutors have become the teachers and the teachers have become the students.

The students are utilizing sophisticated equipment that many teachers call on the school's technology experts to handle. Another teacher said his students have become so adept at using the equipment, they help around the school with other teachers who need technology support.

These are students who generally are considered at-risk of leaving school and low-academic achievers. The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program supports and encourages teacher coordinators and their students to utilize technology. These examples show that, given the opportunity and teachers who believe in them, students can excel.

Video Conferences

IDRA has facilitated video conferences between Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program students for the past three years. During April and May 2001, IDRA will hold seven video conferences among 14 different schools from eight different school districts in eight cities. The districts are in three states, Texas (Brownsville, Deer Park, La Joya, Mission and San Antonio),

Tutors in the program and the teacher coordinators who work with them are learning to use and are becoming experts in the use of computers software, such as Microsoft Word and

California (San José and Los Angeles), and New Mexico (Cobre). More than 300 students will participate in these video conferences.

The purpose of the video conferences is to give tutors from different cities an opportunity to meet each other and see that they are part of an expansive group of tutors who provide support, through tutoring, to younger students. The use of technology – video conferencing – has been one vehicle used to accomplish this.

There are two facets to this technological endeavor: (1) tutors communicate via e-mail as "keypals" with other tutors before and after the video conference, and (2) the video conference, where tutors meet face-to-face in a two-way audio and video communication.

The video conference experience incorporates many learning opportunities. The students learn video conference etiquette. It allows for tutors to develop oral language skills, writing skills and

editing skills. It teaches them how to present orally in front of a camera – how to project their voice, enunciate, look into the camera, elaborate and expand on their oral presentations.

Each of these tasks, together with their responsibilities as tutors, helps them improve academically and personally and helps them stay in school.

Schools Support Tutors with Technology

Because the tutors have demonstrated their interest, capability and willingness to learn about technology, schools are supporting the tutors in the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program by providing them with computer workstations.

Tutors from Brownsville Independent School District (ISD), La Joya ISD and South San Antonio ISD have provided each teacher coordinator with a laptop computer, portable printer, digital camera and access to a projection box for the program.

This show of support to the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program tutors has demonstrated to both the teachers and the tutors that the students are valued and that someone believes they are capable. It has helped them become better tutors and better students.

Resources

Cantu, L. and L. López-De La Garza. "Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program

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In This Issue...

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The Diversity Bookmarks Collection: A Tool for Optimizing Teacher Usage of the Web   Laura Chris Green, Ph.D.

For bilingual and English as a second language (ESL) teachers, the World Wide Web can be a wonderful, exciting window to the world of people and knowledge. It can also be a confusing, time-wasting maze of irrelevant and inappropriate information. *The Diversity Bookmarks Collection* helps teachers explore the riches of the Internet and lessens the amount of time needed to use it.

Positive Aspects of the Internet

The Internet provides access to reams of printed information, photographs, illustrations, maps, and audio and video files. Renowned authors and experts – on a wide variety of topics – are also accessible on the Internet. The information available is often of high quality and reflects the most recent knowledge of the topic.

Every day more high quality web sites are added to the Internet. Their webmasters make great efforts to make sites interactive by encouraging users to engage in real-time or extended discussions and by using animation, game formats, and various feedback mechanisms to engage visitors more actively with the site's content. The truly amazing thing is, most of this content, once one has Internet access and the right hardware, is totally free, available from anywhere in the world 24 hours a day, and constantly changing, usually for the better.

Challenges of the Internet

The web can be difficult to navigate, especially when one is looking for web sites that address the unique linguistic and cultural interest and needs of highly-diverse learners in bilingual classrooms. Because of its sheer size and its covering of every conceivable topic, all teachers can find the web intimidating and overwhelming.

If teachers try a web-wide search, they may come up with no "hits" or, more commonly, too many. Most of these hits ot for educational purposes and a few

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Because bilingual and ESL educators must teach all subjects to students of all ages, they need access to the best mainstream and specialized web sites.

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may contain adult content considered inappropriate, even offensive, for children.

In addition to this issue – experienced by all teachers – bilingual and ESL teachers need access to web sites in languages other than English, especially to sites in Spanish. They also need to find English-language sites in which the English is simple enough and the graphics are clear enough such that their students can comprehend the information provided.

Sites are also needed that address their students' cultural heritages as well. Sites that originate in their students' countries of origin or are created by others in their ethnic group, are also of great value. But such specialized sites are fewer in number and harder to locate than mainstream, more typical sites.

Why Have "The Diversity Bookmarks Collection?"

All teachers need time to find, preview, evaluate, and adapt web sites to their students' needs and interests. Bilingual and ESL teachers will require *additional time* to locate and adapt web sites for their students. *The Diversity Bookmarks Collection* was created to help teachers by providing a list of more than 800 web site addresses already selected for educational, linguistic, and cultural value. An example is the Intercultural Development Research Association's (IDRA) web site at www.idra.org, which provides online access to this newsletter and other IDRA resources of interest to bilingual educators.

Some of the web sites are mainstream sites designed for regular classroom teachers. They are included in the collection because they provide excellent educational resources that can be used as is or modified for usage in bilingual classrooms. Other sites are specially designed for ESL purposes, are in languages other than English, or have multicultural content.

Development of the Bookmarks

This list of bookmarks, or favorite web sites, was developed by The STAR Center – the comprehensive regional assistance center funded by the U.S. Department of Education to serve Texas by providing support and technical assistance services to the Texas Education Agency, regional service centers, and the local school districts in the state. This collection was developed over the course of three years and represents hundreds of hours of research and web surfing on the part of its author. Although this list is not exhaustive, it includes most of the major web addresses (URLs) that may be of special interest to bilingual and ESL educators and others interested in issues of educational equity and diversity.

Because bilingual and ESL educators must teach all subjects to students of all ages, they need access to the best mainstream and specialized web sites. Selected educational sites that will be of interest to mainstream educators are also included.

Featured Sites

The majority of the sites listed are non-commercial, but a number of commercial sites of high quality, that offer free as well as paid-for products and services, have been included. Commercial sites all have the extension ".com" in their domain names.

Most of the listed web sites are sponsored by educational organizations

such as universities and education agencies with the extension ".edu"; non-profit organizations such as professional associations and research centers with the extension ".org"; and government-funded organizations such as the U.S. Department of Education with the extension ".gov."

Organization

The collection is organized into 13 categories with several subcategories in each. The broad topics covered by the bookmarks are:

*   School subjects: Math, science, social studies, language arts, fine arts;
*   Minority groups: Black, Latino, Native American, Asian, female;
*   Special populations: Bilingual/ESL, migrant, special education, gifted;
*   All ages: Early childhood, adult education, parents, K-12;
*   Assistance centers: Training, technical assistance, research information, program models;
*   Commercial resources: Publishers, software;
*   Professional resources: Associations, journals, grants, libraries; and
*   Technology resources: Clipart graphics, audio, video, plug-ins, non-commercial software, search engines, other major lists of links, and high tech educational projects.

There are more than 60 subcategories that include everything from ERIC databases to museums, from libraries to ESL student activities.

Location and Use

The collection is currently housed on the Texas Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Region II (Tex-TESOL II) web site, but will be available next month online on the IDRA South Central Collaborative for Equity web site at http://www.idra.org/scce/default.htm.

Users can visit the page and click on the hypertext links to go directly to the web sites in the collection. Like the ever-changing web itself, an effort is made to keep the collection continuously updated by checking links to make sure that they are still active or have not changed and by adding new links.

As all who have surfed the web know, it rapidly changes. New sites are continually added, and old ones whither and die. As a result, some of the addresses no longer work because the site has

Internet Web Sites on Technology

Read Me a Book www.readmeabook.com
National Public Radio www.npr.org
Adventure Online www.adventureonline.com/index.html
African Quest and Other Quests quest.classroom.com/archive/africaquest1998/default.asp
MayaQuest quest.classroom.com/maya2001/
Scholastic Network www.scholasticnetwork.com
Amazing Picture Machine www.ncrtec.org/picture.htm
Media Builder Free Image Library www.mediabuilder.com/graphicsfree.html
Techniques for Teaching with Video www.phregents.com/techniqu.html
Classroom Connect www.classroom.net
Guide to Web Site Building www.erols.com/blind/wsr
Guides to Internet Searching www.mnsfld.edu/~library/helpsearch.html
SmartParent.com www.smartparent.com
Teachers' Internet Use Guide (STAR Center) www.starcenter.org
Online ESL Links www.geocities.com/Athens/Academy/4843/onlineesl.htm
Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) www.coe.missouri.edu/~cjw/call/index.htm
Computer Assisted Language Instruction Consortium www.calico.org
Computer Enhanced Language Instruction Archive www.www.latrobe.edu.au/www/education/celia/celia.html
Computer Learning Foundation www.computerlearning.org
Computer Resources for ESL 207.236.117.20/orlac
Kid's Domain Free Software www.kidsdomain.com
Anna Bishop, Multilingual Technologies www.metc.com
ERIC Clearinghouse – Information and Technology ericir.syr.edu/ithome
National Education Technology – Standards cnets.iste.org
North Central Regional Technology in Education Consortium www.ncrtec.org
National Center for Technology Planning www.nctp.com
High Plain Regional Technology in Education Consortium www.hprtec.org
South Central Regional Technology in Eduction Consortium – Texas www.coe.tamu.edu/~texas/index.html
Texas Center for Educational Technology www.tcet.unt.edu
History Channel – Great Speeches www.historychannel.com/speeches/index.htm
The Global Schoolhouse www.gsn.org
Clip Art Connection www.clipartconnection.com/index.html
Clip Art Universe www.nzwwa.com/mirror/clipart

For many more Internet resources and links, go to the "Field Trip" on IDRA's web site.

www.idra.org

changed its address or has become non-existent. Sometimes URLs cannot be reached for a variety of complex electronic and technological reasons. The URL should be attempted several times or in the next few hours or days. If it continues to not work, it may have been moved or discontinued.

The *Diversity Bookmarks Collection* is an important tool to both experienced and new educators. It is frequently used in training teachers on how to integrate technology into their teaching. Educators and administrators are welcome to pass the sites along and use them in trainings.

Laura Chris Green, Ph.D., is a senior education associate in the IDRA Division of Professional Development. Comments and questions may be directed to her via e-mail at contact@idra.org.

Enriching Your Classroom Through Equitable Technology Integration

Jack Dieckmann, M.A. and Abelardo Villarreal, Ph.D.

Technology has the potential to influence the quality of instruction in creative ways that challenge the young minds of our children (Kuforiji, 1999). Although technology is presently used in the classroom for a variety of purposes, its full potential is yet to be explored. Many schools are still struggling to keep up with the rapid pace of technological changes and their applications to school operations and enhanced educational experiences for children.

Though implications for professional development are many, the development of a basic level of competency in the use of technology for instructional purposes among a critical mass of educators remains a difficult challenge.

Much has been written about the growing inequities in technology funding, infrastructure and access, known as the digital divide (Green, 2000). For example, data from the National Center for Educational Statistics show that the higher the percentage of poor and minority students in a school, the lower their access to technology. Fifty percent of high-poverty schools have dedicated computer lines compared to 72 percent of low-poverty schools (Green, 2000). Fewer than 25 percent of teachers of English language learners use technology, and when it is used, it is often for drill and practice activities (Padrón and Waxman, 1996).

While these issues continue to be critical to the mission of equity and excellence for all children, many classroom teachers, and sometimes even building principals, do not have the resources nor the training to provide technology access to diverse student populations.

Let us consider, for a moment, that the campus and the classroom are powerful units of change that can have a decisive impact on the academic achievement of all students. Even though the complexities of technology implementation issues – ranging from effective use to access to diverse populations – may overwhelm the most dedicated educators, principals, teachers and content specialists, they welcome the

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National professional associations in mathematics, science, social studies and language arts all call for technology usage to support engaged learning.

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challenge. These dedicated professionals are asking, "How can we make the most of the technology we *already* have to improve student learning?"

The focus of this article will be on classroom-level technology in the teaching and learning process. We can call this the instructional core of practice. Furthermore, this article provides benchmarks and key indicators for teachers and campus instructional leaders to assess and improve technology integration in diverse classrooms.

Defining Terms: A Prerequisite for Effective Dialogue and Communication

Because the same terms can be used by different people in different contexts to mean different things, we start off with a basic list of technology terms for a general agreement of what is meant.

Technology is an umbrella word that encompasses any electronic or digital process or apparatus associated with improving or enhancing a task or service. In schools, technology is used for information management (grades, payroll), communication (e-mail) and instruction (word processing).

Educational technology can include videos or CDs teachers use to help students understand content and/or

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Take the *IDRA Newsletter* Field Trip!

Go on a "Field Trip" on IDRA's Web Site

◆ Related *IDRA Newsletter* articles and projects
◆ Statistics, definitions, etc.
◆ Internet resources
◆ Internet links
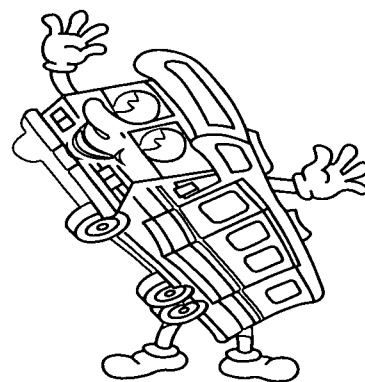
Register for a special prize!

Answer the question of the month!
Each month we will ask a new question for readers online. A sample of responses will be posted online.

This month's question is...
How can technology help to share lessons learned and best practices?

www.idra.org

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become proficient in some technological skills.

Instructional technology refers to student learning that is directly facilitated by technology. Distance learning, whether satellite or web-based, is an example of instructional technology because students receive all their instruction via electronic conduits.

Assistive or *adaptive technology* includes devices that magnify print for the sight-impaired, for instance, or amplify sound for the hearing impaired.

Finally, *connectivity* typically refers to computer access to an internal network for file sharing and connection to the Internet, including the World Wide Web.

Technology as a Tool for Teaching and Learning

A tool is only as good as the user's ability to use it to the benefit of all students and leave no student behind. The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), in their NETS-T Standards delineate the following categories for technology use:

* technology operations and concepts,
* planning and designing learning environments and experiences,
* teaching, learning and the curriculum,
* assessment and evaluation,
* productivity and professional practice, and
* social, ethical, legal and human issues.

Texas, and other states, has adopted a statewide curriculum that includes specific guidelines for student competencies in technology for each grade level. North Carolina's state curriculum also identifies teacher competencies in technology. National professional associations in mathematics, science, social studies and language arts all call for technology usage to support engaged learning. Private sector entities call for schools to produce students who are technologically literate, and able to compete in a global economy.

With technology, equitable funding and equipment are not sufficient indicators that the needs of all students are being met. As educators, we must pay close attention to the *manner and quality* in which technology is used to meet the instructional needs of students.

A principal or other observer may walk into a classroom and see groups of its clustered around computers.

As educators, we must pay close attention to the *manner and quality* in which technology is used to meet the instructional needs of students.

While this configuration appears to support technology integration, more information is needed about the context. The context includes the roles of the teacher and student, and the nature of the task. Each can be thought of along a continuum with key indicators that provide clues about the effectiveness and appropriateness of technology usage.

Technology and Diverse Students: From Deficit-based to Assets-based

Historically, students who under-perform on conventional measures of achievement, largely minority students, have been given remedial instruction consisting of rote memory skills and lifeless curriculum (Darder, 1997). Those students deemed to be gifted or high-ability are often given more interesting and engaging learning opportunities, rich in exploration and discovery.

Many times this stratification of learners and learning opportunities is promoted by a deficit perception of students' abilities. English language learners and others considered "diverse" by the school system (non-Asian minority, migrant, limited-English-proficient, at-risk or economically disadvantaged) are seen as problematic and in need of remediation toward conformity.

This perspective erroneously guides decisions to group these students and sit them in front of computers for endless automated drill and practice until they "catch up." Consequently, large sums of money for low-cognitive level software are spent. It is common to observe hand-me down computers for these · students. Professional development is minimal and irrelevant, after all, it is basic skills that are being taught.

In contrast to this traditional and pervasive deficit-model of schooling, an assets-based approach (Montemayor and Romero, 2000) offers a more effective and equitable solution for educating all students in ways that lead to success. Assets-based

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thinking holds that each person is valuable and offers a unique contribution to the talent pool of the learning community. Students and their families bring a wealth of untapped resources (intellectual, cultural and experiential) that can enrich the learning experience.

Moll (1992) called these resources, "funds of knowledge." Operating from an assets perspective, schools engage English language learners in challenging content and learning experiences, along with appropriate support for academic language acquisition. In special education circumstances, assistive technologies and support are used to include these students in the mainstream classroom, learning the same content. A student's culture, heritage and traditions are seen as in-class expertise and springboards for learning in all content areas.

These enriched learning environments necessitate up-to-date and reliable computers, appropriate software and trained teachers. Robust connections to the Internet provide valuable learning resources for both students and teachers. It is these kinds of learning-rich, technology-supported and assets-based classrooms that provide a context for equitable technology integration. For the past 27 years, the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA), through its projects, products and services, has partnered with many schools and families across the country to help make the vision of equity a reality.

Teaching and Learning Together: A Context for Useful Dialogue and Joint Planning

The teacher, students and task form the core learning context. Assessment and aspects of the learning environment are embedded in the core context categories. We can consider each along a continuum of technology usage. The purpose of this framework is not to find fault, but rather to stimulate informed discussions among key stakeholders (teachers, administrators, parents) about the status and direction for technology integration at the campus level in support of increased student learning.

Many issues will surface as teams reflect and dialogue together, issues beyond those that are mentioned here and many beyond the control of the campus team. Nevertheless, a team commits to change what is within its influence. As a

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first task, a team develops and agrees on a few guiding principles. The following are examples of these principles:

- Effective technology integration is a vital ingredient for student success and as such, our deep and best thinking is needed to make it a reality.
- Each student's needs and assets are unique. We commit to use technology in ways that affirm, challenge and inspire *all* students to grow intellectually, academically and socially.
- It is more productive and more generative to approach issues and challenges from an assets-based model, focusing on the resources from which we can draw to work toward solutions that work for our campus.

If a campus team can articulate and agree on principles such as these, they can use these principles to guide in the decision-making process. These principles are used to assess the quality of decisions or dialogue and can serve to refocus the group.

It is important to remember that all components of the learning context – teacher, student and task – are interrelated.

Progress in one dimension can facilitate progress across the board. For instance, as teachers adjust to their role as facilitators, students may become more active in the learning process. As students become more active in their learning, the teacher may adjust the kinds of tasks and products he or she expects. Despite the constraints of time pressures, curricular demands and resource availability, resourceful teachers orchestrate learning experiences across the ranges of technology usage.

The table on pages 8 and 9 is a working document that provides a framework for assessing the use of technology in a classroom with a diverse student population. These categories, based on the learning context, are used to cluster benchmarks and indicators of equity and excellence in campuses and classrooms. This framework can be used to inform decision makers attempting to improve the integration of technology in an equitable and excellent manner.

As with any observation instrument, it is recommended that the teacher and the observer (administrator or other stakeholder) meet beforehand to discuss the criteria and then schedule a debriefing

as a follow-up.

Assessment Tool for Equitable Technology Integration

Criteria for Equity and Technology in the Learning Context. Because our aim is *equitable* technology integration in the classroom, a set of criteria for equity in the learning context can be applied to technology use in the classroom. The criteria assess instructional practices that:

- use a variety of languages consistent with language understood by students,
- use technology as a tool for literacy development in English and other languages,
- use assistive technology to increase access to all students,
- modify the use of technology to ensure that all students benefit from instruction,
- are accessible to all students, and do not target only a selected group,
- reflect a deep knowledge of technology as a resource for bilingual and multicultural education, and
- capitalize on the power of technology to provide equal opportunities to learn for all students.

HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT IDRA ACTIVITIES

In March, IDRA worked with **9,068** teachers, administrators, parents, and higher education personnel through **54** training and technical assistance activities and **276** program sites in **14** states plus the United Kingdom and Brazil. Topics included:

- ✦ Race Relations
- ✦ IDRA's *Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program*
- ✦ Preparing Adolescents for College
- ✦ Administrators Role in Supporting Diversity
- ✦ Accelerated Schools

Participating agencies and school districts included:

- ✧ Arkansas Department of Education
- ✧ Austin Independent School (ISD), Texas
- ✧ Los Angeles County Office of Education, California
- ✧ Piñon Unified School District, Arizona
- ✧ Richmond Public Schools, Virginia

Activity Snapshot

During the *Annual IDRA* La Semana del Niño *Early Childhood Educators Institute*, IDRA hosted a special full-day institute for parents to concentrate on the challenges of early childhood education and how to maximize parent leadership. More than 200 parents participated with a panel of experts on state policies, home and school curricula, and leadership development. They then worked together to develop a concrete plan of action for exerting leadership in early childhood education. The institute was co-sponsored by the IDRA *South Central Collaborative for Equity* (the equity assistance center that serves Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas); *STAR Center* (the comprehensive regional assistance center that serves Texas via a collaboration of IDRA, the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin, and RMC Research Corporation); and RE-CONNECT (the parent-information and resource center that serves Texas).

Regularly, IDRA staff provides services to:

- ✦ public school teachers
- ✦ parents
- ✦ administrators
- ✦ other decision makers in public education

Services include:

- ✧ training and technical assistance
- ✧ evaluation
- ✧ serving as expert witnesses in policy settings and court cases
- ✧ publishing research and professional papers, books, videos and curricula

For information on IDRA services for your school district or other group, contact IDRA at 210/444-1710.

Classroom Assessment Tool* for Equitable Technology Integration

Directions: For each indicator, check if evidence exists. If it does, apply the Criteria for Equity to assess, guide, support and improve classroom instructional practices. Multiple classroom observations, teacher conferences and review of student work are recommended to provide comprehensive data.

Equity Criteria:

1 = use a variety of languages consistent with language understood by students

2 = use technology as a tool for literacy development in English and other languages

3 = use assistive technology to increase access to all students

4 = modify the use of technology to ensure that all students benefit from instruction

5 = reflect a deep knowledge of technology as a resource for bilingual and multicultural education

6 = capitalize on the power of technology, is accessible to all students, and provides equal opportunities to learn for all students

	Evident? If yes, use equity criteria.	Equity Criteria					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
Teacher's Use of Technology *Demonstration* • Teacher uses technology to present a concept (e.g. animation of osmosis in science). • Teacher leads discussion and interactive questioning to assess what students understand from the demonstration.							
Directed Instruction • Teacher models "how to" procedure using a technology application (e.g. how to import a graphic, how to use a graphing calculator). • Teacher provides directions to students in multiple modalities: audio, print and graphically. • Teacher uses multiple assessments to ensure that all students are proficient in pre-requisite skills. • Teacher demonstrates proficiency in technology tools for instruction and their use in classrooms with diverse students.							
Facilitation • Teacher actively uses technology to facilitate cooperative learning with heterogeneous student groups. • Teachers abide by school policies regarding students' access and use of Internet and other online sources (e.g. filtering software and supervision). • Teacher actively previews software packages that support the instruction of diverse learners.							
Student's Use of Technology *Basic Computer Literacy Skills* • Students are able to manage files, print, save, edit and retrieve information stored electronically. • Students follow a step-by-step process to accomplish an application task (e.g. create a table). • Students demonstrate proficiency in productivity tools (word processors, spreadsheets and web browsers).							
Presentation • In cooperative groups, each student plays an integral part of planning and executing or presenting the technology-based product. • Students create and present multimedia products with purposeful and logical use of visual, audio and graphic elements (e.g. PowerPoint or Hyperstudio) to convey information. • Students' products draw from or connect to their experience, language, culture and or family.							

*This is a preliminary assessment tool.

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	Evident? If yes, use equity criteria.	Equity Criteria					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
Inquiry/Investigation							
• Students apply learning to investigate meaningful and relevant issues and topics that relate to their world.							
• Students demonstrate original and creative thinking and problem-solving in tasks using technology.							
• Students engage in spirited and inclusive discussions around content topics and use technology resources to formulate and debate conjectures.							
• Students have multiple forms to demonstrate mastery of concepts.							
• Students are fluent in a range of technology tools and are able to select applications needed to complete a task.							
• Students are able to consider the validity of information based on the credibility of the sources (e.g. propaganda or bias).							
• Students connect with outside experts and online, real-time information sources (e.g. NASA, Library of Congress).							
• Students include multicultural or global perspectives in their work.							
• Technology is transparent (e.g. students are not distracted by the mechanics of the computer program and can fluently navigate within them).							
Nature of Task							
Closed/Convergent Tasks							
• Tutorial programs reinforce conceptual *and* skills development.							
• Appropriate computerized diagnostic tests are given to assess student proficiencies and plan for appropriate instruction.							
• Computerized games are given to reinforce skills and are available in an equitable manner (not simply as a reward to those who finish their work first).							
Semi-Structured Tasks							
• Students use technology tools to compute, calculate, draw or design (e.g. calculators, PhotoShop).							
• Students compose essays, reports or stories about a specific topic or theme using technology.							
• Students use search engines to find information online (scavenger hunts).							
Open-ended/Divergent Tasks							
• Problem, project, scenario or task is constructed so as to permit many, equally valid solutions (e.g. keeping the playground litter free, planning a colony on Mars).							
• Projects are designed to include family and community resources, perspectives and experiences.							
• Language, culture and forms of student expression are welcomed.							
• Resources are readily available to students (e.g. Internet, CD Encyclopedias).							
• Project findings are discussed and evaluated in whole class discussions in ways in which each student's ideas are considered and valued.							
• Project findings are exported to a larger community (parents, business leaders or other students).							

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Free School Improvement Training and Technical Assistance

In this era of school reform and academic excellence for all students regardless of race, sex, national origin and economic level, we are confronted with many challenges as we work to create schools that work for all learners. The Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) has been funded by the U.S. Department of Education to provide assistance to schools. This funding is directed through the nation's network of equity assistance centers. The center that serves Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas is the IDRA South Central Collaborative for Equity.

Districts are eligible to receive a minimum of two to three days of assistance and training to help them ensure equitable educational opportunity for all learners and to assist all learners in reaching high standards of academic excellence. This assistance and training is free to schools and includes:
- staff development,
- materials development,
- strategic planning,
- classroom demonstrations,
- observations and collaboration,
- focus group and development of team assistance, and
- other forms of assistance as specified by the campuses or districts to meet their local needs.

Additionally, IDRA staff can deliver this assistance and training directly to teachers, administrators, non-certified personnel, parents, students, school board members and members of the community. **In order to take advantage of this assistance, school personnel can complete the form on the next page and send to IDRA by fax (210/** 444-1714) or mail (IDRA, 5835 Callaghan Road, Suite 350, San Antonio, Texas 78228).

Schools in other states, may receive assistance from the equity assistance center that serves that region (ask IDRA or the U.S. Department of Education for contact information). For more information on the IDRA South Central Collaborative for Equity, contact Bradley Scott, Ph.D., at IDRA (210/444-1710; fax 210/444-1714) or visit the IDRA web site (www.idra.org/scce/default.htm).

It is important that we work together to give every student an equitable opportunity to achieve. The IDRA equity assistance center is eager to support you in that effort. It is up to you to request the support. Together, we can make a difference for students in schools.

Leadership and Support from Administrators

As teachers experiment with new technologies to fashion different learning environments, principals and classroom observers will need to retool the way teaching and learning are assessed and evaluated. Multi-tasking, cooperative learning, and project-based learning will span across days or weeks, requiring more snapshot visits to capture the learning in motion. Consensus must be reached in what the team means by "learning with technology." If there is a mismatch for example, a school district may work very hard to procure a new computer lab for a campus only to find teachers resistant or unable to use it for meaningful instruction.

At the fiscal and physical plant management level, principals and leadership teams will need to find ways to address other aspects of technology. These include infrastructure, upgrades and equipment maintenance, policy and training needs. Again, all of these issues are important but subordinate to the learning goals that are possible with technology in classrooms.

This article framed a context for dialogue and suggested core dimensions – learning event, the teacher, the learner and the task – and indicators to gauge levels of equitable technology integration. As teams become more adept and informed about the uses of technology, they may want to adapt their own. By mapping teachers' and students' use of technology in the learning process, principals and campus teams have a solid beginning toward creating a campus-customized plan for professional development for teachers (Fuller, 2000).

Resources
Darder, A. "Creating the Conditions for Cultural Democracy in the Classroom," *Latinos and Education* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1997).

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Kuforiji, P. "Technology Education Teaching Strategies for Diverse Population," *Action in Teacher Education* (1999). Retrieved from the Internet March 1, 2001, http://vweb.hwwilsonweb.com.

Moll, L.C. and C. Amanti, D. Neff. "Funds of Knowledge for Teaching: Using a Qualitative Approach to Connect Homes and Classrooms," *Theory into Practice* (1992). Retrieved from the Internet May 7, 2001, http://vweb.hwwilsonweb.com.

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Jack Dieckmann, M.A. is a senior education associate in the IDRA Division of Professional Development. Abelardo Villarreal, Ph.D. is the director of the IDRA Division of Professional Development. Comments and questions may be directed to them via e-mail at contact@idra.org.

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EQUITY ASSISTANCE NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY
Educational Equity Programs

39723

District

Address

City **State** **Zip**

Phone ( ) **Fax** ( )

Last Name **First Name** **MI**

Job Title **Date**

Instructions: Please indicate the extent to which your district needs assistance in the items below.

	Extent of Need		
	None	Some	Great
Student, parent, community involvement: A.	○	○	○
Employment practices and employee relations: B.	○	○	○
Implementation of desegregation plan: C.	○	○	○
Bilingual education and/or ESL implementation: D.	○	○	○
Promoting gender equity: E.	○	○	○
Non-discriminatory/non-traditional student assignment and placement: F.	○	○	○
Non-discriminatory student discipline and treatment: G.	○	○	○
Student engagement and academic excellence: H.	○	○	○
Non-racist/non-sexist curriculum development: I.	○	○	○
Race relations and human relations training: J.	○	○	○
Prejudice reduction in schools and classrooms: K.	○	○	○
Cross-cultural conflict resolution: L.	○	○	○
Reducing hate crimes and other inappropriate activities: M.	○	○	○
Sexual and racial harassment reduction (adult-student - peer-peer): N.	○	○	○
Strategies for promoting equity and excellence for all learners: O.	○	○	○
Development of supplemental programs and materials for LEP students: P.	○	○	○
Closing the minority-majority achievement gap: Q.	○	○	○
Non-discriminatory practices in Title IX gender equity: R.	○	○	○
Equity-based early childhood education: S.	○	○	○
Meeting federal civil rights requirements: T.	○	○	○
Non-discriminatory counseling practices and methods: U.	○	○	○
Multicultural education and validating student's culture in the classroom: V.	○	○	○
Training for diversity in schools and classrooms: W.	○	○	○
Addressing test bias in student assessment: X.	○	○	○
Appropriate language identification, assessment and placement: Y.	○	○	○
Strategic planning for equity-based excellence in systemic school reform: Z.	○	○	○

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Students Meet Peers Via Video Conference," *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, August 1998).

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Tips for Video Conferencing

- *Start small.* Limit the number of sites to be linked.

- *Familiarize yourself with using the technology.* School personnel need to find out what technology exists on their campuses (computers, fax machines, e-mail capability), where it can be found within the school and who has access to it. For many teachers this is their first experience with e-mail and video conferencing. They learn how to find the technology, who has it and how to use it.

- *Do not wing it.* Distance learning sessions must be carefully planned if they are to be effective.

- *Use an agenda (and stick to it).* You can give students a sense of direction by mentioning the items to be covered. It emphasizes what is to be taught instead of the technology itself. Agendas also relay a sense of urgency since time is limited.

- *Review the rules.* Certain behaviors are necessary on behalf of all participants. There will be little learning if students speak up whenever they feel like it. The microphones pick up all noise and the cameras pick up all movement. Students need to keep side conversations to a minimum and avoid rustling papers, making noises with their feet and hands, and tapping pencils.

- *Use a good facilitator.* Facilitators need to be enthusiastic and stick to the agenda. Also, the facilitators need to be sensitive to students who are shy or nervous.

IDRA

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IDRA Newsletter

Transformative Leadership in Latino Communities: A Critical Element in Successful and Sustainable Educational Change

Rosana G. Rodríguez, Ph.D. and Abelardo Villarreal, Ph.D.

Inside this Issue:

- ✧ Leadership for educational change
- ✧ Book review
- ✧ Early childhood education

We are living in an extraordinary time of diversity and change in the midst of educational inequities. This context offers a unique opportunity to celebrate and honor diversity and co-create a reality that pushes our educational systems, families and communities to act in partnership to eliminate inequities.

This is the second in a series of articles aimed at raising awareness of institutional responsibilities to engage families and communities in efforts that create positive educational environments for a diverse student population. This article provides some thoughts and insights on the characteristics of transformative leadership in Latino communities that champions educational equity and excellence for all students.

It is based on experience and promising practices, lessons learned and opportunities for changing leadership gleaned from evaluations provided by ENLACE – ENgaging LAtino Communities in Education – grantees. ENLACE is an initiative which provides resources to kindergarten through college graduation (K-16) partnerships that propose to increase graduation rates of Latino students from high schools and universities. ENLACE is supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the Intercultural Development Research Association.

Emergent Leaders and Engaged Institutions

Educational leaders are being asked to pay more attention to the success of a diverse student population, to consider themselves stewards of a community's well-being, and to share responsibility and decision-making with a variety of stakeholders. They must view themselves in new ways that demand new skills, including learning how to work effectively with diverse groups of people, families and students. Sustaining change within this context of diversity requires a redistribution and realignment of control, power and predictability.

We chose to call this new type of leader a "transformative leader," because of his or her potential to become a change agent within collaboratives that include all stakeholders in the K-16 educational pipeline, including communities and families. Transformative leaders face the challenge of catalyzing the thinking of diverse stakeholders – including non-formal educational partners – whose culture, values and beliefs have not heretofore been acknowledged or appreciated. The long-term impact of this more collaborative educational practice will depend on a leader's ability to foster a climate of interdependence, relevance and shared accountability. The readiness for co-creating this type of educational reform begins with the leader's own values, attitudes and skills.

Emergent leaders and advocates for equity and excellence in education must understand the dynamics of an engaged institution. An engaged institution is one that is inclusive of the communities it

serves and has positive impact on the quality of education for all students, including Latino students. Consequently, student and community leadership development are integral parts of the overall ENLACE strategy. These concepts are imbedded within the ENLACE institutional engagement objective to partner with community in planning for student success.

With that in mind, institutions approach community in new, comprehensive, dynamic, and creative ways. In so doing, fundamental shifts occur about leadership and about perceptions of community and its implications to successful leadership development. It is the hope that the ENLACE partnerships will demonstrate expertise in the areas of community and leadership development and be guided by an ethos that fosters a receptive and responsive climate for institutional change.

As a result of the planning year, we have gathered hypotheses, which we present here in the hope that they will spark further thought and discussion in the area of leadership for engagement and transformation.

We consider this information a first step toward using what has been learned to begin a concerted effort for ongoing exploration of these issues. We hope this inspires others to join in this journey of inquiry.

The community is an essential component of the ENLACE initiative.

A Context for Leadership Development

The community is an essential component of the ENLACE initiative. When completed, the ENLACE initiative will have created better educational environments for learners through new paradigms of engagement for student success. These new paradigms will emerge through community and K-16 partnerships for education-related decision-making; and an emerging cadre of Latino students, administrators, faculty and community members with a shared vision about engaged and transformative leadership.

Recent literature is replete with information on leadership qualities and their impact on successful initiatives. ENLACE is in a unique position to promote the involvement of Latino communities in partnership with K-16 institutions.

The heightened interest and funding in collaborations represents a new understanding of the interaction between an educational system and the increasingly complex environment in which it functions, i.e. its local community.

Communities represent a set of cultural values and beliefs that must be considered by leaders in designing, implementing and evaluating change. In considering community as an integral part of overall systems change and of leadership development, particular attention must be given to the unique leadership qualities that are consistent with the cultural ethos of a group.

A recent study conducted by the National Community for Latino Leadership, Inc. (NCLL) reveals the 20 most desired leadership qualities by Latino communities across geographic regions. These qualities are clustered around character, competence, compassion and community service. These findings serve to inform efforts to create a framework for developing leadership that will benefit educators and community leaders serving Latino student populations. The graph on Page 10 delineates these qualities by the four clusters.

A Transformative Leadership Development Approach

Often, there are some inconsistencies in defining "community." The concept of community is fundamental to ENLACE in that it reflects a holistic view of the learner and a valuing of the context in which the learner lives and interacts. Each grantee in the network or cluster brings a different perspective or preference to the concept of community.

One underlying definition that is shared by all grantees is that community

In This Issue...

Early Childhood Education

José L. Rodríguez

September 2000 marked the 50-year anniversary of Dr. José A. Cárdenas' life as a professional educator. Immediately after graduating from the University of Texas at Austin in 1950, Dr. Cárdenas started as a science teacher in the Laredo Public Schools. After a two-year stint in the U.S. Army, he resumed his teaching career in the Edgewood Independent School District (ISD) in San Antonio.

Additional classroom teaching was soon augmented by various supervisory and administrative positions leading to the superintendency of the district from 1969 to 1973. Dr. Cárdenas' work in public schools was supplemented by many years of full- and part-time college teaching and almost 30 years in educational research and development.

In 1973, Dr. Cárdenas resigned as superintendent and founded the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) (formerly Texans for Educational Excellence). IDRA was founded to undertake school finance reform advocacy and now works with people to create self-renewing schools that value and empower all children, families and communities.

IDRA celebrates these 50 years of contributions to the improvement of educational opportunities for children with a series of conversations with Dr. Cárdenas and members of the IDRA staff published in the IDRA Newsletter. In this issue's conversation with Dr. Cárdenas, interviewer, José L. Rodríguez, focuses on early childhood education.

In your book, "Multicultural Education: A Generation of Advocacy," you state that IDRA was involved with the legislation for the establishment of preschool programs in Texas public schools. Unfortunately, implementation of such programs stressed academic content rather than the child development emphasis of HeadStart programs. What is wrong with that?

J.A.C.: If we look at the basic theory

> **Development varies so much for different children that I would not even consider retention until after the third or fourth grades, and then only for a very small portion of the population.**

of learning, we see several things that are essential to a learning situation. The first essential is pre-requisite learnings; the second is successful performance; the third is immediate, strong reinforcement; and the fourth, small increments of difficulty.

This is perhaps a behaviorist approach to learning, but the various theories are all similar when it comes to what makes up a learning situation. One of the reasons economically-disadvantaged, minority, immigrant and migrant children often do poorly in school is because they do not have the pre-requisite learning to succeed in an English-language-based learning situation.

The language of instruction may be missing, or for a variety of reasons students may have different experiences than those commonly found in middle-class homes. School curriculum is middle-class-oriented. When some students do not have the pre-requisite skills for a specific learning situation, it is very difficult for them to learn. This accounts for much of the under-performance of students from disadvantaged and minority populations.

One of the reasons for the implementation of the HeadStart and other early childhood education programs in Texas was to provide pre-requisite skills so that the student who undertakes a basic skill such as reading at the age of six, has already mastered the language, words and concepts involved in this learning situation.

These pre-requisite skills are commonly present by the age of six in

middle-class homes, so the purpose of the early childhood education programs is to provide experiences similar to those of middle-class children to make sure that children from economically-disadvantaged homes have these pre-requisite skills.

What frequently happens in early childhood education programs is that the curriculum of the first grade is pushed down and offered at an earlier age. As a result, the pre-requisite skills expected at the age of six are not developed and poor performance and failure become even more common occurrences.

In spite of the unsoundness of such a methodology, early childhood education teachers are often under strong pressure from other teachers and school administrators to teach academic skills rather than the development of pre-requisite skills.

I anticipated this in 1969 during the design of the Edgewood Independent School District (ISD) Model Cities Early Childhood Education Program and design of the José A. Cárdenas Early Childhood Center. I spotted the need to reduce the pressure from the regular program to have early childhood education teachers do premature teaching of reading, arithmetic and other academic skills.

So instead of having a developmental program to prepare students to be *ready* to learn, what educators are doing is giving academic learning to students at an earlier age when they are even *less* ready to learn.

School districts are starting three-year-old student programs in their schools and treating these programs like pre-kindergarten programs. Are these programs beneficial because they are preparing students for schools? Should a three-year-old be in an early childhood education-type of program? Where do you think the state is going with such an early start?

J.A.C.: It amazes me that the state would

promote this. It is inconceivable that increasing the prospects of failure can be expected to lead to future success. Success breeds success; failure breeds failure.

Students in pre-school programs at the age of three should be developing the pre-requisite skills that will reduce the chance of failure and enhance the chance of success in the learning of academic skills at a subsequent age.

Does the state want this early a start to improve student performance on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS)?

J.A.C.: The state wants students to learn TAAS material earlier. The school and state should realize that sometimes patience is very profitable. Students allowed to develop pre-requisite skills can and will become better learners. Learning will become easier at the ages of six through nine years with a foundation for learning and the elimination of early failure.

Pressure for improved performance on the TAAS leads to the introduction of content material at an earlier age. I believe that the basic tenet is that repetition rather than preparedness for the TAAS is the key to learning. It is bad enough that the politicians do not understand this, but the thought that educational administrators and elementary school teachers seem so unaware of the detriments of attempts at premature learning worry a lot of members of our profession.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) pre-kindergarten guidelines have caused some concern among teachers because they stress academic guidelines. They are results of the TPRI and Tejas Lee Reading Inventory, the reading inventory given to pre-kindergarten, first and second grade students. **How might someone who is teaching children at the pre-kindergarten level start a program to prepare children to take the test?**

J.A.C.: Academic skills come before the test which comes before pre-requisite learning.

We know that in reading there are such things as oral language, right-to-left eye movement, audio discrimination, visual discrimination and the acquisition of context clues as skills necessary for successful mastery of reading.

These pre-requisite skills must be

Self-discovery only motivates children to love learning. When children love and enjoy learning you have created a successful learning environment and ultimately success for every child.

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mastered and it is incumbent upon the teacher to determine that such skills are present in order to enhance the chance of success and reduce the threat of failure.

It is ironic that students from middle-class homes are given six years to master pre-requisite skills and then introduced to reading, but we are taking non-middle-class students and attempting to teach basic skills at the age of three. It seems that in compensatory education we are moving in the wrong direction and doing the wrong things.

The José A. Cárdenas Early Childhood Education Center utilizes the seven fundamental skills for well-rounded learning: imagination, creative thinking, observation, cooperation, discrimination, living ethically and a sense of beauty. **When did you see the importance of developing such a center?**

J.A.C.: It had been a dream of mine since working for the Southwest Education Development Laboratory (SEDL) when I prepared a book on the early development of Mexican-American children.

This book formed the basis for the Model Cities Program that SEDL developed. But, unfortunately, Edgewood ISD did not like the program and did not accept the proposal that I wrote. As luck would have it, the superintendent quit, and I was selected as superintendent. I had no trouble passing it through the Model Cities Program committee, and we had no trouble implementing the program.

Some teachers had negative perceptions. I saw it as play rather than as the developmental activities that we have been discussing. I hired an early childhood education specialist to run the program and was able to acquire all the necessary funds.

Community people and early childhood staff did much of the conceptualizing of the building. Richard Moore, a very creative architect took the

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input from the early childhood education staff, the community and myself and created this unique building. It is especially designed for early childhood education, and it includes many provisions for research, curriculum development and teacher training. The building emphasizes deinstitutionalization. It was such a unique facility that people from all over the world came to see it.

Is there some research on what happens when students move from early childhood education into mainstream schools?

J.A.C.: There is no sufficiently good research. That was one of my shortcomings; I never had enough money to conduct enough research when I was with Edgewood ISD. That is why with IDRA I insisted that adequate resources be assigned to research and evaluation. We knew that the children were doing very well, it was subjective, but we never had the resources to confirm what we knew about how well the children were performing. A lot of our information was based on case studies. I regretted that I did not make a bigger effort to show that not only did the Cárdenas Center look better and was a happy place, but also that more learning was taking place.

I would imagine that children in the José Cárdenas Center have astounding growth while participating in the program. I fear that when they go back to their elementary schools within two or three years all that growth is lost if the programs are not continued. After three years in regular school you may not be able to tell the difference.

Why is that? What is the difference in the curriculum?

J.A.C.: The school is not a neutral instrument in the education of children. It can be both a positive and a negative influence. Positive perceptions of self, that a successful learner would have, can be knocked down in favor of negative perceptions of self. Acquisition of skills can be slowed down to lose the advantage gained in an early childhood education program.

Why aren't there any more centers like the Cárdenas Center in Edgewood ISD?

J.A.C.: They have the early childhood education program in the regular schools as part of the instructional

program. Some principals know little about early childhood education and make little effort to provide an adequate developmental program. As mentioned earlier, they find themselves under strong pressure to begin the preparation for TAAS testing. I have heard some excuses for the failure to separate early childhood from the regular school program.

I have heard school officials state that bus transportation to a separate site is too dangerous, but I do not believe that has to be so. The Cárdenas Center transported children ages three to five-years-old for four years while I was there without a single accident or detrimental incident. There are many school districts in Texas in which all pre-school age children are transported by the district. The bulk of the children in the United States are transported to their schools.

You have been in education for 50 years. What major differences have you seen from when you started to the present?

J.A.C.: Looking back there was no early childhood education when I started. There was kindergarten, but it was more custodial than educational. In fact there was criticism about the Edgewood ISD program spending so much on early childhood education that could have been spent on other programs that were expected to produce a more direct impact. But the results as indicated by subsequent evaluation and the curricular gains have lasted longer than many of the effects of other activities that were recommended at the time.

Do you see any methods of teaching that were prevalent 20 years ago reappearing now? For example, when I started school, phonics was taught, then done away with, and now it is back.

J.A.C.: Educators go from one extreme to the other. I do not know why we have this argument about phonics. Phonics is and has always been a part of a reading program. On the other hand, it does not produce the same level of results as it would in languages that are more structured and phonetically consistent than English.

Phonetic approaches to reading are much more successful in languages that use 26 letters in the alphabet to represent 26 phonetic sounds. English uses 26 letters present almost 50 sounds and simply

does not lend itself to an exclusive phonetic approach.

Not enough money is spent on research and development to determine the benefits of the various methodologies and programs. In addition, there are a lot of myths in education, that have been successfully challenged for years and years, which are still accepted as gospel.

For example, the belief that retention in-grade is an effective way of making students perform better is a myth. Retention is a terrible approach to under-performance; it makes students perform worse. The evidence has been there consistently since I was a student 50 years ago, but the myth is still there.

We hear arguments about new concepts, such as that the TAAS test is a huge motivator for children in the early years, because they know they have to pass the TAAS to graduate. We have known, as educators, or should know as educators that in learning situations, reinforcement has to be strong and immediate.

B.F. Skinner demonstrated that a few seconds delay in reinforcement could result in a substantial loss of learning. To say to a six-year-old student, "You are going to have to study really hard to pass a test 10 years from now," has little, if any, motivational value.

What would you say to a principal who would ask teachers to retain early childhood education students?

J.A.C.: I would point out, that learning takes many years and students grow individually. Some are ready to learn parts of the curriculum at an early age, others may take more time. Development varies so much for different children that I would not even consider retention until after the third or fourth grades, and then only for a very small portion of the population. Retention can be such a negative experience in terms of personal and family expectations that it can become a psychological barrier for future learning.

Before leaving office San Antonio's former mayor, Howard Peak, committed $1 million to start the Kindergarten Reading Readiness Initiative. What are your thoughts on the initiative?

J.A.C.: I appreciate the Mayor's efforts and feel that it could be very helpful to children in the city. I can only hope that the proposed kindergarten program is not a "push down" program trying to get

children to learn to read at the age of four or five.

What are your hopes and dreams for the future of early childhood education?

J.A.C.: I hope everyone has an opportunity for a good education. I hope that all the goals that you mentioned will be realized. I hope that all students will have an equal education opportunity. I don't think that all kids will achieve equally, but the opportunity should be there for everyone. I hope the education system stops wasting resources because of failure to recognize the capabilities of children. I think life would be more beautiful, enjoyable, satisfying, and aesthetically pleasing if people recognized the capabilities of children.

Interviewer's note: Learning is a life-long journey on which a young child will embark. This journey should be fun and exciting. Preparing a child to learn requires building developmentally-appropriate skills before introducing academic content. Children need to be taught the pre-requisites of learning if we are to see growth and success for all children.

Today, schools across the state are adding three-year-old programs to their campuses, but the curriculum continues to be pushed down. Emphasis on passing the TAAS has trickled down to pre-kindergarten classes and in order to see success the curriculum is pushed down.

When I taught at an Early Childhood Education Center, I often felt as if I were not teaching, but playing because I was teaching developmentally-appropriate skills. Once these skills were learned, the children were prepared for academic content. The learning was fun and exciting for the children.

It is amazing to see the faces of children when they discover that they can read and write simple words. Self-discovery only motivates children to love learning. When children love and enjoy learning you have created a successful learning environment and ultimately success for *every* child.

José A. Cárdenas, Ed.D., is the founder and director emeritus of IDRA. José L. Rodríguez is an education associate in the IDRA Division of Professional Development. Comments and questions may be sent to them via e-mail at contact@idra.org.

The Best for Our Children

Pam McCollum, Ph.D.

"The time has come to consider biliteracy, the new threshold for literacy achievement in the new millennium. When this becomes a reality, Latino students and other bilinguals will be repositioned at the center of the curriculum rather than at the margins. To be satisfied with less than this is to accept a lower ceiling for our children's academic achievement and to force them to develop only half of their potential" (Reyes and Halcón, 2001).

This provocative quote by María de la Luz Reyes is from a ground-breaking volume co-authored by Reyes and John J. Halcón entitled *The Best for Our Children: Critical Perspectives on Literacy for Latino Students* (2001).

This recent publication from Teachers College Press is comprised of contributions by leading Latino researchers, teacher educators and classroom teachers who present a unique "insiders" perspective on literacy instruction for Latino students. The authors' perspectives are informed by their experiences as language-minority students in United States public schools.

Then, as today, language-minority students were frequently forbidden to speak Spanish, were labeled "at-risk," "culturally disadvantaged," and "limited-English-proficient" and were often viewed from a deficit perspective.

The Best for Our Children presents a different picture of Latino children and their potential. It is assets-based, asserting "that Latinos who grow up bicultural and become biliterate – in spite of an educational system that has little understanding of the linguistic and cultural resources they possess – are 'gifted and talented,' not 'at-risk,' not 'culturally disadvantaged,' not 'limited-English-proficient!'" (Reyes and Halcón, 2001).

This volume is not another installment of the tiresome reading wars, debating the value of phonics vs. whole language. It is an elucidating work that is an excellent resource for educators at all levels who wish to understand literacy instruction for Latino students.

The authors do not advocate one fixed method of literacy instruction, but rather advocate an approach that draws upon Latino students' bicultural knowledge and linguistic resources to develop biliteracy in Spanish and English.

This book celebrates the resources and talents Latino students bring to the classroom, dispels many common myths concerning them, and vividly illustrates that biliteracy is possible when one proceeds from a culturally sensitive assets-based approach.

The Best for Our Children is divided into three sections. Part one presents the cultural, historical, and political factors necessary for understanding the context of literacy for Latino students. Chapters in this section explain historical and present-day political forces needed to understand literacy for Latino students.

The work of Vygotsky is used to emphasize the importance of using children's native language in activities from their cultural frame as the most effective classroom environment to promote literacy. This theme is reiterated throughout the volume and is accompanied by rich illustrations of children's work.

Part two explores biliteracy in Latino students and discusses hybridity during instruction. Results from classroom-based research with students in the early grades demonstrate that biliteracy is attainable when speaking, reading, and writing is nurtured in the classroom.

Moreover, the notion that students should be prohibited from code switching (alternating between two languages) during instruction is dispelled. Hybrid language use is shown to serve strategic, affiliative and sense-making functions among bilingual students and actually facilitates literacy development (Gutierrez, 2001).

Part three explores the area of

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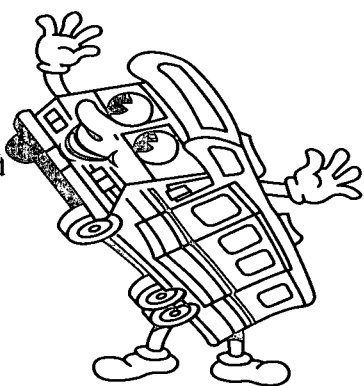
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Answer the question of the month!
Each month we will ask a new question for readers online. A sample of responses will be posted online.

This month's question is...
> *How have you invited greater community participation in your school or college? How has this been helpful to student success?*

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"critical literacy," which is based on the idea that one learns to "read the word by reading the world" (Freire, 1970; Freire and Macedo, 1987). Reading the world involves understanding the world in which one lives and seeing the ideas and beliefs of one's world mirrored in reading activities and materials. It also involves the ability to critically view one's position in relation to others in society and includes knowledge of what must be done to improve one's condition.

This framework acknowledges the importance of class and ethnicity in positioning language-minority students within the school system and illustrates how literacy can serve a gate keeping function in schools, limiting potential in not just in one language, but two.

This book is sure to become required reading for students in the area of reading because it is the first of its kind in so many

categories. It is the first volume on literacy written solely by Latinos about literacy instruction for Latino students under a single cover.

Because it is written by bilingual Latinos, it explores the issues of biliteracy and the use of two languages during instruction as "natural" extensions of bilingual communicative behavior. It is also not a book on literacy dedicated just to technical issues of reading strategies and method.

Those interested in improving reading achievement are exposed to "theories of possibility" and encouraged to develop "critically literate" youth who are biliterate. Possibly the greatest strength of this book is that while it portrays the inequities of the present educational system, it also presents tremendous hope and clear examples of what is possible when Latino students' assets – namely language and their cultural resources, are

understood and used to develop their full potential. *The Best For Our Children* is truly the path for the new millennium!

Resources

Freire, P. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York, New York: Continuum, 1970).

Freire, P. and D. Macedo. *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World* (South Hadley, Mass.: Bergin and Garvey, 1987).

Reyes de la Luz, M. and J.J. Halcón. *The Best for Our Children: Critical Perspectives on Literacy for Latino Students* (New York, New York: Teachers College Press, 2001).

Pam McCollum, Ph.D., is an senior education associate in the IDRA Division of Professional Development. Comments and questions may be directed to her via e-mail at contact@idra.org.

HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT IDRA ACTIVITIES

In April, IDRA worked with **9,785** teachers, administrators, parents, and higher education personnel through **82** training and technical assistance activities and **276** program sites in **14** states plus the United Kingdom and Brazil. Topics included:

◆ Workshop on Workshop Training
◆ Title VII Systemwide Evaluation
◆ Families and Schools Working Together
◆ Read Any Good Math Lately?
◆ Reading Strategies for Vietnamese Learners

Participating agencies and school districts included:

◇ Greenwich Education Business Partnership, England
◇ Pulaski County Special School District, Arkansas
◇ New Braunfels Independent School District (ISD), Texas
◇ St. Mary Parish School Board, Louisiana
◇ Waco ISD, Texas

Activity Snapshot
After the Office for Civil Rights cited an Oklahoma school district for racial incidents and violations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, the district requested staff training from the IDRA South Central Collaborative for Equity (SCCE). Before the SCCE assistance, the district experienced racial tension and conflict that grew from reactions to increasing student diversity. The SCCE also worked with a multicultural task force to monitor race relations throughout the district and provided staff training on topics concerning learning styles, embracing cultural differences in the classroom, and racial attitudes and perceptions.

Regularly, IDRA staff provides services to:
◆ public school teachers
◆ parents
◆ administrators
◆ other decision makers in public education

Services include:
◇ training and technical assistance
◇ evaluation
◇ serving as expert witnesses in policy settings and court cases
◇ publishing research and professional papers, books, videos and curricula

For information on IDRA services for your school district or other group, contact IDRA at 210/444-1710.

Dr. José Cárdenas Receives Prestigious Child Advocate Award from the Texas Federation of Teachers

José A. Cárdenas, founder and director emeritus of the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA), was recently honored by the Texas Federation of Teachers (TFT). Dr. Cárdenas earned the "Child Advocate Award" from the TFT for his outstanding work in the development of multicultural and bilingual education programs, and his important work on behalf of equity in school funding that would provide every child in Texas with an equal access to a quality educational program.

The TFT has presented the Child Advocate Award only four previous times in the organization's 27-year history. Dr. Cárdenas is the first non-elected official to receive the prestigious award. John Cole, President of TFT, said, "We don't give this award annually, or on any regular schedule. We give it only to really exceptional people who have worked extraordinarily as advocates for children, and whose achievements in the field of education have been extraordinary." Previous recipients were former Texas Senators Greg Luna and Carl Parker and former State Representatives Wilhelmina Delco and Ernestine Glossbrenner.

Dr. José A. Cárdenas, recipient of the "Child Advocate Award" and John Cole, president of the Texas Federation of Teachers.

At 19, Dr. Cárdenas began teaching junior high school science in Laredo, and discovered what would prove to be a life-long love of children and teaching. He continued his educational career as a teacher and an administrator of the Edgewood Independent School District and later as chair of the Education Department at St. Mary's University. Dr. Cárdenas then took a job in educational research at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. Later, he returned to the Edgewood Independent School District where he served as superintendent from 1969 to 1973. Dr. Cárdenas' work in public schools was supplemented by many years of full and part-time college teaching and almost 30 years in educational research and development. He also participated as an expert witness, and/or consultant in over 70 civil rights cases involving the denial of equal protection or the civil rights of children. In all of the cases, participation was on behalf of children.

In 1973, Dr. Cárdenas founded IDRA as an independent, non-profit organization, dedicated to creating schools that work for all children. IDRA fulfills its mission through professional development, research and evaluation, policy and leadership development, and programs and materials development. As a vanguard leadership development and research team for more than 27 years, IDRA has worked with people to create self-renewing schools that value and empower all children, families and communities.

Minority Women in Science: Forging the Way

by Keiko E. Suda, Oanh H. Maroney, M.A., Bradley Scott, M.A., and Maria Aurora Yánez, M.A.

A great student-centered tool to support equity in math and science education!

We must ensure that minority girls are not left behind as progress is made toward narrowing gender and racial gaps in math and science education. This is an innovative resource that can be used with all students – girls and boys – to help break down gender stereotypes about scientists.

You will find:

✦ Profiles of seven minority women scientists who have surmounted barriers to forge the way for themselves and future scientists.

✦ Science lessons for the classroom that cover such topics as acid/base chemistry, earth science, wildlife and environmental science, and biology.

✦ Life skills lessons for the classroom that cover topics such as getting college information from the school counselor, identifying a support system, reaching goals, knowing self-worth, having community pride, overcoming stereotypes, and linking hobbies with career choices.

✦ The opportunity to use this guide to plan with other teachers, from other departments, using the stories of these inspirational women as the basis for cross-curricular lessons for students.
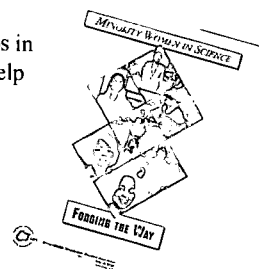
"Being a scientist can open doors to opportunities that you may never have dreamt of or even considered."

– Patricia Hall, M.S., one of the scientists featured in *Minority Women in Science: Forging the Way*

(Student Workbook ISBN 1-878550-67-5; 2000; 32 pages; paperback; $6.50)
(Teacher's Guide ISBN 1-878550-68-3; 2000; 94 pages; paperback; $25.00)

Developed and distributed by the Intercultural Development Research Association 5835 Callaghan Road, Suite 350, San Antonio, Texas 78228; Phone 210-444-1710; Fax 210-444-1714; e-mail: contact@idra.org.
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includes the geographical dimensions that the institution of higher education (IHE) or a particular school district or group of school districts serve.

The second issue involves the dual role of community in the ENLACE initiative. In the same project, community can be both the object of change and the agent of change.

Not only must the community promote change, it must agree to become an object of change. This duality of roles is shared by the K-16 institutions. Sometimes this duality can result in confusion and conflict, especially when one of the partners takes a "you, not I, must change" posture and attitude.

It is important that any changes occurring within each of the partners capitalize on the assets and strengths of the community, rather than view the community from a deficit perspective or a conglomeration of problems to be solved.

The community as an agent of change is best addressed through this question: Who can we call upon as a resource, or who can we mobilize, equip, and support to participate in local education decision-making, programs and systems? The answer is simply to include families and other stakeholders who have a vested interest in the educational success of Latino students.

Other stakeholders include community-based organizations (CBOs) that may represent aspects of the community and are established to respond to specific needs. Examples are youth organizations, parents' clubs, children's rights defense groups, and faith communities. These types of CBOs can work with K-16 institutions to create a supportive atmosphere for learners.

Experience has shown that while engaging stakeholders sounds simple, it may not be. Educational organizations must put forth a conscious effort for engagement of this nature to occur.

Once stakeholders have been recruited, the next big challenge is to embrace and practice a new paradigm within the community of possessing valuable assets that are critical to educational decision-making and planning.

With this broader understanding of the term "community," it becomes easier and more effective to pursue an engagement approach to educational reform.

New Paradigm of Transformative Leadership and Engagement

A credo to preface a transformative leadership development approach that incorporates community might be framed to include the following thoughts:

We reaffirm that education is a basic human right. In accordance with this, it is necessary to work together on efforts that allow the realization of this right in defined community clusters, providing maximum support to Latino youth to attain improved educational levels in the scope of promoting community participation in education.

To accomplish this, it is necessary to foster the most extensive synergy possible of educational systems with community – inviting, motivating, training, supporting, and thus strengthening families and stimulating the development of leadership.

It is the duty of the educational systems from K-16 to become involved creatively in this process, empowering students and the communities in which they live with a view of transforming our educational systems and communities and generating an attitude of increased responsibility for individual and collective well-being.

Through the synergy of educational systems and community, new paradigms of transformative leadership and engagement can emerge that reflect a change in values, a new solidarity and the upholding of the principle that education, and especially higher education, is a right and a viable option for all.

This approach banks on a commitment to value community engagement. Some of the major implications for higher education include the following practices:

- reassessment of curricula in different undergraduate and graduate courses in order to identify possible solutions to challenges identified by the community;
- realignment of curriculum to establish a seamless K-16 curriculum;
- allocation of credit hours for community work studies;
- additional credit hours for community work activities related to multiple disciplines;
- additional credit hours for community work itself;
- making university work accessible to the community (transportation, centers); and

- additional recruitment efforts in the community.

These, and other steps, will help bring educational institutions to the community, make their services more accessible, and create a synergy for effective partnering. This is indispensable to maintaining a dynamic community that is committed to excellence and to the welfare of its student population.

It is vital to identify the best professors and IHE administrators to interact in community experiences. They must be willing to dedicate prime-time to this task, which implies a willingness to become part of collective learning, solidarity, mutual exchange, and self-criticism. It also implies a commitment to the following:

- identifying common aspects of various professions in community work approaches, trying to marry the aspects of theory and practice;
- organizing multi-professional teams that are responsible for conducting projects in various settings; and
- working with community and service representatives on local activity planning.

In addition, it implies a desire to foster cooperative involvement by professors and students of various professions with communities. Multi-disciplinary work should go beyond being merely the sum of activities performed in each discipline or course. Their collective actions in and with the community must be coherent and contribute to an overall vision developed in concert with the community.

Finally, such an approach means promoting an ongoing discussion among different participants about the developing ENLACE efforts. They must freely discuss advances, limitations, and conflicts to maintain the integrity of the collective experience. This effort can foster trans-university organizational changes that bring about curriculum revisions, a working methodology, and relations with the community and service institutions.

Leadership development in the context of transformation requires favorable conditions to develop work within communities. These include providing faculty with support systems to work with community, keeping good records, giving feedback, providing needed materials, and furnishing support from the highest levels

of the institution for greater sustainability.

Key Assumptions for Engaged and Transformative Leadership

In our journey to define and create transformative leadership, there is a call to recognize inherent traits of leadership that not only transcend language, culture and systems but are also firmly rooted in our Latino traditions of family, spirituality and celebration of life across the diversity of our people: Mexican American, Afro-Caribbean, Latin American and Indigenous roots. Nine key assumptions are proposed to form a conceptual framework for building transformative leadership for engaged institutions. These nine assumptions are based on the integration of three critical dimensions of leadership – community consciousness, commitment and skills. The assumptions follow.

Visionary. Transformative leaders possess a clear picture of the scenario they wish to pursue. They are clear about the condition of education which must exist if Latino students are to successfully compete in this society. Their actions are data-driven and based on a clear view of reality. They are aware of the community's needs and involve the community and families in the establishment of the vision.

Transformative leaders promote the community's "blueprint for change." The vision for a better reality is ever present until it becomes a reality. The leader, the constituents, and the context are transformed with this type of leadership as together they partner to develop the future scenario and hold themselves and one another accountable for creating and realizing it.

Community Consciousness. Transformative leaders have a sense of "community consciousness" that transcends whatever profession they may undertake throughout their lives. For these engaged leaders, their community and the welfare of its families are at the core of their responsibility. Language and culture are indispensable and protected elements that define the values and beliefs of that community. Within this broader view of community every attempt to invigorate the community is significant because of its potential to create opportunities of growth for students, individuals and families.

Power. Engaged leaders recognize that power comes from within (knowledge, desire and commitment) or can be acquired externally through position or political status. When it is acquired internally, it cannot be taken away. Power is a choice of thought. Furthermore, when we can accept that we are continually evolving as a people, and as individuals, we recognize that our power is in our "now."

Not only is it crucial to understand and use our power judiciously to influence change, we must also analyze the power base of others who can also influence the outcome. Moreover, not only is it acceptable to have unfulfilled desires, it is powerful to have unfulfilled desires. Why? Because these evoke the creative force within us and the will to engage with others to accomplish new goals. It is in struggling and striving that our focus is heightened on our goals. Our goals must remain clear and our focus true.

Life Experiences. As individuals and as a people, many of us have survived difficulties: poverty, isolation, racism, and fear. This first-hand experience is a powerful one that has left lasting impressions that foster an urge to take immediate action. The very contrast that many have experienced is an extraordinary opportunity to focus more clearly on what we do want.

Much has been written and studied about evaluating the negative contrast of where we have been. The new leadership of transformation through engagement propels us to be brief in our examination of this present contrast and move forward. We can take negative experiences as a place from which to launch ourselves to our goals. Our concentration as leaders can shift from observer of the contrast, to dreamers and executors of a new reality for our students and for our communities.

Imagination. The leadership of engagement and transformation is based upon the power of imagination. Imagination is born from a state of mind that is unrestricted and focused. Within this new focus, there are burgeoning beliefs and the ability to create future realities that lie within our capabilities. Engaged leadership is determined to expand thoughts and ideas beyond where they have been before.

This leadership is not only

Latino Leadership Qualities

Community Servanthood
1. Serves/Helps the Community
2. Respects the People
3. Dedicated to the Community

Character
1. Honest/ Trustworthy
2. Strong Moral Values/Ethical
3. Good Person (parent, spouse, friend)
4. Religious/Spiritual/ *Persona de fe* (person of faith)

Compassion and Caring
1. Loving/ Kind/ Compassionate
2. Humble/*Sincero* (sincere)/Sensitive
3. Fair/Impartial/Just
4. Accessible/Good Listener

Competence
1. Intelligent/ Educated/ Experienced
2. Assertive
3. Skilled Communicator
4. Hard Worker
5. Goal Oriented/ Efficient
6. Has Common Sense/Wise

Latino Leadership

Source: National Leadership Perspectives. Reflecting an American Vista. The Character and Impact of Latino Leadership, January 2001.

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knowledgeable of the realities around us, but also chooses to focus more on what could be rather than what is. Reality, seen in this light, helps transformative leaders sift and sort what they want to create, rather than remain stuck in old ways of thinking and doing. This is creative leadership at its best, recognizing that each of us has choices and that we are guided and inspired at many levels within an ever-changing path toward a better future for our youth.

Reflection. Engaged leaders are those who periodically reflect on their accomplishments and can thrive in any circumstance because they feel empowered, are fully committed to change, and have a vision of justice and fairness. Transformative leaders do not get caught up in a cycle of victimization. They always have the context of how far they have come. They are an integral part of their communities and families, honor their language and culture, and learn from the special circumstances they have lived.

Rather than be trapped on the negative side of the struggle, they recognize and celebrate that their current position is a tribute to their resilience and commitment to their communities. They seize every opportunity to encourage others to do the same. They seek educational equity and accept nothing short of excellence. They encourage others to become empowered. They strive to make the educational system accountable by equipping our young people with academic skills and inculcating in them the thought that they are "thrivers" and "doers" who belong and have a responsibility to strengthen their community.

Catalysts. Transformative leaders are catalysts. They recognize the interconnectedness of our families, communities, and educational systems. Engaged leaders are highly conscious of their connectedness with others. They are comfortable knowing that they have an impact on the welfare of the community and sow seeds that others may harvest; that is part of the cycle of life. The greatest gifts they offer are encouragement and joy, inspiring others to believe in themselves.

Catalysts analyze information around them while keeping their eyes on the prize. They emit positive energy, which others are automatically drawn to and respond. The mantra of the catalyst leader is "Believe in yourself and in what you can

Transformative leaders
have a sense of
"community consciousness"
that transcends whatever
profession they may
undertake throughout
their lives.

accomplish." Engaged leaders who are catalysts understand that sustainable change takes time. They are determined but patient with themselves and with others. They recognize that we are all interrelated – each person is a student and a teacher.

Valuing Perspective. Transformative leaders come from an abundant valuing perspective that begins with themselves. There is no room for a scarcity mentality or deficit thinking. As they give of their leadership skills, more will come forth.

These leaders do not spend an inordinate amount of time in laborious self-examination that can be detrimental. They do not dig deeply into what they do not want, rather, they dig into what they do want. They see that if something is worth doing, everyone can participate. Everyone has direct access and contact to this type of abundant leadership. Through the clarity of their examples, others are drawn into the process.

Because this type of leader is the "captain of their ship," they empower others to be this way as well. They take responsibility and share accountability for their collective actions. Because they easily ask for assistance from others, they are also ready to give of themselves and let go of their limitations for the greater good.

Inspiration. Engaged leaders recognize that they are co-creators of a new reality. Their work is enriched by a deep understanding and belief in the community in which they work. They are eager for what is "becoming" and for what they are helping to mold. These leaders are acutely aware of the spiritual aspects of being a part of such important work. Because of this, they maintain a sense of connection with their own spirituality. They ask for help and guidance and reach for uplifting thoughts that can affirm they are not alone. They often ask themselves, "What's next? What is desired? What is becoming? And what might be?" Spirituality is a strong

central element of inspiration in the lives of transformative leaders.

At their core, they can bask in the energy of well-being because they stop often and recognize themselves and others as beings that live together in the creation of life. These leaders take the time to tap into their "inner-guidance." They find satisfaction with an ever-evolving situation because they are comfortable with themselves as part of a broader perspective. Joy and laughter come easily as a natural part of celebrating and easing the tensions of life. These leaders not only rely on their five senses to guide their lives and their work, but they also see with an inner eye. They savor the now and use it to launch a tomorrow because they have hope that is inspired from knowing they will help to create the future.

These assumptions embrace ideas that we firmly believe are critical in developing sustainable and community-conscious schools that provide opportunities for Latino students to succeed, graduate and exercise an abundance of options that are not limited by inadequate schooling and lack of academic skills.

Conclusion

In the past, educational leaders have often been accustomed to imparting their expert knowledge to relatively passive listeners in neatly-packaged meetings or lectures. Transformative leaders will be asked to facilitate a dynamic process of learning whereby diverse groups of educators and community members come to decisions on their own time and in their own way. They will be expected to use this new community base as an environment to achieve certain changes, while simultaneously involving and serving its constituents. They will be asked, in a sense, to see the community as a partner in change, a resource and as a client. Not all can be planned beforehand. Sometimes as situations arise, the new transformative leaders must be willing to use that situation, seize that particular opportunity and capitalize upon it for transformation to occur.

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Creating schools that work for all children,
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IDRA Newsletter

Successful Bilingual Education Programs

Criteria for Exemplary Practices in Bilingual Education

María Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., and Josie Danini Cortez, M.A.

Twenty-five common characteristics contribute to the high academic performance of students served by bilingual education programs. The Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) identified these characteristics through funding by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA). IDRA rigorously and methodically studied exemplary bilingual education programs in schools across the nation as determined by limited-English-proficient (LEP) students' academic achievement. IDRA now is helping others identify successful programs or raise the bar with their own bilingual education programs.

The 25 indicators that emerged from the research were clustered around five domains:

- School Indicators,
- Student Outcomes,
- Leadership,
- Support, and
- Programmatic and Instructional Practices.

This study comes at a critical time. There are an estimated 3.7 million LEP students in the United States, a persistent achievement gap between LEP and non-LEP students, and a critical shortage of bilingual education teachers with the preparation, skills and tools to ensure that *all* of their students succeed.

Over the next six months, the *IDRA Newsletter* will feature a series of articles on our research study's significant findings. The series will provide information on each

of the five indicators and outcome standards with first-hand accounts from teachers, administrators, parents and researchers across the country.

We begin the series this month with an overview of the research study. The primary purpose of this study was not to prove that bilingual education works – there are years of rigorous research that prove it does work when implemented with integrity. Instead, the purpose of this research study was to identify those characteristics that are contributing to the high academic performance of students served by bilingual education programs. First, we will present some background information.

Condition of Education for LEP Students

Bilingual Education Act

The *Bilingual Education Act* (BEA) was first enacted in 1968 as a response to the 80 percent dropout rate of language-minority (Hispanic and Native American) students. California offers an excellent example of the condition of education for language-minority students prior to the *Bilingual Education Act*.

In 1872, California legislators passed an English-only classroom mandate that lasted 95 years. In 1967, then Governor Ronald Reagan signed Senate Bill 53, repealing the English-only mandate and authorizing bilingual education in California schools.

In his 1999 testimony to the Senate

Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, Dr. Joel Gomez, director of the Institute for Education Policy at the Graduate School of Education and Human Development at George Washington University, cites the reasons for the English-only repeal:

It [the English-only mandate] kept students from learning their academic subjects in a timely fashion; it caused language-minority students to be retained in grade because they were behind in their academic studies; it caused students to become frustrated, to give up and drop out of school. And most ironic of all, English-only instruction did not lead to mastery of the English language.

Prior to the repeal of the English-only mandate in California, only half of the California Mexican-American youth between the ages of 18 and 24 had even completed the eighth grade.

The intent of the 1967 California *Bilingual Education Act* and the federal version in 1968 was to help states and school districts develop and implement quality education programs for LEP students.

The word "quality" must be underscored for it was the intent that LEP students be afforded an equitable *and* excellent education, using programs and approaches that would accelerate their academic achievement and performance

English language learners should not have to give up their language, their culture, or their diversity as the price for learning English.

and hold *all* students, including LEP students, to high standards.

LEP Enrollment

There were an estimated 3.5 million LEP students in the United States in 1996-97 – a conservative estimate of LEP student enrollment as reported by the nation's state education agencies that receive Title VII funds. This represents a 6.9 percent increase from the previous year (see box on Page 8). This is considered a conservative estimate also due to the incomplete response rate of state education agencies to OBEMLA's annual *Survey of States' Limited English Proficient Students and Available Educational Programs and Services*, which is one of the primary methods used to collect data on the number of LEP students in the various states and outlying territories and jurisdictions. For the 1996-97 school year, 54 states or jurisdictions responded to the survey – Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia did not participate nor did American Samoa, Northern Marianas, and Wake Islands.

Confounding the data collection and analyses is the fact that there is no federally mandated definition of limited English proficiency. While the *Bilingual Education Act* does include an operational definition of "limited English proficiency," LEP status depends largely on state and local agencies. In the 1996-97 survey, most of the state education agencies based their definitions of limited English proficiency on a combination of a non-English language background and/or difficulties with speaking, reading, writing and understanding English.

LEP Student Assessment

State education agencies use various assessment methods to identify LEP students, including home language surveys (which may be used to identify language backgrounds or determine limited English proficiency), teacher observations, parent information, achievement tests and/or referrals, student records, and teacher interviews. A few states report using between the 30th and 50th percentile cutoff on standardized tests as a criterion for determining limited English proficiency.

Language proficiency tests are also used by states to determine limited English proficiency, including Language Assessment Scales, Idea Oral Language Proficiency Test and the Language Assessment Battery.

The primary reasons that the survey

In This Issue...

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Transforming Teachers with FLAIR

Juanita C. García, M.A.

The Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) has developed a process to transform the way schools teach linguistically diverse learners. IDRA is helping several schools carry out this process through a project called FLAIR (Focusing on Language and Academic Instructional Renewal).

FLAIR puts the student at the center of the curriculum. It values the heritage and the capacities that all students bring with them to the academic experience. In the Vygotskian way, the teacher provides the class with a scaffold to build meaning and attain academic gain.

FLAIR empowers classroom teachers. Teachers are recognized for the tremendous capacities that they have acquired through years of experience. It also builds on their leadership capacities. In a learner-centered approach, teachers and their learning processes are paramount. What is to be learned is identified by the learners as knowledge and skills they need for themselves, their work, or the world around them. Learning is transformative (Mackeracher, 1996). Therefore, teachers in the project are considered facilitators of knowledge and change agents, capable of creating quality environments for their students and their families.

With FLAIR, IDRA provides a process for redesigning, adapting and re-energizing reading programs that is more responsive to the characteristics of diverse learners. The project promotes:

- student data-based decision-making using state and local standards for mastering on-level reading comprehension objectives;
- integration of literacy skills in content-area teaching;
- continuous vertical and horizontal communication among teachers in the school;
- empowerment of teachers by equipping them with the necessary knowledge and

resources to make better classroom and instructional decisions;
- creation of a "family" environment where everyone feels responsible for student success;
- reflection and action as two critical instructional practices of successful reading programs; and
- ways for assessing program effectiveness.

All students become successful readers!

FLAIR capitalizes on the campus leaders, mobilizing the principal, teachers, librarians and support staff as a force to tailor-make a reading program that is research-based resulting in better achievement for all students.

How the Transformation Occurs

FLAIR is a three-year process that involves in-depth technical assistance from IDRA. FLAIR capitalizes on instructional leadership, commitment, creativity, inspiration, and innovation. It is a comprehensive process that allows school success to occur at a healthy pace. Look to the community of Mora, New Mexico, for a good example of FLAIR implementation.

Nestled in the valley of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in northern New Mexico, Mora is a rural, remote community where time seems to stand still. The tiny, predominately Hispanic community stands at the northern entrance to the beautiful

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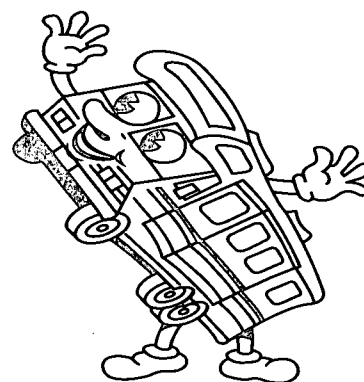
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This month's question is...
What are some creative ways your school has used or obtained its resources?

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Mora Valley. For a number of years, residents have faced economic decline and the reality of losing their way of life or culture. The community is now challenged with revitalizing and improving community life and creating school reform. Their educational plan for student success involves developing and implementing a meaningful curriculum (Bauer, 2000). Mora staff have completed their second year of the FLAIR process.

Through focus group interviews, participating teachers revealed the impact of the project for students and teachers. In reviewing these interviews about the project's impact, certain qualities and themes emerged from the data indicating student and teacher success. The following are a few insights using the language of the participants and highlighting examples drawn from the individuals.

Learning Can Be Fun

Children do what is fun; but if they are never shown that learning and reading to learn can be fun, then they will never have the opportunity to enrich their lives with reading and life-long learning.

One teacher commented: "Project FLAIR introduced us to new teaching strategies. These are new to the students and [provide] a different way of learning for them. It makes learning fun."

Another teacher said, "I have more creative activities where my students are engaged, and just doing these fun activities gets my students to share their ideas and their knowledge."

All of our motivation comes from within ourselves, and we choose to do what is most satisfying to us at the time. To have fun is a basic need all living creatures have. It is a catalyst that makes anything we do better and worth doing again and again. With this knowledge teachers should be able to restructure their teaching so that many more students will choose to work and learn because they find it satisfying to do so (Glasser, 1998).

Changes In Teachers

For adults to become fully engaged in learning, they must be willing and able to channel their motives into the change process. For these reasons, teachers need a learning environment that supports them and does not threaten them. Both A.W. Combs and J.R. Kidd report that this is facilitated when relationships between the [facili]tator and learners are built on trust

(Mackeracher, 1996).

One teacher presented her reflections about her change process in a poem:

I have been teaching for 19 years,
A lot of times teachers are afraid
Or they do not want to try new things.
You know, you are stuck in your own routine,
Your same style and feel kind of like,
Why are they trying to tell me
To do things different?
It has worked for me this long,
Why do I have to change now?
But when I try some of these strategies
I realize that this a good thing,
And I have to make the time for this to work,

> I feel like project FLAIR, with its strategies and structures, has brought a lot of motivation to learn for my students. It has helped us as teachers to motivate and activate the level of learning in our students. The students have a good attitude toward learning, and they seem to be having fun.
> — Teacher in Mora, New Mexico

For this to work successfully.

Another stated: "I think that when we started we were not too sure what FLAIR really was and we did not feel comfortable even doing the strategies in the classroom. Then as Year 2 started, you kind of start trying them a little more, and we have grown as a group together. Now we know what we are doing. This has caused growth within ourselves."

These statements serve to point out the beliefs and attitudes many teachers have taken on as part of their models of reality. Our values and attitudes constantly affect what we are willing to learn and how we are willing to learn it (Mackeracher, 1996). If the affective component is positive, then we tend to move toward something. If it is negative, we tend to move away. Changing the way we teach and the way we have been doing things is difficult, but when teachers are

faced with low student achievement, then we *must* change because there are no excuses for student failure.

Facilitating Change

Project FLAIR helps people in the school community work together to transform every classroom into a powerful learning environment, where students and teachers are encouraged to think creatively, explore their interests and achieve at high levels. In turn, it uses the school's philosophy and process to create its own vision and work collaboratively to reach its goal. Through best practices, FLAIR facilitators provide top notch workshops, follow-up support, modeling of high cognitive literature based lessons, and de-briefings and reflections.

One teacher stated, "The presenters that we have presenting project FLAIR have made this project what it is and made us what we are, feel comfortable about it, because they have been really good coming in here and teaching us."

Another teacher commented, "I think this project has succeeded and we are positive because of them [the facilitators], because of what they have done."

Another added: "It has put some spark into some of the staff. The teachers that have taken the professional development are engaged learners. It has been a lot of fun."

Continuing Commitment

Through the South Central Collaborative for Equity, IDRA has been able to assist Mora with training, support and information for academic dual language development with project FLAIR. The South Central Collaborative for Equity is the equity assistance center that serves schools and education agencies in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas in the areas of race, gender and national origin. Mora's staff want to preserve the area's culture and provide a challenging curriculum to empower students with a healthy sense of who they are and where they come from (Bauer, 2000).

The effort in Mora is still in progress. The FLAIR taskforce is working on coaching and mentoring new teachers for the project. IDRA facilitators are assisting in curriculum development, staff training and identification of appropriate materials for the school's dual language model.

The staff are determined to equip students to perform well academically and to guide students to understand their reality

Teacher Shortages – Implications for Reform and Achievement for All Students

Albert Cortez, Ph.D.

The supply of elementary and secondary education teachers has grown to an estimated 3.1 million. About 2.66 million are teaching in public schools, and 400,000 are employed at private schools (Yasin, 1999). But, a combination of factors are converging to more than offset this increasing supply and contribute to an overall shortage in teaching personnel needed to fill existing positions (McCreight, 2000).

Some say this shortage may require the hiring of an additional 200,000 teachers over the next decade (Fielder and Haselkorn, 1999). The factors that most impact the need include increasing school enrollments, an emphasis on reducing teacher ratios, and ongoing and, at times, escalating teacher attrition and retirement.

The Growing U.S. Student Population

Although not a universal reality in all states or communities, taken in the aggregate, the total enrollment in U.S. schools has been steadily increasing. According to U.S. Census data, the population increased by 14 million between 1990 and 1995, a 5.6 percent increase in a five-year span. Fueling the growth were increases in birth rates in major sub-groups in the population and ongoing immigration. The number of school-age persons (ages five to 19) increased from 52.9 million in 1990 to 61.2 million in 2000, an increase of 15.7 percent (2000). Demographers project that the school-age population will continue to increase as the children of the "baby boomers," begin to have children of their own.

Researchers also note that the increases in population reflect significant and accelerating change in the national demographic profile (Murdoch et al., 1997). The U.S. Hispanic population increased by 57.9 percent in just the last decade, growing from 22.4 million in 1990 to 35.3 million in 2000. Another important observation is that the Latino population, which accounts for much of the overall population growth in the country, is a younger population group, with a larger proportion being under the age of 25. The group's relative youth, in turn, means

> **Some say this shortage may require the hiring of an additional 200,000 teachers over the next decade.**

that more schools will need to be prepared to deal with the increased diversity reflected in the younger portion of the U.S. population.

Though concentrated in five states (California, Florida, Illinois, New York and Texas), an increasing Hispanic presence can be noted in many parts of the country, including Arkansas, Georgia, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, and North Carolina. Many states that had not been as heavily impacted by diversity issues will have to begin dealing with the challenges and opportunities that are presented by a changing population.

Research reflects that the most critical teacher shortages are occurring in states where extensive reforms have created an increased demand for more teaching staff.

Specific areas in the teaching field are accounting for much of the shortage. Shortages are most prevalent in the areas of bilingual education, special education, mathematics, and science – particularly physics and chemistry. Future efforts to address the shortage issue will have to recognize and target the needs identified in critical shortage areas.

Increasing Teacher Retirement and Attrition

The teaching force reflects the national trend – baby boomers are aging and retiring. At times they are spurred by more attractive early retirement opportunities crafted by states, at other times by the pressure inherent in scaling up of school accountability requirements. As more teachers leave the profession, many states are faced with increasing vacancies.

In some states, teacher union efforts to enhance retirement programs can contribute to accelerated retirement. In Texas, recent state reforms that enhanced the retirement program for teachers and administra-

tors resulted in a substantive increase in teacher retirement rates and added fuel to an existing educator shortage.

Exacerbating the shortages is the fact that many states with the greatest growth are failing to produce the numbers of new teachers needed to address student growth and increased retirements. According to Yasin, states such as California, Florida, Nevada, and Texas all require more teachers than they produce (1999). While some states (Minnesota, New York, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin) historically produce an abundance of teachers. Encouraging a major relocation of new teacher graduates to the high-need states poses significant challenges for personnel recruiters.

Research on teacher attrition has long noted that, though many teachers do not remain employed in the teaching profession for more than a few years, reasons they leave the profession can vary. In contrast to previous generations, some may suggest that contemporary younger workers are less likely to remain in the same field for more than a few years, changing careers at substantially greater rates than their parents' generation.

According to national research data, as many as 50 percent of new teachers leave the field within the first three years of employment.

Other research suggests that work conditions, salaries and the growing diversity in student populations require greater teacher specialization. Traditional teacher preparation programs are often ill-prepared to teach a student population that is increasingly minority, low-income, or with limited English skills. Given limited support to help them better serve such pupils, some teachers opt for other jobs that may be less demanding (Darling-Hammond, 1984).

Shortages seem exacerbated in times of high levels of overall employment, possibly because teachers leave the classroom to pursue more lucrative paying jobs in other sectors. Even in more stable economic times, schools have been challenged in recruiting and retaining needed staff.

Teacher Shortages - continued on page 6

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Reducing Class Size, Increased Accountability and Other Reforms

Texas and other states have recently adopted extensive reform efforts, including increasing state emphases on uniform curriculum standards and school accountability. In many states that are implementing expanded school accountability and uniform curriculum requirements, teachers have countered with demands that the opportunity to reach higher standards be supported by reductions in average class sizes and other mechanisms to support teachers.

Additionally, pressures associated with these ongoing reform efforts often are perceived as attempts to restrict local school and classroom teacher autonomy. This causes some educators to explore other career options.

Taken together, all of these factors – increasing demands related to diverse student populations, accelerated retirement, and increasing school reforms – have exacerbated the national teacher shortage problems that have long plagued public education.

fied teachers hired in the preceding year (9,793 teachers times 26 pupils per class).

Even more disconcerting are the report's findings on areas reflecting the greatest shortages and subsequent hiring of less-than-fully-certified personnel. According to the study, 48 percent of elementary school-level bilingual teacher hires and 41 percent of secondary school bilingual/ESL hires were not fully certified to teach in that area. Of all foreign language teachers, 36 percent were not fully certified, and 33 percent of secondary special education and technology teachers hired were not fully certified. Another 30 percent of secondary science teachers were not fully credentialed to teach in the areas assigned.

Faced with the need to place a teacher in additional classrooms and in specialized teaching areas, schools will need to hire less-than-fully-certified staff until the critical shortage issues are comprehensively addressed (Texas A&M Institute for School-University Partnerships, 2000).

Even as states scale-up efforts to produce new teachers, they suffer from ongoing losses to recruiting efforts from neighboring

ties they serve. Moreover, it has a significant impact on all sectors of the communities, which are all directly are indirectly affected by schools' success.

Teacher Shortages Impact Reform Efforts

Over the last decade, many states have attempted to adopt polices to make systemic changes in the ways public schools operate. These reforms included changing the ways schools are financed by both increasing the levels of state support and the extent of equity in selected state funding systems.

Often, proposed reforms also involved the adoption of clearly articulated standards for school curricula and the development of accountability systems to allow the general public and state leaders to assess the extent to which schools and students were attaining stated goals.

Central to many of the proposed reforms was the assumption that the staffing needed to implement the reforms at the classroom level would be available and would possess the competencies required to achieve the state's objectives.

In Texas and other states, these goals included such measures as:
*   percentages of students' passing state-developed assessment measures,
*   attendance rates,
*   dropout rates,
*   numbers of students enrolling in advanced academic courses, and
*   numbers of students applying for college admission.

All major reform efforts pre-supposed that teaching staff required to meet those objectives would be in place and would have sufficient support.

As schools strive to meet these targets, it is apparent that it will be difficult to meet, much less maintain, performance levels with a continuing teacher shortage. Some communities may be better positioned to meet the rising expectations in part because they have retained the teaching force needed and have access to the resource supports necessary to meet the state standards.

Data on existing teacher shortages have established that schools in inner cities, those with high concentrations of low-income pupils, and rural communities have a particularly difficult time recruiting and retaining fully-certified teachers (Stevens, 1993).

A different set of factors inhibit inner-city school systems from effectively recruiting and retaining new staff, not the least of

All major reform efforts pre-supposed that teaching staff required to meet those objectives would be in place and would have sufficient support.

The Texas Situation

In many ways, the teacher shortages currently being evidenced in Texas reflect the national teacher shortage situation. According to a study commissioned by the state's education agency, Texas schools reported *a need to hire 39,652 teachers* in the 2000-01 school year (see box on Page 7).

According to the report, the greatest teacher specialty area needs were found in the areas of elementary bilingual education (3,522), secondary mathematics (3,434), secondary special education (2,336), elementary special education (2,591), secondary science (2,286), and secondary-level foreign language (1,022).

Of the number needed, schools reported hiring 38,444 staff, or 97 percent of the total needed. Of greater concern was the fact that of those hired *only 28,651 or 75 percent were fully certified* to teach in the area to which they were assigned. Looking at it from a student perspective, about 195,860 pupils being taught by less-than-fully-certi-

states. A separate study conducted for the Texas Board of Educator Certification examined the number of Texas certified teachers who were employed by schools outside of the state. According to that data, more than 2,400 Texas teachers were working in other states, with the majority employed in adjacent states (1999).

Teachers tended to migrate from states with excess teachers to those areas where local teacher preparation institutions were unable to keep up with demand. A recruiter in San Antonio shared that a local major urban system recruits teachers on an ongoing basis, sending recruiters all over the country to recruit replacement of new teachers to fill its ever present needs (Tobin, 2001).

Because of a growing state awareness of and demand for public school performance and an ongoing effort to reform local schools at the national, state and local levels, the continuing existence of critical teacher shortages creates major challenges for state and local school officials and the communi-

Teacher Demand in Texas

Subject Areas and Levels	Anticipated Number of Teachers Needed		Total Hired		Of the Teachers Hired			
Elementary School	*Number*	*Percent of Grand Total*	*Number*	*Percent*	*Certified*	*Percent*	*Not Certified*	*Percent*
Special Education	2,336	5.9%	2,459	100%	1,762	72%	697	28%
Bilingual/ESL	3,522	8.9%	2,765	79%	1,436	52%	1,329	48%
All Other Elementary Teachers	12,636	31.8%	727	100%	10,376	82%	2,351	18%
Total All Elementary	*18,494*	*47%*	*17,951*	*97%*	*13,574*	*76%*	*4,377*	*24%*

Subject Areas and Levels	Anticipated Number of Teachers Needed		Total Hired		Of the Teachers Hired			
Secondary School	*Number*	*Percent of Grand Total*	*Number*	*Percent*	*Certified*	*Percent*	*Not Certified*	*Percent*
Math	3,434	8.7%	2,853	83%	2,125	74%	728	26%
Science	2,286	5.8%	2,293	100%	1,608	70%	685	30%
Foreign Language	1,022	2.6%	894	87%	576	64%	318	36%
Technology	795	2.0%	757	95%	505	67%	252	33%
Bilingual/ESL	546	1.4%	486	89%	285	59%	201	41%
Special Education	2,591	6.5%	2,475	96%	1,651	67%	824	33%
All Other Secondary	10,484	26.4%	10,735	100%	8,327	78%	2,408	22%
Total All Secondary	*21,158*	*53%*	*20,493*	*97%*	*15,077*	*74%*	*5,416*	*26%*
Grand Totals	**39,652**	**100%**	**38,444**	**97%**	**28,651**	**75%**	**9,793**	**25%**

Source: Teacher Demand Study 2000-2001. Texas A&M University System: Institute for School-University Partnerships. February, 2001.

which are perceptions that these schools present significantly more challenges than those faced by teachers working in less ethnically and economically diverse suburban areas. Compounding such perceptions is the emerging recognition that many colleges of education fail to adequately prepare new teacher candidates to work with diverse students, instead of continuing to prepare teachers to work with a White, middle-income student population that is no longer the norm in many communities (Cárdenas, 1995).

Faced with major challenges in recruitment and retention, rural and urban centers face an increasing need to recruit new teachers on an ongoing basis, spending disproportionate portions of their budgets in efforts to stay one step ahead of the process. Despite their circumstances, policymakers continue to demand higher levels of performance and accountability from all schools. This is an appropriate stance, though one that must be accompanied by providing ever resources are required by theses

communities to create a playing field that is comparable to their more affluent suburban counterparts.

What Has Been Tried So Far

The issue of teacher shortages is not a new one. In some areas, it is a persistent, unresolved challenge, and in others it is episodic or cyclical. A review of the literature notes that studies of teacher availability and impending or existing shortages date back to at least the 1950s when the children of returning war veterans began to tax the capacities of local schools. In the 1980s, studies of different states described both the extent and types of teacher shortages, as well as state and local efforts to combat the problem (Darling-Hammond, 1984; Clay, 1984).

In attempts to stem the tide of early leavers, states and schools have created support systems to help smooth new teachers' transitions. Typically these have included mentor-type systems where older, more experienced staff are teamed with new teachers for one or more years (Gonzales and Sosa, 1993).

Other strategies have included increasing teacher salaries or fringe benefits and providing other perks that encourage new entries to stay in the profession for more than a few years.

A more common strategy used in some states involve programs designed to increase the pool of new teachers entering the profession. These have ranged from providing state-funded scholarships to encourage more undergraduates to pursue teaching careers to providing opportunities for education aides, already employed in schools, with funding to encourage them to become fully-certified teachers.

Some schools begin the process with recent graduates in what are referred to as "grow your own" strategies where students are encouraged to and supported in pursuing teaching degrees.

Other more creative approaches include the Intercultural Development Research Association's (IDRA) Alianza project, which provides opportunities for teachers prepared in other countries to enroll in and

IMMIGRANT STUDENTS' RIGHTS TO ATTEND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The National Coalition of Advocates for Students (NCAS) has launched its annual *School Opening Alert* campaign to reaffirm the legal rights of all children who reside in the United States to attend public schools, regardless of immigration status. The fliers provide information for immigrant parents about the rights of their children to attend local public schools this fall. IDRA is working with NCAS to make this alert available. NCAS can also provide a camera-ready copy of the alert in English and Spanish to be reproduced and distributed by schools and community groups. The copy of the alert below and on the following page may be reproduced and used as well.

School Opening Alert

In 1982, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Plyler vs. Doe* [457 U.S. 202 (1982)] that undocumented children and young adults have the same right to attend public primary and secondary schools as do U.S. citizens and permanent residents. Like other children, undocumented students are required under state laws to attend school until they reach a legally mandated age.

As a result of the *Plyler* ruling, public schools *may not*:
- deny admission to a student during initial enrollment or at any other time on the basis of undocumented status;
- treat a student differently to determine residency;
- engage in any practices to "chill" the right of access to school;
- require students or parents to disclose or document their immigration status;
- make inquiries of students or parents that may expose their undocumented status; or
- require social security numbers from all students, as this may expose undocumented status.

Students without social security numbers should be assigned a number generated by the school. Adults without social security numbers who are applying for a free lunch and/or breakfast program for a student need only state on the application that they do not have a social security number.

Recent changes in the F-1 (student) Visa Program *do not* change the *Plyler* rights of undocumented children. These changes apply only to students who apply for a student visa from outside the United States and are currently in the United States on an F-1 visa.

Also, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prohibits schools from providing any outside agency – *including the Immigration and Naturalization Service* – with any information from a child's school file that would expose the student's undocumented status without first getting permission from the student's parents. The only exception is if an agency gets a court order (subpoena) that parents can then challenge. Schools should note that even requesting such permission from parents might act to "chill" a student's *Plyler* rights.

Finally, school personnel – especially building principals and those involved with student intake activities – should be aware that they have no legal obligation to enforce U.S. immigration laws.

For more information or to report incidents of school exclusion or delay, call:

NCAS	Nationwide	(800) 441-7192	(English/Spanish/French/German)
META	Nationwide	(617) 628-2226	(English/Spanish)
META	West Coast	(415) 546-6382	(English)
NY Immigration Hotline	Nationwide	(718) 899-4000	(English/Spanish/Chinese/French/Korean/Polish/Urdu/ Haitian Creole/Hindi/Japanese/Russian)
MALDEF – Los Angeles	Southwest/ Southeast	(213) 629-2512	(English/Spanish)
MALDEF – San Francisco	Northwest	(415) 546-6382	(English/Spanish)
MALDEF – Chicago	Illinois	(312) 782-1422	(English/Spanish)
MALDEF – San Antonio	Southwest	(210) 224-5476	(English/Spanish)
Florida Parent Hotline	Florida	(800) 206-8956	(English/Spanish/Haitian Creole)

Please copy and distribute this flier.
This flier is available in English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Vietnamese, and Hmong at 1-800-441-7192 or http://www.igc.org/ncas/soa.htm)

National Coalition of Advocates for Students   100 Boylston Street, Suite 737, Boston, MA 02116

Llamada Urgente al Comienzo del Curso Escolar

En 1982, El Tribunal Supremo de los Estados Unidos dictaminó en el caso *Plyler vs. Doe* [457 U.S. 202] que los niños y los jóvenes indocumentados tienen el mismo derecho de asistir a las escuelas públicas primarias y secundarias que tienen sus contrapartes de nacionalidad estadounidense. Al igual que los demás niños, los estudiantes indocumentados están obligados a asistir a la escuela hasta que llegan a la edad exigida por la ley.

A raíz de la decisión *Plyler*, las escuelas públicas **no pueden**:

- negarle la matrícula a un estudiante basándose en su situación legal y/o inmigratoria, ya sea a principios del curso o durante cualquier otro momento del año escolar;
- tratar a un estudiante en forma desigual para verificar su situación de residencia;
- efectuar prácticas cuyo resultado sea obstruir el derecho de acceso a los servicios escolares;
- requerir que un estudiante o sus padres revelen o documenten su situación inmigratoria;
- hacer interrogatorios a estudiantes o padres que pudieran revelar su situación de indocumentados;
- exigir que un estudiante obtenga un número de seguro social como requisito de admisión a la escuela.

La escuela debe de asignar un número de identificación a los estudiantes que no tienen tarjeta de seguro social. Los adultos sin números de seguro social quienes están solicitando que a un estudiante lo admitan a un programa de almuerzo y/o desayuno gratis, sólo tienen que indicar que no tienen seguro social en el formulario.

Los últimos cambios del Programa de Visado F-1 (de estudiantes) **no cambiarán** las obligaciones antedichas en cuanto a los niños indocumentados. Se aplican sólo a los estudiantes que solicitan del extranjero un visado de estudiantes y que están actualmente en los Estados Unidos en un Visado F-1.

Además, el Acta Familiar de Derechos y Privacidad Escolar *(Family Education Rights and Privacy Act - FERPA)* le prohibe a las escuelas proveerle a cualquier agencia externa – *incluyendo el Servicio de Inmigración y Naturalización (Immigration and Naturalization Service–INS)* – cualquier información del archivo personal de un estudiante que pudiera revelar su estado legal sin haber obtenido permiso de los padres del estudiante. La única excepción es si una agencia obtiene una orden judicial – conocida como una citación o subpoena – que los padres pueden retar. Los oficiales escolares deben estar conscientes de que el mero hecho de pedirle tal permiso a los padres podría impedir los derechos *Plyler* de un estudiante.

Finalmente, el personal escolar – especialmente los directores de las escuelas y los secretarios generales – deben saber que no están bajo ninguna obligación legal de poner en vigor las leyes de inmigración de los EE.UU.

Para más información, o para denunciar incidentes de exclusión escolar o retraso en la admisión a clases, favor de llamar a:

NCAS	Nacional	(800) 441-7192	(Inglés/Español/Francés/Alemán)
META	Nacional	(617) 628-2226	(Inglés/Español)
META	Costa Oeste	(415) 546-6382	(Inglés)
NY Línea de Urgencia de Inmigración	Nacional	(718) 899-4000	(Inglés/Español/Chino/Francés/Coreano/Polaco/Urdu/ Haitiano Crillo/Hindú/Japonés/Ruso)
MALDEF – Los Angeles	Sudoeste/ Sudeste	(213) 629-2512	(Inglés/Español)
MALDEF – San Francisco	Noroeste	(415) 546-6382	(Inglé/Español)
MALDEF – Chicago	Illinois	(312) 782-1422	(Inglés/Español)
MALDEF – San Antonio	Suroeste	(210) 224-5476	(Inglés/Español)
Línea Para Padres de Florida	Florida	(800) 206-8956	(Inglés/Español/Haitiano Crillo)

Favor de copiar y distribuir esta hoja informativa.

Esta información fue puesta al día en 8/99 y está disponible en inglés, español, haitiano criollo, portugués, vietnamita, y hmong (http://www.igc.org/ncas/soa.htm).

National Coalition of Advocates for Students *100 Boylston Street, Suite 737, Boston, MA 02116*

U.S. LEP Enrollment Growth from 1986-87 to 1996-97

School Year	LEP Enrollment
1996-97	3,452,073
1995-96	3,228,799
1994-95	3,184,696
1993-94	3,037,922
1992-93	2,735,952
1991-92	2,430,712
1990-91	2,232,500
1989-90	2,154,781
1988-89	1,948,107
1987-88	1,656,180
1986-87	1,553,918

LEP Enrollment
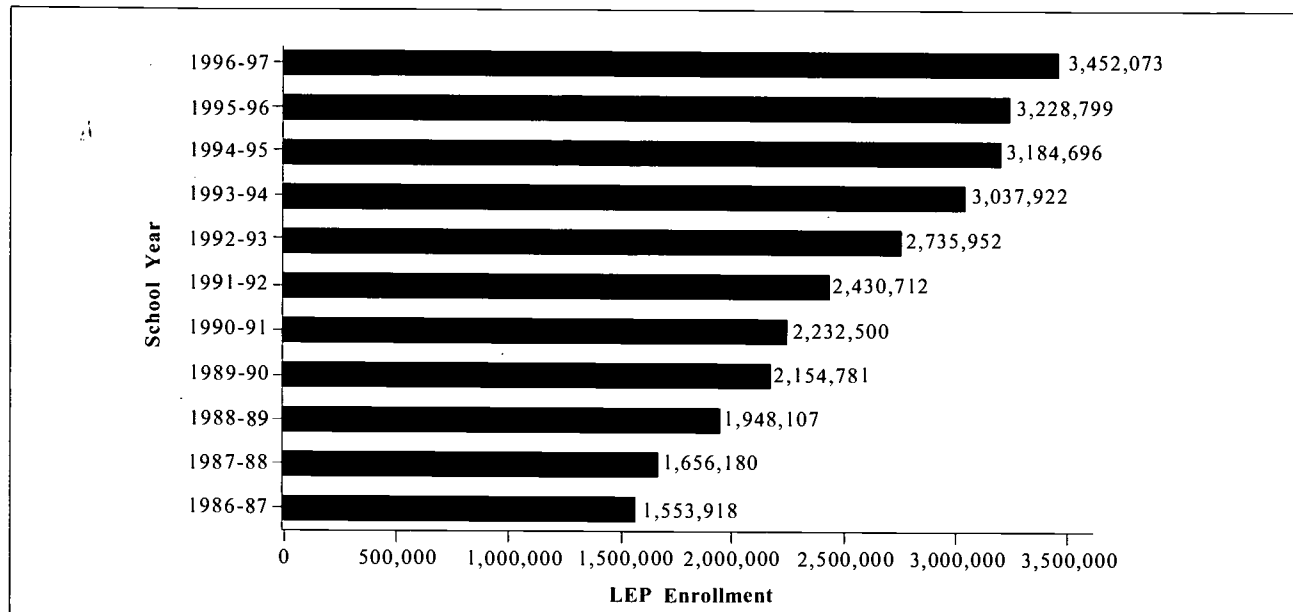
Source: Donly, B., et al. *Summary of Bilingual Education State Educational Agency Program Survey of States' LEP Persons and Available Educational Services 1993-94*. Prepared under contract for the U.S. Department of Education by Development Associates Inc., in Arlington, Virginia (1995).

Bilingual Education - continued from page 2

results are incomplete in determining the educational condition of LEP students are the variations in assessment instruments across states and the exemption of LEP students from testing or data not reported by the category of "LEP student."

Educational Status of LEP Students

With these caveats in mind, the national snapshot of the educational status of LEP students as reported in the survey is dismal:
* Thirty-three states reported that 5.1 percent (37,837) of their LEP students were retained one or more grades the previous year (1995-96). These states reported a total of 740,516 LEP students collectively. This is only 21 percent of the 3.5 million LEP students at the time.
* Thirty-three states reported that 1.7 percent (14,032) of their LEP students dropped out of school the entire year before the survey. Few states even reported any information regarding academic achievement as measured in performance on standardized tests.
* Thirty states reported 19.3 percent (253,763) of LEP students scored below state norms in English reading.
* Thirty states reported 16 percent (211,433) of LEP students scored below state norms in mathematics.
* Eighteen states reported 6.9 percent

(52,880) of LEP students scored below state norms in science.
* Seventeen states reported 6.6 percent (51,388) of LEP students scored below state norms in social studies.

LEP Student Services

Forty percent of U.S. teachers reported having LEP students in their classrooms in 1994, but only 29 percent of these teachers had received any training at all in how to serve them. L.T. Diaz-Rico and L. Smith report that between 100,000 to 200,000 bilingual teachers are needed in U.S. classrooms (1994). The critical shortage forces schools to rely on uncertified aides. D. Haselkorn reports that in California, two out of five adults providing bilingual instruction are bilingual aides (1996). In fact, California, the state with the most LEP students, was unable to serve 23 percent of their LEP students in 1995.

This is an important statistic to factor in any assessment of student achievement. The achievement gap between LEP and non-LEP students is indicative that many teachers lack the preparation, skills and tools to ensure that *all* of their students succeed.

In the year 2000, the numbers of LEP students in California served by bilingual education programs has been dramatically affected by the passage of Proposition 227. In June 1998, California voters passed

Proposition 227 that officially mandated an end to bilingual education in that state (with few exceptions). Now, less than 12 percent of LEP students are enrolled in bilingual education programs (California Department of Education). Thus, most LEP students are not receiving the services and programs they need for an equitable and excellent education.

Despite the political and educational realities of California, the country's leadership is still calling for *all* students to receive equitable and excellent educational opportunities, including equitable and excellent bilingual education programs.

The importance of this call to action is the underlying premise that native languages and cultures are assets, not deficiencies. English language learners should not have to give up their language, their culture, or their diversity as the price for learning English. The inherent value of all students and their characteristics must be recognized, acknowledged and celebrated. When LEP students walk into a classroom in this country, they should not be limited in their access to an equitable and excellent education. For that to occur, teachers must be prepared to serve them.

Methodology Used for This Study

IDRA had one primary research question: *What contributed to the success*

of a bilingual education classroom as evidenced by LEP student academic achievement?

"Success" was operationally defined as evidence of academic achievement (compared to district and/or state standards) for LEP students in bilingual education. Additional indicators and research questions that guided the IDRA study included the following.

School Indicators
• What are the school indicators, including retention rate, dropout rate, enrollment rate in gifted and talented programs and in advanced placement programs, enrollment in special education or remedial programs, test exemption rates, and program exiting standards (by LEP and non-LEP percentages)?

Student Outcome Indicators
• What are the student outcomes for oral and written language proficiency (by LEP and non-LEP percentages)?
• What are the student outcomes for content area mastery in English and the native language (by LEP and non-LEP percentages)?

School Level Indicators
• How evident is leadership at the school level, and what are the characteristics?
• How evident are the vision and goals at the school level, and what are the characteristics?
• What are the characteristics of the school's climate?
• What linkages exist between central office and school level staff? How are they characterized?
• How is the school organized?
• What are the demographic characteristics of professional staff, and what opportunities for professional development are provided?
• What is the type, level and quality of parent involvement in the school and the bilingual education program?
• How do staff hold themselves accountable for student success, and how are students assessed?
• How are the staff selected and recognized?
• What is the type, level and quality of community involvement in the school and the bilingual education program?

Classroom Level: Programmatic and Instructional Practices
• What are the characteristics of the bilingual education program model?

• What are the characteristics of the classroom climate?
• What are the teacher expectations regarding student success?
• How is the program articulated across grade levels?

IDRA ensured that programs selected for site visits reflected the diversity of U.S. schools and included elementary and secondary schools, different language groups, LEP concentrations, and Title I targeted assistance and schoolwide programs as well as Title VII grantees (current and former).

In addition to the review of quantitative student and school outcome data, school demographic data, surveys of principals, teachers and administrators, and structured formal classroom observations were other sources of quantitative data. Qualitative data included structured interviews with the school principals and the administrators and focus group interviews with teachers, parents and students (whenever possible). Additional qualitative data were elicited from school profiles.

A framework was provided for describing each site visit thus providing a context and background for the visit. IDRA gathered, analyzed and synthesized all of

Percent of LEP Enrollment by State 1996-97

Legend:
- ☐ 0-1
- ☐ 2-5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ 11-15
- ■ 16-25
- ▨ 26 +
- ☐ No data

Alaska

Hawaii

Guam ■
Marshall Island ▨
Micronesia ▨
Palau ☐

Puerto Rico (U.S.) British Virgin Islands (U.K.)
San Juan
Virgin Islands (U.S.)
St. Croix
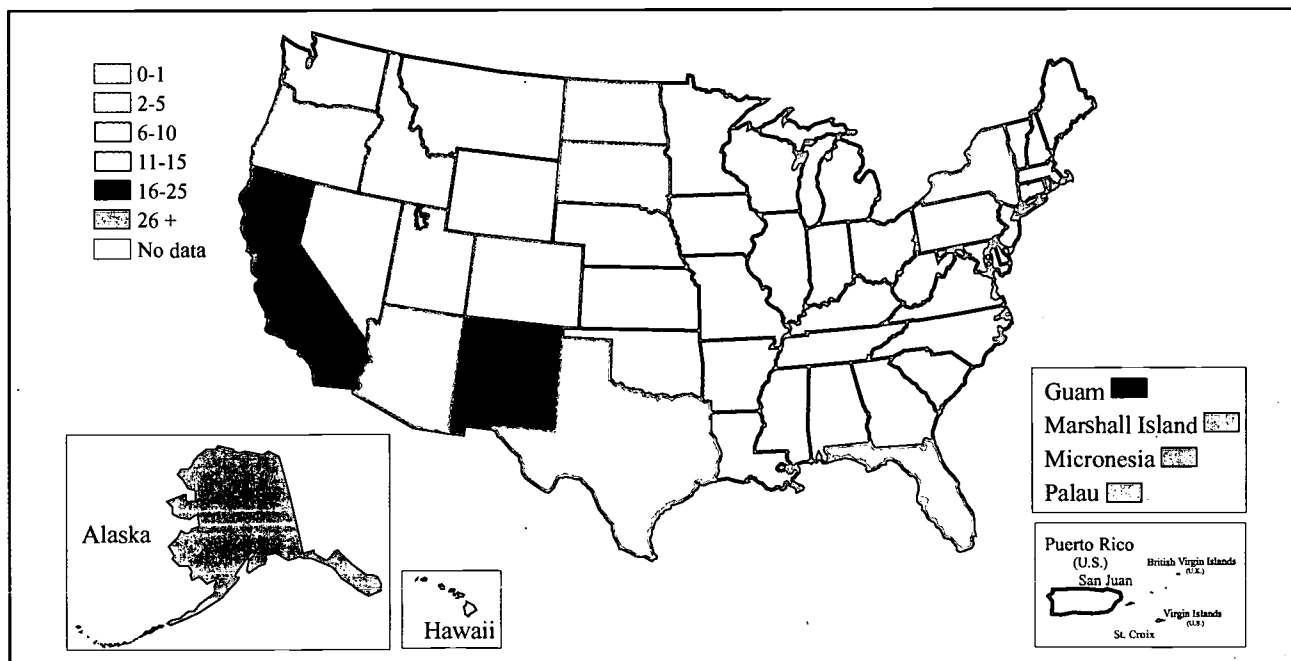
Source: Macías, R.F. et al. *Summary Report of the Survey of the States' Limited English Proficient Students and Available Educational Programs and Services, 1996-97* (Washington D.C.: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, 1998).

these data. Results were then triangulated to provide a rich and accurate picture of each program. Patterns and trends across programs were also identified, providing the empirical basis for the resulting criteria.

It is important to note that this research study was *not* an evaluation of bilingual education programs, that is, we did not evaluate programs using a set of characteristics and criteria already established. Instead, we developed the criteria by observing and learning from programs that had evidence of achievement for all of its students. These criteria can now be used by practitioners and researchers to assess programs and recognize areas that are strong and others that may need improvement.

It is also important to note that if each of the programs in this study were to conduct a self-assessment by these criteria, there would be no perfect program – one that meets 100 percent of the criteria. They would, however, meet most of the criteria with room for improvement for a few. Perhaps one of the most important lessons these programs teach is the need for constant assessment in a context of school accountability for student success, and/or focus on improvement and celebration of achievements. It is in this spirit that we present the major findings of this study. Next month, we will feature the school indicators, including school profiles and organizing similarities.

Resources

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first as a means to connect to the broader global community.

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Indicators of Success for Bilingual Programs

School Indicators	Student Outcomes	At the School Level: Leadership	At the School Level: Support	At the Classroom Level: Programmatic and Instructional Practices
✓ Retention Rate ✓ Dropout Rate ✓ Enrollment in Gifted and Talented/ Advanced Placement Programs ✓ Enrollment in Special Education or Remedial Programs ✓ Test Exemption Rates ✓ Program Exiting Standard ✓ Oral Language Proficiency	✓ Written Language Proficiency ✓ Content Area Mastery in English ✓ Content Area Mastery in Native Language ✓ Leadership ✓ Vision and Goals	✓ School Climate ✓ Linkages ✓ School Organization and Accountability ✓ Professional Development	✓ Parent Involvement ✓ Teacher Accountability and Student Assessment ✓ Staff Selection and Recognition ✓ Community Involvement ✓ Program Model ✓ Classroom Climate	✓ Curriculum and Instruction ✓ Teacher Expectations ✓ Program Articulation

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2001

Bilingual Education Research Organizations

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For additional resources, visit the IDRA Field Trip

www.idra.org
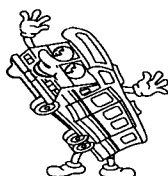
graduate from U.S. teacher preparation programs. Alianza is funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (Cortez, 2000).

While useful in expanding the existing teacher pool, these strategies are often used as only one portion of a multi-faceted approach to teacher preparation.

One of the more commonly adopted options (often perceived as bold and innovative despite the fact that it dates to the 1960s) is the notion of providing non-education majors an opportunity to adopt new careers in teaching through the use of "alternative certification" programs.

In these programs, adults with previous experience in other fields are encouraged to become teachers, often enrolling in streamlined curricula designed to minimize academic work and expedite their journey into the classroom.

Audiences targeted in these efforts include recent retirees, former members of the military, and professionals working in other areas who are interested in making mid-career changes (Newman and Thomas, 1999). Efforts to adopt large scale alternative teacher education programs are slowed by professional educators' insistence that such alternative programs reflect some of the same rigor found in regular teacher preparation programs and emerging data suggesting that such efforts may need further refinement (Whiting and Klotz, 1999).

Many of these programs to help reduce existing teacher shortages have succeeded in various settings to varying degrees. If this is the case, why does the issue seem to persist? The reasons vary. But some common themes that may explain the persistence of the problem emerge.

Things to Continue and Expand

One of the observations noted in the data is that while many schools and states do a reasonable job of projecting teachers' needs, most do not simultaneously and persistently monitor how various strategies may be aligned and coordinated.

Often noted in reviews of these strategies is the fact that there are various distinct and disconnected strategies operating simultaneously in a non-coordinated manner. States may create teacher preparation or recruitment programs at the same time school systems and colleges or universities are operating their own efforts. This lack of coordination may lead to duplication of effort or a failure to address what may be a

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critical shortage area as multiple programs target the same populations.

A second common theme is the absence of comprehensive evaluations of these efforts. The evaluations should look at the number of staff members produced by a distinct effort, the extent to which the new entrants remain employed in the system, and the success they experience in the school setting.

While a few states have attempted to assess the extent to which alternative certification programs produce well-prepared teachers – as reflected in student outcome data – few programs do the follow-up studies needed to measure the effectiveness of the programs.

Similarly, few states examine the extent of persistence of innovative teacher preparation strategies, leaving the question of whether graduates of such programs leave the profession at levels similar to teachers prepared in conventional college programs.

There are not enough extensive stud-

ies on what may be contributing to teacher attrition. While surveys conducted by some teacher organizations ask former members their reasons for leaving the field, these surveys may be impacted by specific issues that the teacher leadership groups are focusing on – including issues of teacher control, salary and benefits – and are reflected in the construction of the survey items.

Also, the research often focuses on specific issues – reasons urban teachers may leave inner-city schools or factors impacting rural schools' teacher recruitment and retention. Other research provides interesting descriptive data on the attributes of teachers leaving the field but lacks enough extensive useful data that could help guide the development of strategies to decrease teacher attrition levels.

Caution is Important

As schools struggle to find the number and quality of teachers needed to address the instructional needs of an increasingly diverse U.S. student population, there

is a tendency for some to settle for placing an adult – albeit a caring and responsible one – in a classroom, with minimal consideration as to whether the individual possesses the skills and attributes needed to ensure success for all students.

In the press to staff the classroom, some may look for the "magic bullet" to alleviate the persistent staffing challenge, opting for approaches that may sound appropriate, but for which evidence of effectiveness is lacking. Emerging research on strategies for accelerating teacher preparation already are suggesting that not all alternative or accelerated programs are equally effective (Newman and Thomas, 1999).

For example, some research on alternative certification programs suggests that these programs have produced mixed results, with some graduates requiring extensive support after entering teaching to produce results comparable to a university-prepared staff person.

In a related study, efforts to improve

HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT IDRA ACTIVITIES

In May, IDRA worked with **9,643** teachers, administrators, parents, and higher education personnel through **73** training and technical assistance activities and **276** program sites in **14** states plus the United Kingdom and Brazil. Topics included:

+ Leadership in Diversity
+ Training of Trainers in Parent Outreach
+ Proposal Writing for School Improvement
+ IDRA's FLAIR Project (Focusing on Language and Academic Instructional Renewal)
+ Alternatives to In-Grade Retention

Participating agencies and school districts included:

◇ Atlanta Public Schools, Georgia
◇ Brownsville Independent School District (ISD), Texas
◇ Espanola Public Schools, New Mexico
◇ New York City Public Schools, New York
◇ South San Antonio ISD, Texas

Activity Snapshot

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation funds Project Alianza, a collaboration of IDRA and the Mexican and American Solidarity Foundation to create a comprehensive and interdisciplinary teacher preparation and leadership development program to serve an increasing Hispanic student population in the U.S. Southwest and Midwest. The project is expanding the elementary education curricula at participating universities to enhance the abilities of teachers, parents, administrators, school board members and community leaders to collaborate effectively. It focuses on kindergarten through sixth grade teachers – grade levels where bilingual education is mostly offered and where there is a shortage of well-prepared teachers. Project Alianza is enabling universities to tap into three groups of individuals who possess the basic requirements of a prospective bilingual education teacher: bilingual teacher aides, students in traditional bilingual teacher-preparation programs, and teachers trained in Mexico to teach in their elementary grades (*normalistas*) and who are legal U.S. residents.

Regularly, IDRA staff provides services to:
+ public school teachers
+ parents
+ administrators
+ other decision makers in public education

Services include:
◇ training and technical assistance
◇ evaluation
◇ serving as expert witnesses in policy settings and court cases
◇ publishing research and professional papers, books, videos and curricula

For information on IDRA services for your school district or other group, contact IDRA at 210/444-1710.

teacher quality by recruiting graduates with high test scores revealed that good grades did not guarantee development of good teachers. While content knowledge was an important characteristic, other personal qualities were also critical to producing successful outcomes for pupils (Sears et al., 1994).

New Strategies to Consider

The extensive amount of research generated on teacher recruitment, retention and persistence suggests that schools may have already identified some strategies that have proven effective for specific categories of individuals in certain settings.

For most, availability of an adequate salary commensurate with the job requirements and suited to the cost of living in a region is critical. As important as salary, are the nature and quality of working conditions, including the extent of autonomy or opportunity to be creative and or innovative (Clay, 1984).

In rural areas, access to social and community connections may be considered more critical than in urban or suburban areas. For some, access to quality retirement or fringe benefits programs may prove to be essential. Beyond these conventional observations, some communities have begun to look at new strategies for expanding or maintaining the local teaching pool.

One strategy has involved developing locally-based teacher pools by offering financial support or job assurances for local community members or para-professionals to pursue teaching in exchange for a commitment to work in local schools.

IDRA's Alianza project has worked with universities in Texas and California to design and implement a program that recruits immigrants who were credentialed teachers in their home countries. The project designs accelerated programs that can get these individuals through a university teacher preparation program and produce badly-needed, qualified bilingual and ESL teachers in the participating school districts (Cortez, 2000).

Some school districts have engaged in collaborations where local lending institutions offer housing support through low-cost loans or other subsidies to help supplement local salaries.

In Texas and other states, new strategies have included recruiting individuals entering a post-retirement phase (military s) and others interested in making mid-career shifts into education. While offering some promise, emerging data suggests that such new entrants may require specialized support systems to help them make successful transitions into full-time teaching.

Other communities have experimented with providing non-conventional work schedules, allowing new entrants to work on a part-time basis or on a schedule that differs from the conventional schedules found in most local schools.

There seems to be little research on successful teacher recruitment and retention strategies, hindered perhaps by a persistent competition for available staff among many school systems. Even in those cases where some research has been conducted, limited venues exist for sharing these efforts, producing little more than informal networks of educator recruiters that may often be competing for the same small pool.

Texas and other states have convened commissions that have explored ways of increasing the available teacher pool. Often, these groups produce recommendations that truly contribute to increasing the available teacher pool. Their recommendations include suggestions for encouraging more young people to consider teaching as a career, providing scholarships or other forms of financial aid to assist pupils to enroll and remain in teacher preparation programs, and strategies for recruiting outside the conventional labor pools.

Too often however, these innovative efforts do not incorporate adequate research or evaluation designs that allow their proponents to assess the effectiveness of those efforts. Lacking adequate documentation, assessment and feedback mechanisms, innovative programs often operate for a few years and disappear – along with whatever insights or lessons that might have been gleaned from that experience.

Also missing are mechanisms that link many local innovations to universities and state policymaking bodies that might integrate these new strategies into existing teacher preparation programs or support the design of more extensive state-level programs. Lacking the opportunity to "scale-up," teacher preparation programs have continued to exist in an environment that produces persistent shortages, that seem to persevere despite long-standing efforts to diminish the problem.

Past efforts to develop more coordinated and expanded efforts, informed by past experiences may have been hindered by limited communications technology or other factors beyond the control of local school personnel. New technologies offer great opportunities to design, implement and disseminate new teacher recruitment, preparation and retention strategies that can minimize, if not eliminate, this perpetual educational personnel shortage crisis.

Much of the literature on effective education reform programs concludes with the observation that access to quality teaching personnel is a central element to the success of any individual pupil. Conversely, other innovations, absent a well-prepared teacher, may not produce the results desired. What are needed are more comprehensive, integrated and well-supported strategies that involve the whole community and incorporate mechanisms to monitor the innovations and assess their results. All students and all communities deserve no less than high quality schools, committed to the success of all, not some at the expense of others.

In the press to staff the classroom, some may look for the "magic bullet" to alleviate the persistent staffing challenge, opting for approaches that may sound appropriate, but for which evidence of effectiveness is lacking.

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High Expectations, Substandard Results
The 2001 Texas Legislative Session

María Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., and Albert Cortez, Ph.D.

IDRA extends our sympathy to those forever affected by the tragedy of September 11, 2001. We are particularly mindful of the impact on children. We wish for peace for all children of the world.

In the November-December 2000 issue of the *IDRA Newsletter*, the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) outlined a set of nine priorities for public education. In that article we identified an array of recommended policy reforms needed to improve the quality of Texas public education. The policy issues we addressed included nine areas that, in our judgement, significantly affect the short- and long-term prospects for student success. These nine priority areas are:
* School dropouts,
* Open enrollment charter schools,
* Disciplinary alternative education programs,
* In-grade retention,
* High stakes testing and accountability,
* School facilities funding,
* Access to higher education,
* Access to comprehensible instruction for students learning English, and
* Use of public money for private schooling.

When the session ended in May, the progress made in a few areas was outweighed by the lack of action around too many issues. If asked to grade the legislature's overall effort, at best it would rate a "C-," and for some areas perhaps a "D" or "F."

Most pronounced in the 2001 debates was the distraction caused by bitter battles over the re-drawing of legislative districts, leaving little time or energy for substantive leadership on important education issues. Even the long-needed adoption of state-funded health insurance for teachers was delayed until the last hours of the session.

The exclusion of retired educators from this important new coverage left most observers feeling less than jubilant about that achievement.

To their credit – and more accurately to the credit of a handful of insistent legislators who would not be denied – a few bright spots can be noted for the 2001 Texas legislative session. The issues and how they relate to IDRA's nine priority areas are outlined below.

School Dropouts

In the November-December issue of the *IDRA Newsletter*, we pointed out that the state definition of a "dropout" must be revised so that *all* students are counted. In order for the state dropout estimates to be credible, a number of reforms need to be considered, specifically:
* Change the definition of who is considered a school dropout to exclude those who received a General Education Development (GED) certificate, non-verified transfers and other non-verified leavers from high school graduation counts.
* Require reporting of numbers of students graduating with a high school diploma to help verify reported dropout counts.
* Include longitudinal dropout rates in the state accountability rating systems.

Following the 1999 legislative session, many people around the state became increasingly aware of the problems associated with the way the state required districts to calculate and report dropout rates. The state was so concerned with the issue that it

appointed an interim committee to study the methods used to calculate dropout rates and recommend ways in which the counting and reporting system could be strengthened.

After convening hearings on the issue, the interim committee drafted a set of recommendations that included developing a revised approach focused on the number of students who "complete" either high school or a GED program and tightening procedures for auditing school district dropout records. Though a potential improvement, these recommendations fell far short of the sweeping changes many critics had hoped would emerge from the committee.

Testimony presented before the committee included calls for an extensive revamping of the state's dropout counting and reporting procedures. In testimony before the committee, IDRA and numerous others, proposed wholesale changes in the state's dropout counting and reporting procedures to restore credibility to the state dropout numbers. Concerns that the effect of wholesale changes would lead to a major reductions in the number of schools rated "exemplary" or "recognized" contributed to some legislators' reluctance to make the extensive changes.

Instead, the state opted to institutionalize the existing school leaver process that it had been developing over the last several years. In that reporting process, schools are required to create an individual record reflecting *what they believe to be the status* of

> If asked to grade the legislature's overall effort, at best it would rate a "C-," and for some areas perhaps a "D" or "F."

every student who is initially enrolled in a school system but who leaves the school system prior to graduating.

The leaver reporting system includes over-reporting categories ranging from "enrolled at another public school in Texas" to "returned to home country." Of the 46 leaver codes, only 20 are allowed to be used in developing a total dropout count. Too many of the categories require no actual verification of student status (other than a weak "assurance" that the student "intends" to re-enroll in another school system or "intends to pursue a GED").

Despite its recognized weaknesses, the senate leadership insisted on the adoption of a completion rate system based on the questionable school leaver system. The state's use of this approach will continue to yield dropout numbers that lack credibility in most circles, save a few that seem more concerned with having the state and local school districts "look good" in the eyes of the public – despite numerous stories in the state's major newspapers that question the

legitimacy of the state and local school system reported dropout numbers.

It has become increasingly clear that state leaders will be reluctant to make substantive changes in this area without greater public outcries about the sorry state of Texas' dropout reporting system. As in other major state reforms, what is required is the development of public will that conveys that the gross understating of state and local dropout numbers will no longer be tolerated. Until this happens, thousands of students will continue to be lost from the Texas system, uncounted and unheard, while some state leaders and local school officials continue to turn a blind eye to the real dropout numbers. (The next issue of the *IDRA Newsletter* will provide the latest results of IDRA's annual attrition study.)

Open Enrollment Charter Schools

Based on evaluation of findings concerning open-enrollment charter schools, IDRA believes that the state of Texas should:
*   Initiate a moratorium on approvals for new open enrollment charter schools,
*   Increase its oversight of all charter school operations, and
*   Create mechanisms for accelerated action in those charter schools found to be under-performing.

Four years after its initial foray into the creation of state-funded charter schools, the Texas Legislature began to move toward exerting greater control over this expanding

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Destined to Get an Equitable System of School Funding

Anna Alicia Romero

This month marks the 51-year anniversary of Dr. José A. Cárdenas' life as a professional educator. Immediately after graduating from the University of Texas at Austin in 1950, Dr. Cárdenas started as a science teacher in the Laredo Public Schools. After a two-year stint in the U.S. Army, he resumed his teaching career in the Edgewood Independent School District (ISD) in San Antonio.

Additional classroom teaching was soon augmented by various supervisory and administrative positions leading to the superintendency of the district from 1969 to 1973. Dr. Cárdenas' work in public schools was supplemented by many years of full- and part-time college teaching and almost 30 years in educational research and development.

In 1973, Dr. Cárdenas resigned as superintendent and founded the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) (formerly Texans for Educational Excellence). IDRA was founded to undertake school finance reform advocacy and now works with people to create self-renewing schools that value and empower all children, families and communities.

IDRA celebrates these 51 years of contributions to the improvement of educational opportunities for children with a series of conversations with Dr. Cárdenas and members of the IDRA staff published in the IDRA Newsletter. In this issue's conversation with Dr. Cárdenas, interviewer, Anna Alicia Romero, focuses on school finance.

You have said that you feel destined to link yourself to the issue of school funding. Why has it become such a burning issue for you?

J.A.C.: For several reasons. One is that all of my teaching experiences have been in low-wealth school districts. I had continued frustration over the lack of instructional supplies and materials, particularly as a science teacher. The lack of scientific equipment available made it difficult for me to teach. And my concepts of equity and equality of educational opportunity came together with my lack of equity in resources, enough for me to spend 20 years in the quest for equitable school funding.

Coming from Laredo, Texas – where you grew up with these same inequities – when and how did you notice them? Despite seeing the dearth of supplies available for teaching, many teachers operate with the understanding that these inequities are to be expected. When did it strike a nerve with you?

J.A.C.: First, when I started teaching science at the junior high school level, there had not been extensive science offerings at that level. There were some readings, but no laboratory sciences as such. And teaching in a school that had no laboratory equipment left a sour note on these memories.

Second, when I started teaching

> When I picked up the newspaper... and found out that on the basis of the suit I had been involved in as superintendent of Edgewood, the entire school finance system in Texas had been found unconstitutional... it hit me that something big had happened.

science at a high school, I did not have access to a laboratory. Teaching in a shed outside with no running water, barely electricity, made it pretty obvious that there was a shortage of teaching materials and equipment for teaching those subjects in science – which was what I was responsible for teaching.

For you, how did the absence of supplies and necessary equipment become a quest for equal funding?

J.A.C.: I think that the normal progression was finding similar shortages

of money in many aspects of education. In 1969, when I became superintendent of the Edgewood Independent School District (ISD) in San Antonio, it all came together. We started instituting school reform measures, but I found it almost impossible to bring about any amount of school reform in the absence of adequate resources for the school.

This manifested itself primarily in a high turn-over rate of teachers. It seemed that as soon as a teacher was certified, he or she was made a more generous offer from another school district and inevitably left our district. While there were many good teachers in the district, there was a tendency for the better teachers to move on to better paying school districts.

At the time, we had more than one-third of the teachers in the school district without teaching certificates. This meant that they did not meet the basic requirements for a teacher in Texas. Of course salaries for teachers were very, very low. I found it difficult to bring about any vast change in the education of the students in the absence of these three resources: teacher retention, teacher certification, and teacher salaries.

How did the situation you saw in Laredo and at Edgewood ISD make school finance such an important issue in your life?

J.A.C.: Actually, through the vehicle itself, *Rodríguez vs. San Antonio ISD*. Up to this time, no one thought that school finance could be dealt with differently. I think that the *Rodríguez* case showed not only that it could be done differently, but that it was feasible to do so. It was *Rodríguez vs. San Antonio ISD* that triggered my active role in school finance reform.

In the Rodríguez case, the state court found the Texas system of school finance unconstitutional. So this became, for you, a signal to move beyond the school system and the constraints in the school system?

J.A.C.: That's right, until then I think, like everyone else in education, I had been very concerned with *more* money for the schools. *Rodríguez* changed my perspective to *equal* funding for schools.

Turning a state system of operation upside down is a monumental undertaking. This is not a school district or a small organization, but a state the size of Texas with its vast resources. Rodríguez vs. San Antonio ISD made it seem that there was a light at the end of the tunnel. You said that this type of change became feasible, after Rodríguez vs. San Antonio ISD.

J.A.C.: The key word here is *after* *Rodríguez vs. San Antonio ISD*. This case was very much a "sleeper" court case. Originally, the suit was filed against school districts. [Then they were dropped as defendants and were replaced by the State of Texas.] It was not until the end of *Rodríguez* that it started really looking attractive to me in terms of school finance reform, and even then I had no idea of the partial success that we would enjoy.

When I picked up the newspaper on December 23, 1971, and found out that on the basis of the suit that I had been involved in as superintendent of Edgewood ISD, the entire school finance system in Texas had been found unconstitutional – and by implication that of about 40 other states – it hit me that something *big* had happened. It was like being hit by an asteroid and not having been aware that it was coming.

Because, as I mentioned before,

Texas School Finance Reform: An IDRA Perspective

by José A. Cárdenas, Ed.D.

A master story-teller, Dr. José A. Cárdenas offers an insider's view of the 32-year history of school finance in Texas. Dr. Cárdenas is the founder and director emeritus of IDRA and is the only person who has been actively involved in the entire school finance reform effort since the early days of the *Rodríguez vs. San Antonio ISD* litigation when he was superintendent of the Edgewood Independent School District. More than a history, this book provides a blueprint for persons interested in bringing about future reform in schools and other social institutions. Beginning with a description of the Texas system in 1950, the account covers court cases, legislation, and advocacy efforts and concludes with the status and future of school finance reform. Personal vignettes sprinkled throughout offer glimpses of those special untold moments that impacted history. Much of this volume – including the myths of school finance and lessons learned – relate to reform efforts in other states as well. Dr. James A. Kelly, president of the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, provides a foreword, "Fighting the Good Fight," describing Dr. Cárdenas as a trailblazer and pioneer. As a former program officer for the Ford Foundation, Dr. Kelly coordinated support for school finance reform efforts around the country.
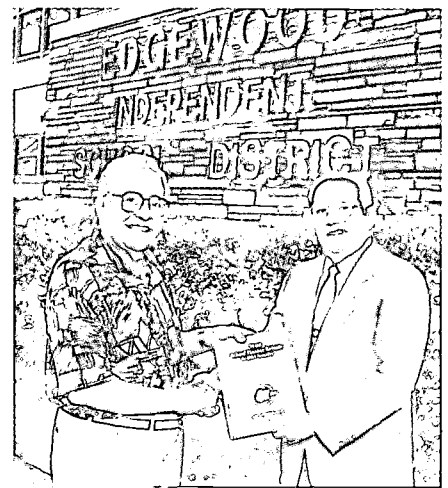
Dr. José A. Cárdenas (right) presents a copy of his book to Demetrio Rodríguez (left), lead litigant in the Rodríguez vs. San Antonio ISD case. Photo credit: Randall Reines Photography, San Antonio, 1997.

"He worked hard, he played hard. And in doing so, never lost sight of his goal. Because for José school finance reform was never really an end in itself. It remained (and remains) a means to a larger end: to improve teaching and learning for all children; in particular, to improve the life chances of the poor and dispossessed... This book is a testimony to a life lived in pursuit of that dream, one which paid off for all of Texas' children."

– Dr. James A. Kelly

Officially released on April 29, 1997 – the 10th anniversary of the *Edgewood* decision by State Superior Judge of Travis County Harley Clark that struck down Texas' school finance system as unconstitutional.

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Rodriguez was a sleeper court case, it sailed past many states, and it got by the state of Texas also, without creating a lot of controversy or publicity, concerning the courts. It was not until 1971, with the initial court finding by the three judge panel, that *Rodriguez* got noticed.

At that point did you believe that the school funding system could be turned around?

J.A.C.: At that point, yes. The court said that we could do this and that it should be done. That it must be done. It even went further into implementing aspects of *Rodriguez* that the plaintiffs had not gotten into in court.

Can you give a further example of this?

J.A.C.: The regional service centers, for instance, provide services to school districts. They were created and funded by Texas, yet participation of the regional service center was through a fixed fee on the basis of the numbers of students in the school districts in each region. Therefore, Edgewood ISD's participation with audiovisual materials borrowed from the regional service center cost $1 per child. Edgewood ISD at that time had about 24,000 students, which meant that it would cost us $24,000 to use movies, film strips, audio tapes and other things available.

For districts with a lot of money, $1 per child was not a heck of a lot of money. But in Edgewood ISD, $1 per child was probably three-fourths of our share of the foundation school program, so it was impossible for us to participate in these things.

As the wealthy got more, the poor got less, in terms of school finance. At this time, I started challenging the regional service center on the basis of *Rodriguez*, stating that it was illegal for them to furnish resources on a monetary basis, charging the same amounts to school districts of varying district wealth. Before this was resolved, *Rodriguez* was reversed by the U.S. Supreme Court so nothing ever came of my protests.

Did you ever have serious doubts about reforming the school funding system?

J.A.C.: I think that the biggest moment of serious doubt was the day that *Rodriguez* was turned around. Talking to the lawyers in the litigation of *Rodriguez* in the Supreme Court, I never had any doubt

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that we were going to win *Rodriguez* [at the Supreme Court]. The serious doubt was when I picked up the newspaper and I found we lost by a 5 to 4 vote.

I felt as if everything had gone down the tube. However, during the litigation of *Rodriguez* in the Supreme Court, several things happened that made me optimistic in spite of the reversal. One of those things were guarantees given to me by the Texas governor, by the Texas Legislature, and by certain school superintendents in the state, that no one objected to an equitable system of school finance. The reason it was being fought was that they did not want it pushed down their throats by the United States court.

They also agreed that even if we lost in the appeal of *Rodriguez*, they would hasten to bring about an immediate reform of school finance in the state of Texas. This was assured to me by everybody.

From the moment that you began this quest, to its final stages, how did your attitude or perspective change?

J.A.C.: I had different changes of

perspectives, at first I thought it was a hopeless case and we would never win. Then we won. Then we had a big change the day the Supreme Court reversed the decision in a 5 to 4 vote. Of course when you lose something in a close vote you say, "Gosh, if I had just done this or that," and so forth. I resigned myself to the fact that the Supreme Court majority came out with a decision, and then looking at the case itself, and the way it read, that they grasped at straws to substantiate the decision that they made.

Then you start getting the feeling 10 years down the line, in the *Edgewood* cases that followed, that there were not going to be any promises kept. You realize that Governor Dolph Brisco, and subsequently Governor Mark White and others who had pledged to me personally that we would have an equitable system of school finance, were not going to keep their promises.

The same people who were making those promises were saying in essence, "José, we are very interested in having an

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equitable system of school finance, but it has to be devised in such a way that our own get more." They wanted a system of school finance where everyone gets the same, except they wanted to perpetuate their own positions.

So, in fact, that has happened and is still happening in the state of Texas. It was very frustrating to have the Supreme Court say in *Edgewood III* that all school systems are entitled to equal access to funds, but once they have it some can have more.

Who was telling you they had no problem with equitable school finance?

J.A.C.: Governors, legislators, senators, representatives, Texas Education Agency personnel and school district personnel. They had no qualms with equalized school finance system, as long as the privileged would remain in the privileged position. This included not only the amount of money that was going through them, but the amount of taxes they were paying, because they were privileged in both areas.

This leads to some of the myths in school finance. One of the myths that was perpetuated for years and years, and is still present, is that there are better schools in some areas of town because they sacrifice and spend more money for the education of the children.

Supporting our schools through property taxes is inherently inequitable. At the time of the Edgewood suits, did you see other ways to fund schools?

J.A.C.: The simple answer is yes. All of the inequities can be eliminated very quickly. Texas has a system of assessment where every school district is assessed at a different rate. The whole assessment process leads to appraisal. A value is put on the land, then the assessment is done. Then a tax rate is assigned for how much of the value will be taxed.

You would have a very wealthy place that was assessed very low and taxed even lower and therefore produced low yield. And they would say, "Well gee, we don't have enough money to operate schools, etc." Now that can be changed very quickly.

They were making true appraisal comments and assessed appraisal comments in order to accommodate those school districts that had very low assessments. Well, with one fell swoop,
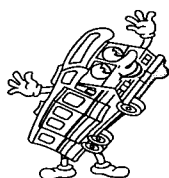
they just did away with the assessment. So it went from appraisal to taxation and no more assessment.

The appraisal system underwent a tremendous change because the state set up county appraisal districts supervised by a centralized system to make sure that the appraisals are fair. Now, it is supervised centrally to make sure that the appraisals that are being made in San Antonio are comparable with the appraisals made in Corpus Christi and Odessa.

We have to un-complicate the system, and then we can come back with a very efficient system of school finance. In Texas, very little of the state wealth comes from local property taxes. Most of the state wealth comes from the sales tax, which is a very regressive form of taxation. The state government says that you cannot do this or that because they are using state taxes – sales taxes – in order to finance the thing, and these are not equitable either.

It only takes the passing of a motion to enact a state income tax, which would be much more progressive than the sales tax that we have. So you have to be very careful with statements like, "It cannot be done because..." It may be hard and some people might not like it, but it can be done.

I used to go around talking about school finance reform in a wealthy district in San Antonio [Alamo Heights ISD] telling them, "In Edgewood ISD, they are taxing themselves $2.20 per $100.00 evaluation, and Alamo Heights folk are taxing yourselves 37 cents." The response was, "Well they can do that, but we can't because our people do not like to tax themselves."

This is a poor excuse to continue an inequitable system of school finance and

continue hurting kids in low-wealth school districts because people in the high-wealth school district don't like to tax themselves. Of course I cannot help but make the statement that people in the low-wealth school districts do not like to tax themselves either, they just bite the bullet and do so. Although it can solve the problem, people don't like to tax themselves, so it is a hard sell.

What role do parents and community members play in the school funding struggle?

J.A.C.: Parents and communities are interested in the schools and, to a certain extent, the interest should be increasing greatly right now rather than diminishing. For one thing, school finances are a very complicated subject, and I notice that many school professionals have never understood the concept of what constitutes an equitable or inequitable system of school finance.

I think that the parents in the community are even more uneducated about school financing. They care to have good schools but are not sure how this would be brought about. I have been harping for the last 20 years that the shifts in our economy from manufacturing and farming to services and technology has led to a need for a much more educated population than what we have now. This is why I am concerned with the dropout rate and students doing poorly in school.

I think school has become much more important than when I was a student. I remember stating that you can dig a ditch for a living. But now there are mechanical ditch diggers that will put you out of business and will dig a ditch that it used to take 200 people to dig in the same period of time. Technology requires a much more educated population than we have now.

It is unbelievable that the state of Texas is losing 40 percent of students from schools and is not greatly concerned about it. They complain of not being able to find teachers and have even proposed ways of using emergency personnel and so forth, but don't go to square one. What does it take to keep teachers? Why do 47 percent quit in the first year? Well, probably because they do not make enough money or the situation is not attractive enough to them. Let's make it attractive and attain and retain better teachers.

Incidentally, traditionally low paying

Successful Bilingual Education Programs

10 Schools Serve as Models

María Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., and Josie Danini Cortez, M.A.

Editor's Note: Last year, the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) conducted a research study with funding by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA) to identify characteristics that contribute to the high academic performance of students served by bilingual education programs. The August 2001 issue of the IDRA Newsletter began a series of six articles describing this research study's significant findings. The first installment provided an overview of the research design and methods. This second article features an overview of the schools' demographics and the major findings pertaining to school indicators.

Amid a backdrop of great language diversity among the students and parents that U.S. schools serve are schools with exemplary bilingual education programs and extraordinary individuals who are committed to equity and excellence. This commitment manifests itself as academic success for *all* students, including limited-English-proficient (LEP) students. These schools refuse to make excuses for a lack of student achievement; they refuse to settle for anything less than excellence and high standards for all.

While there are many such schools and classrooms across this country, time and resources dictated that IDRA work with only 10 schools and use their lessons learned as a guide for developing criteria that others can use to assess their own programs. The following provides an overview of these schools' demographics and the major findings pertaining to school indicators. There is also a profile of one of the schools as described by an IDRA researcher.

School Demographics

By design, the school demographics reflected a diverse landscape. Programs in eight elementary schools, one high school and one middle school participated in this research study. The student enrollment for the 10 schools ranged from 219 in the high school to 1,848 students in the middle school. By geographic location, there were six urban schools, three rural schools, and one reservation school.

There was also diversity in ethnic representation. Hispanic students ranged from 40 percent to 98 percent of students enrolled; Asian students made up 2 percent to 41 percent of the students enrolled; Russian students ranged from 12 percent to 32 percent of the students enrolled; and Native American students comprised 3 percent to 98 percent of the students enrolled. The number of limited-English-proficient (LEP) students ranged from 20 percent to 100 percent. Four of the 10 schools implemented dual language or two-way bilingual programs. The languages used for content area subjects included Spanish, English, Russian, and Navajo.

All of the schools were committed to maintaining the students' primary language and culture while learning English. This commitment was evident in the school administration and staff, the majority of whom were proficient in two languages. Most of the office staff also were bilingual, allowing for open communication between the school personnel and the students and families.

Five of the 10 schools had Title VII funds, including one in California, that had received an Academic Excellence Dissemination grant in 1994 to 1996.

School Organization

Schools generally organized themselves by grade level teams with both vertical and horizontal alignment and account-

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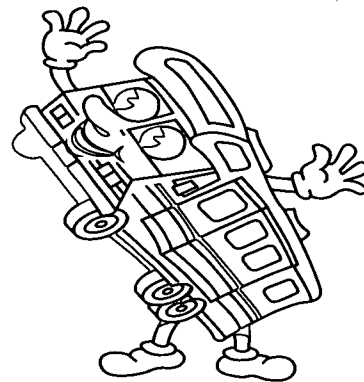
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ability evident. Faculty met frequently, some as often as three times a week. There was support by the administration for these regularly scheduled meetings, with the principals often planning the agendas, in most cases, with input from the teachers and staff.

Six out of the 10 schools included elective staff in their meetings, allowing for easier integration and alignment. Most of the time at the meetings was spent on curriculum and instruction, with staff using student data to inform curriculum and instruction decisions. Teachers were also provided regular planning time.

There was open and easy communication between the principals and teachers at these schools. Teachers reported frequent discussions with their principals via e-mail, meetings (formal and informal), open-door policies, and principals visiting the classrooms daily.

All of the schools had technology in classrooms. The extent of use varied by school (see boxes below and on Page 9).

School Indicators

The 10 schools participating in this study had similar profiles, including:
- High poverty – Nine of the 10 schools had at least half of their students eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program, a poverty indicator.
- High average attendance – All of the schools had high attendance (86 to 98 percent).
- High percentage of their students participating in the bilingual education programs – Most of the schools had at least one-third of their enrolled students being served by bilingual education programs – one school served all of its 219 enrolled students.
- Low retention rate – Most of the schools had low retention rates. Four schools retained 1 percent or less of their students.

- Low annual dropout rate – Nine of the 10 schools had a 0 percent annual dropout rate.
- Low percentage of migrant students – More than half of the schools did not serve migrant students. Of the five that did, three served less than 10 percent. However, in one school, two out of five students were migrant.
- LEP student representation in gifted and talented programs – Most of the schools with gifted and talented or advanced placement programs had LEP students fully participating.
- Low LEP student representation in special education programs – Most of the schools had few LEP students in their special education programs.

Example of a Successful Bilingual Education Program

Each bilingual education program is

Organization at Schools Studied by IDRA

School	Faculty Organized	Effective Staff in Meetings	Frequency of Meetings	Percent of Time Spent in Meeting on Curriculum
School A	Teams and departments	Yes	50% Teams meet three times a week; 50% Departments meet two times a week	100% Depts. student progress and curriculum teams
School B	Grade level teams	Yes	Scheduled once a week; additional meetings as needed.	100%
School C	Grade level teams	No	Teachers meet every Wednesday from 3:00 - 5:30 p.m.	100%
School D	Grade level	No	Third grade weekly	100%
School E	Grade level	As needed	Weekly	100%
School F	Teams – one teacher teachers in Spanish; the other in English	No	Once every two weeks	AMIGOS lead teacher
School G	There are no teams or departments. The only department is the language arts group.	Yes	Every Friday	20%
School H	Grade level	No	Weekly	100%
School I	Grade level teams	Resource teachers included	Weekly	100%
School J	Grade level	Yes	Weekly	80%

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Organization at Schools Studied by IDRA (continued)

School	Block Scheduling	Technology Used in Bilingual Education Program	Title VII Grant	Type of Bilingual Program
School A	Yes	All of the school is hard wired.	No	Maintenance – *Project New Beginnings* and dual language
School B	No	All classrooms equipped with computers; all students (K-5) scheduled to computer lab.	Yes	Bilingual/Transition
School C	Yes, reading	Every classroom has a computer.	Yes	Bilingual/Accelerated transition
School D	Yes, third grade	Yes	No	Bilingual/Late transition. Working on late transition program. Has FLES program for English, Spanish and Russian speakers.
School E	No	Yes	No	Dual language
School F	Literacy block in both languages	The school has a computer lab, and every class has a work station.	Yes	Two-way bilingual program
School G	No	Yes	Yes, last two years	Bilingual
School H	No	Yes	No	Dual language
School I	No	Every classroom has computers.	Title VII Academic Excellence Dissemination Grant 1994-1996 DBE 1989-1992	Two-way bilingual immersion
School J		Yes	No	Bilingual

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part of a school with its own unique context and special characteristics that are clearly evident. These characteristics or "indicators of success" are described in the following profile of one school, providing a first-hand look at the inner workings of a successful program and school.

Heritage Elementary School, Woodburn, Oregon

Woodburn, Oregon, billed as the "City of Unity," prides itself on its cultural diversity. Here, Anglos, Hispanics and Russians come together in a unique blend of local and extended heritage. Woodburn has developed a cosmopolitan blend of cultures not normally found in cities of its size – an area four square miles.

Woodburn is located in northeast Oregon, approximately halfway between Salem and Portland, in the midst of lush, fertile farmland. Employment opportunities range from food processing to construction of manufactured housing to professional services, resulting in a relatively affluent community. Historically, farming has contributed greatly to Woodburn's economic health, and large farms and orchards still put their stamp on this area.

Heritage Elementary School is an attractively designed new school, only three years old, and stands in a neighborhood of well kept middle- to upper-class homes. It is adjacent to the middle school.

The school serves three language groups: Hispanic Spanish-speakers, Russian-speakers and English-speakers. His-

panic students are predominately of Mexican or Mexican-American origin, and most are classified as migrants because their parents are local farmworkers (having moved to Woodburn from Texas or California) who sometimes go north to Washington to pick fruit. Many workers have begun to settle in Woodburn and are no longer classified as migrants, but new migrant farmworkers continue to replace those who have been reclassified.

Most of the Russian students are recent immigrants and are members of a sect known as Old Believers, which was formed more than 700 years ago when the Russian Orthodox church split from the Greek Orthodox church. Portions of the sect spent many years in exile in China, Turkey and Argentina

before coming to Woodburn to settle in the 1950s. They speak an old dialect of Russian and follow many traditional customs that separate them from mainstream American society. Also, many are migrant workers in the fishing and timber industries who migrate to and from Alaska.

The Heritage Elementary School building is clean and bright. Pictures of parents, teachers and students as well as examples of students' work decorate the hallways. When IDRA researchers visited, the principal exhibited her pride both in the teachers and students. She spoke very openly about the program and its continual development.

A third grade teacher believes the building is one of the best support services available for students learning English. She remarked, "We label everything on the walls in Russian, Spanish and English – hallways, classrooms and administrative offices."

Inside the classrooms, posters and student work grace the walls. Most of these use both English and another language. There are also a large number of books in every classroom, both in the native language and English. In one class, there are more than 40 books that have been translated from English to Russian by a group of involved parents.

Most classrooms have listening centers, a reading corner and a computer station. Student desks are arranged in groups of four or five, and the teacher moves among the groups. Moreover, teachers interact with each other frequently regarding instructional topics and methods.

One teacher cited the sharing of ideas and thoughts among the staff as being the most important professional development activity. "Curriculum planning and mapping here at the school helps us to see that we are all going in the same direction," she said.

Students are enthusiastic and participate in the lessons, some teacher-directed and others independent. Although teachers encourage the students to speak in their home language during the morning sessions, they are not prohibited from communicating in English if they want to. Thus, students can often be heard conversing in both English and their home language.

Heritage Elementary School conducts several bilingual education programs simultaneously. The late-exit program serves 342 English-learners (57 percent) from kindergarten through third grade who had low English student language assessment scores when they entered school. Even though

"Curriculum planning and mapping here at the school helps us to see that we are all going in the same direction."

these students will officially exit the program at the end of the third grade, the plan allows for all of them to continue in a bilingual program through fifth grade. The program was begun four years ago and has added a grade each year, having reached third grade this year.

Students with higher English language assessment scores upon initial entry are placed in mainstream classrooms and can be pulled out of class for English as a second language (ESL) support in grades two through five. In grades four and five students can receive pull-out native language support or support from bilingual educational assistants within the mainstream classrooms.

Until recently, Oregon did not require that bilingual teachers obtain a bilingual endorsement; nevertheless, five teachers from Heritage Elementary School are currently working toward one. Of the total staff, 35 percent speak Spanish and 19 percent speak Russian. Of the classified staff, 50 percent speak Spanish and 29 percent speak Russian. Of the three native language classrooms observed (one Russian and two Spanish), all three teachers and one aide were fluent in the respective language.

Heritage Elementary School has drawn on the research of prominent bilingual educators in designing and evaluating its program. Before starting the program four years ago, the staff read the literature and visited schools with exemplary practices in Oregon and around the country. They then decided to implement a late-exit model. Last year, they asked a research team to the school to assess the program and provide the staff with suggestions for improvement.

The school has both a Spanish-English bilingual and a Russian-English bilingual program. In addition, for English proficient students, it offers Spanish and Russian as a foreign language for an average of 90 minutes per week.

The design of the bilingual program specifies the amount of time devoted to each of the three components: an ESL component called English language development, in-

struction in the native language, and sheltered English techniques. Initial reading instruction is provided in the native language, with English literacy usually delayed until third grade. The content areas are provided initially in the native language with a carefully planned introduction into each grade of specified subjects using sheltered English techniques.

From the beginning of the program at the kindergarten level, students spend a portion of each day with English speakers. Russian and Spanish speakers are also grouped together for English language development. The staff reported that this accelerated their English acquisition because both kinds of students were forced to use English to communicate with each other. Students remain in the program through at least the fifth grade.

IDRA researchers noted that all the instruction is uniformly of high quality and reflects best practices recommended for mainstream and second language-learners. Students often work in cooperative, heterogeneous groups or with partners. Student-to-student and teacher-to-student interactions are frequent, meaningful and focused on instructional tasks. Activities are hands-on, and teachers use a large variety of materials: bilingual books of many genres and types as well as visual, audiovisual and art materials.

Many students were observed receiving individual or small group assistance from additional teachers, bilingual educational assistants and parents. This extra help is provided inside their classrooms or in quiet, cozy corners in the halls outside.

All students, English-learners and native English-speakers, are integrated in one of the morning and afternoon homerooms. This gives everyone an opportunity to mix with each other as a group and begin and end each day together.

One teacher interviewed believes this arrangement has contributed to the success of the school's program. She noted: "Students start and finish in a mainstream classroom. The first and last periods of the day, students are with the same teacher and their mainstream class. This gives students a feeling of being more integrated into the entire school."

Throughout the day, English-learners are divided into language groups and placed in an ETP instructional model (late-exit, early-exit, literacy center, or mainstream classroom depending on each student's language capability) and are taught in their native lan-

guage of Russian or Spanish.

Language capability is assessed by administering a home language survey. The ETP coordinator makes the appropriate assessment to determine the particular English learning level of each child. Students are also given the Oregon student language assessment and the Woodcock-Muñoz language tests before being placed in an instructional model. Additionally, kindergarten and first grade students are given the Brigance Screen to measure basic language skills, and teachers use various classroom assessment methods to determine how students are progressing during the year.

Although the school is moving toward a late-exit program, presently only those in kindergarten through second grade are in such a program. Third, fourth and fifth graders are in an early-exit program, having made the transition into English. Other students are identified as mainstream English, and some students are placed in literacy centers. Sheltered English techniques are used to help students who have not mastered English by the end of fifth grade.

The school also has an English Plus program, through which parents can opt to have their children continue to learn their native language. Students can also learn a third language through English Plus – English, Spanish or Russian.

Heritage Elementary School's bilingual education practices are deemed exemplary in large part because of its support of native language development and retention. According to a Russian parent: "Many students have grandparents who don't speak English. The kids are very interested in speaking to their grandparents, so they are motivated to learn. The children are not embarrassed to speak Russian in school, because they use it at home and in their neighborhood."

This integration of community culture and school lifestyle makes an enormous impression on the parents and stimulates them to contribute to their children's school and become involved in their children's success.

Although the state of Oregon requires that by third grade students are transitioned to English, the school continues to create avenues for supporting the students in their native language while they learn English.

Also important is the staff's organization of the classwork for these students, such as in the English language develop-

Helping Children Understand the Terrorist Attacks on September 11, 2001

Below are resources for parents and teachers to help children deal with the effects of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
www.aacap.org/publications/factsfam/disaster.htm
This web site discusses ways children deal with disaster. It includes a list for parents about possible changes in children's behavior that may signal Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Children's Defense Fund
www.childrensdefense.org/resources_tragedy.htm
This web site features general resources that can be used by parents, teachers, and other caregivers to help children through difficult days.

Connect for Kids
www.connectforkids.org/usr_doc/CopingWithGrief/htm
Connect For Kids has guidance for grown-ups that includes sites and resources for dealing with grief.

Kidshealth.org
kidshealth.org/mis_pages/P_squarebanner.html
This site includes articles for parents, children, teens and teachers dealing with a terrorist tragedy.

National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education
www.ncbe.gwu.edu/library/tolerance.htm
This list of resources for educators highlights "Promoting Cultural Understanding in the Classroom and Community."

National Education Association
www.nea.org/crisis
This web site features a crisis communications guide and toolkit. It includes the topics of "Before a Crisis," "During a Crisis," "Moving Beyond Crisis," and "Hands-on Assistance Tools for Educators."

Compiled by the Intercultural Development Research Association

STAR Center and the Intercultural Development Research Association
www.starcenter.org/pdf/violenceprevention.pdf
"Internet Resources for Violence Prevention in Schools," contains Internet resources with detailed descriptions and URLs. Requires Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Talking With Kids About the News
www.talkingwithkids.org/television/twk-news.html
This guide includes 10 tips for discussing the news with your kids.

Tolerance.org
www.tolerance.org/index.jsp
This site includes articles about talking to children about the terrorist attack and about backlash against American Arabs and Muslims. It has a "Do Something" section with topics such as: "10 Ways to Fight Hate," "101 Tools for Tolerance," and "Explore Your Hidden Biases."

U.S. Department of Education
www.ed.gov/inits/september11/educators/html
This site has suggestions for educators. It includes a list principals need to consider for students in their schools.

U.S. Federal Emergency Management Association
www.fema.gov/kids
This creative site is geared for children about disasters and ways children can help their families and friends. It includes stories about rescuers like Izzy the rescue dog from Massachusetts.

Wright State University
www.wright.edu/sopp/cps/TraumaticStress.html
This web site features "Managing Traumatic Stress: Tips for Recovering from Disasters." It includes discussions about understanding normal responses to abnormal events. It also answers questions about what happens to people after a natural disaster or other traumatic events.

of teachers was attributed mostly to the fact that teachers were female. In some states it was prohibited for males or for married teachers to teach a class. Most of the teachers were single females and did not have a great need for money; or they were married and could depend on husbands, therefore, supposedly, it was a waste to give them a pay raise.

When you started the Texans for Education Excellence (TEE), what was the ultimate vision?

J.A.C.: When I started with TEE in 1973, many people in positions of power said they would be happy to change the school finance system but did not want the federal government shoving it down their throats. They guaranteed a vast movement in the state of Texas to provide a system of equitable school finance. Naive in my heart, naive in my soul, I figured in a few years, two maybe four, that we would devise a system that everybody would support – the way they had locally supported this during the *Rodríguez* years – and that the problem would be solved quickly.

TEE, which later became the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA), was formed as a short-term organization to provide assistance in the formulation of an equitable system of school finance. Proof of this is that we did not have any money for a long period of time. We didn't institute fringe benefits, retirement, insurance, or anything because nobody thought the institution would be around for more than a few years, four years at the most, during which a system of school finance that was equitable would be established in the state of Texas. It was not until about four or five years later that it started to dawn on us that it was not going to be as easy as we thought it was.

After the realization that it was going to take longer than two to four years and there actually was a resistance to a truly equitable system of funding, what then became the strategy?

J.A.C.: Two things became very clear, one of them was that there was not going to be improvement in the inequities nor diminishing of the inequities unless it came through a court order.

Second, there could be no court order until such time as the state of Texas had a fair, progressive, liberal Supreme Court. These factors came together in about 1984 so that 11 years after our initial efforts to develop an equitable system of school finance, we were able to go to the courts to try to get their blessings for doing so.

The issue of school facilities has been debated as part of the conversation of school funding equity. Currently, political and fiscal conservatives are claiming that additional funding for school facilities is not a necessary line item for increasing student achievement. What do you say to that?

J.A.C.: School funding is a state responsibility. Now keep in mind that at the time of the *Edgewood* litigation, Texas was the only one among the select group of 10 states where there was no state money used for physical facilities.

Well, I say that education is a function of the state, and all aspects of education are the function of the state. I consider myself a very good teacher. The ideal school used to be a teacher sitting at one end of the log and student on the other. There are days in which special equipment is needed to effectively teach. Facilities are part of the educational system, and the only reason that people think the facilities should be furnished by the local government is because they always were in the past.

The problem is, facilities are getting very costly. They are increasing in price at a very rapid rate because of specialization: special features, special materials and special designs. High schools, and even elementary schools, cost more, many times more, than they did 50 years ago. There is no reason to assume the costs should be born out of inequitable local funds. There is no reason to say, "Well, this little pig has to build his house out of straw, and this one out of twigs, and this one out of bricks." I think that all having the same amount of funds, which the state offers, all the little pigs should have protective homes built out of bricks.

What are some of the more memorable moments in your educational career?

J.A.C.: The most memorable moment was when we [at Edgewood ISD] made the decision to be dropped as defendants and become plaintiffs in the *Rodríguez vs. San Antonio ISD*. Then, no question about this, it was the trying and the decision of the case on December 23, finding the whole

system of school finance unconstitutional. Then, it was the heart-breaking reversal in March of 1973, saying that the federal government wanted no part of it. Then, it was in 1974 when we filed suit again in the state court, and in 1976 when it was tried. Then, it was the year we had the initial decision, which was the 9 to 7 vote from the Texas Supreme Court.

Chapter 41 school districts are the wealthiest in Texas. Now they are suing Texas because, as fast-growth school districts, they feel they are being targeted by Texas' school finance equalization while their needs are increasing. What is your overall sentiment about the Chapter 41 school districts' ability to exempt themselves from the state's current, more equitable school funding system?

J.A.C.: Well, I think that there is excess wealth that is not being used effectively. We tend to forget that there is no such thing as district wealth. There is state wealth located in the district. The wealth belongs to the state for taxing purposes, and it is the prerogative of the state to make any changes it deems necessary in order to have a more equitable system of both school finance and taxation.

These districts want to go back to how it was before. That is ridiculous. These schools are not getting the type of breaks that they got before. Now that the state has a conservative governor and legislature, they want to see if the school funding policies can go back to how they were in the "good old days" when certain segments of the population in Texas were exploited.

I don't think it is going to be successful. They say, you know, that once a person has a taste of freedom, it is very hard to go back to slavery. Once you have a taste of financial freedom, it is very, very hard to go back to financial slavery.

I think that it will be noted that many of the advances in education in Texas to date are attributed to the change in school finance and in some of the programs that have been in place for many years, and not to the policies of any one governor, popular as he may be.

José A. Cárdenas, Ed.D., is the founder and director emeritus of IDRA. Anna Alicia Romero is an education assistant in the IDRA Institute for Policy and Leadership. Comments and questions may be directed to them via e-mail at contact@idra.org.

Texas Study Profiles Successful Bilingual Education Programs

Oscar M. Cárdenas

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has completed a three-year study effort that has resulted in an important leadership and capacity building package to assist school districts faced with teacher shortages and experiencing enrollment increases of limited-English-proficient (LEP) students. *The Texas Successful Schools Study: Quality Education for Limited English Proficient Students* was conducted by the Program Evaluation Unit in the Office for the Education of Special Populations. The study, which was released on September 7, 2000, was subsequently supplemented by an *Educator User Guide for Administrators and Educational Personnel* in February of 2001, a *Technical Manual for the Study*, and a 48-minute training video in May of 2001.

The three documents and the training video comprise the capacity-building package. They provide extensive detail in written and visual case studies, as well as numerous graphic displays regarding effective assessment and instructional practices of bilingual education programs documented in the seven successful schools. Conducted as part of the Commissioner's Educational Research Initiative for 1998-99, the study relied on a collaborative effort between TEA, seven elementary campuses selected as success schools, and Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi for research support.

In his introductory remarks in the training video, Commissioner of Education Jim Nelson states: *"The Texas Successful Schools Study is a unique project because it shows how limited-English-proficient students can experience academic success and meet the state's standards as measured by the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). This study is a testimonial to the premise that all children can learn, as it points out the essential features of seven effective and quality bilingual education programs."*

It was not the intent of the study to test hypotheses, causality or seek to explain relationships. The study design relied on descriptive methodology, using qualitative and quantitative methods in obtaining and

> This study is a testimonial to the premise that all children can learn, as it points out the essential features of seven effective and quality bilingual education programs.

presenting data over a five-year period to ensure a longitudinal database. The data used for statistical analyses included: teacher and principal questionnaires, teacher and principal interviews, focus-group parent interviews, classroom observations, analyses of student and campus performance data, and a review of the literature. In order to determine the extent of success of the schools in the study, performance of LEP and former LEP students was compared to similar students in a cohort group of external campuses and a TEA comparison campus group.

The seven schools were selected based on prescribed criteria that included: enrollment of 40 percent or more LEP students during the 1996-97 school year; enrollment of 50 percent or more economically-disadvantaged students during the 1996-97 school year; zero TAAS LEP exemptions during the 1996-97 school year; and a rating of either "recognized" or "exemplary" in the Texas school accountability system. The accountability system is based on indicators that include TAAS scores in reading, mathematics, and writing and attendance rates for elementary schools. The seven elementary schools participating in the study were: Bowie Elementary in Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District (ISD); Campestre Elementary in Socorro ISD, El Paso; Castañeda Elementary in Brownsville ISD; Clover Elementary in Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD; Kelly Elementary in Hidalgo

ISD; La Encantada Elementary in San Benito Consolidated ISD; and Scott Elementary in Roma ISD.

From information obtained as a result of the data collection methods utilized by the study, as well as the student and campus data available through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) and the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) databases at TEA, the Program Evaluation Unit notes 35 findings supported by the study. Some key findings follow.

- The categories utilized for LEP student identification in six of the seven study sites were "beginner," "intermediate" and "advanced."
- More than 85 percent of the teachers were trained in bilingual methods and language assessment; knowledgeable of the benefits of second language learning; and confident enough in their training to serve LEP students.
- Bilingual education was provided to the LEP students as integral parts of the regular school program in all seven study sites.
- The study sites implemented the appropriate program by focusing on the cognitive, linguistic and academic domains to ensure that LEP students become competent in the comprehension, speaking, reading and composition of the English language.
- The academic (TAAS) performance of third grade LEP students in the seven study campuses significantly exceeded the performance of third grade LEP students in the cohort comparison group in external campuses.
- The academic (TAAS) performance of former LEP students in fifth grade in the seven study campuses exceeded the performance of fifth grade former LEP students in the cohort comparison group in external campuses.
- The most significant difference in fifth grade academic performance between former LEP students in the seven study

campuses and former LEP students in the cohort of external campuses was noted when students had been in the bilingual education program for five and six years.
- In the late-exit model, the exiting of LEP students was more evident after students had been in the bilingual education program for six and seven years.
- Eighty-nine of the 91 teachers (98 percent) that responded to the study survey indicated they assessed the levels of both Spanish and English to ensure an appropriate instructional focus.
- Principal and district leadership support for LEP students received almost equal responses.
- Eighty-five percent of the teachers surveyed indicated that parent involvement helped LEP students advance in academic development and in their language development.
- Teacher preparation, staff training and administrative support were ranked by teachers as the three top factors that contributed to LEP student success.

All of the documents produced as a result of TEA's study effort are available at www.tea.state.tx.us/program.eval/. Questions regarding the *Texas Successful Schools Study: Quality Education for Limited English Proficient Students* may be directed to ocardena@tea.state.tx.us.

Oscar M. Cárdenas is senior manager for the Program Evaluation Unit in the Office for the Education of Special Populations at TEA and was principal investigator for this study.

Upcoming Conferences of Interest to Parents and Educators

"Parent Involvement: Leave No Family Behind"
Sixth Annual Statewide
Parent Involvement Conference
Texas Education Agency

October 18-20, 2001
Bayfront Plaza Convention Center
Corpus Christi, Texas

More than 80 concurrent sessions will be presented by representatives of districts and campuses, education service centers, universities, educational organizations, and other entities implementing programs and practices to support the needs of parents, educators, administrators, counselors and stakeholders.

Contact 512-463-9734 or www.tea.state.tx.us/parent_inv/ conf.htm. Registration is $135.

"Equity and Excellence for All:
Together We Hold the Future"
29th Annual Conference
Texas Association for Bilingual Education

October 17-20, 2001
Adam's Mark Hotel
Dallas, Texas

Through presentations and workshops on research, professional development, and public education, this conference will focus on implementation of educational policies and effective bilingual-bicultural programs that promote equal educational opportunity and academic excellence for language-minority students.

Contact 1-800-822-3930 or www.tabe.org/page8.html. Registration is $165 for members, $180 for nonmembers and ⁀⁀0 for parents and students.

"Title I: Energizing Families and Schools for
Quality Education"
28th Annual Conference
National Coalition of Title I/Chapter 1 Parents

November 7-10, 2001
Doubletree Hotel
Austin, Texas

This year's conference will offer more than 50 workshops and panels on the critical education issues that affect our children. Among these issues will be a complete discussion and analysis of the reauthorization of the historic Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the future of Title I.

Contact 202-291-8100. Registration is $185 per person.

"No Child Left Behind"
Eighth Annual Regional Conferences on
Improving America's Schools
U.S. Department of Education
Central Region Conference

December 17-19, 2001
San Antonio Convention Center
San Antonio, Texas

Improving America's Schools conferences are an important part of the ongoing partnership between the U.S. Department of Education and the nation's educators, families and communities. Educators and friends of education will gather to discuss important issues and rethink current practices in education.

Contact 1-800-203-5494 or www.ncbe.gwu.edu/iasconferences. Registration is $260.

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group of schools. Despite some resistance among charter school supporters, the legislature adopted a number of substantive changes to existing charter school policies.

Perhaps the most striking was its decision to impose a two-year moratorium on the number of charter schools that would be allowed to operate, limiting that number to the 215 charters that had been authorized in state law. With the adoption of the cap, the state allowed for the opening of no more than about 50 new charters over the next two years. Public colleges and universities may also now set up their own charter schools. These would not be subject to the 215 cap. The legislature eliminated the category of "at risk charter schools" (which were charter schools whose enrollment included a 75 percent enrollment of students classified as "at risk" of dropping out before graduating).

The state's decision to increase its oversight of existing charter schools and to strengthen state requirements for these schools was equally significant. Among the changes adopted were more stringent financial accounting and reporting procedures and clarification of the applicability of certain regulations, including open meetings and nepotism regulations. The legislature also strengthened requirements related to charter school staffing, requiring teachers to have at least a high school diploma and for all staff to undergo criminal background checks. This was not previously required of any charter school operation in Texas.

Many of these changes resulted from increasing public complaints of some local charter school operations and from an ongoing state evaluation of open enrollment charter schools commissioned by the legislature when the charter school options were first funded. The interim evaluation also helped establish that many well-intended charter schools lacked the expertise or capacity to effectively operate alternative educational programs.

While initially seen as an opportunity to free schools from what some people perceived as excessive state regulation and supervision, several years of actual operation quickly established that these more autonomous schools were in need of more extensive oversight and supervision than initially assumed. Spurred by extensive evaluation data and high profile media coverage of some schools that had serious problems, the legislature finally moved to curtail some aspects of its initial charter school s. It remains to be seen whether the

changes adopted will be enough to strengthen what many people are beginning to see as another educational panacea that failed to deliver on its original promises.

Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs

Due to IDRA and other groups concerned with the workings of the state's disciplinary alternative education programs (DAEPs), numerous modifications were suggested for the existing program. IDRA recommendations included:

- Require that DAEPs collect and report more student and program data, including student performance on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) and other measures and discipline and academic achievement after students return to the regular school program.
- Require greater communication and coordination between DAEPs and regular school programs.
- Limit DAEP referrals to the most serious offenders (as originally intended).
- Require greater comparability in program and staff credentials between DAEPs and regular schools.

Despite emerging evidence that has caused many people to question the effectiveness of DAEPs in improving school safety and despite serious concerns with the negative academic consequences that result from students' placements in DAEP programs, the legislature resisted attempts to improve the existing program.

Legislation introduced by Representative Dora Olivo to more closely monitor the impacts of DAEP placements on pupils and to address school coordination and due process concerns went largely unheeded. Educator groups were reluctant to support reform of existing DAEP policies. This resistance is based on the perception that curbing schools' tendency to remove what are perceived to be "problem" students somehow erodes teacher and school authority to deal with students as they see fit, irrespective of parent or student opinions to the contrary.

Perhaps the most troubling aspect of these developments was the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) failure to complete and make available to state lawmakers its statewide evaluation of DAEP programs, which was first set for completion in December and was repeatedly postponed. The data still has not been made available.

In an interesting side note, the editors of *Texas Education News* were able to ac-

quire comprehensive data to compile a limited state-level profile. In that summary, published in the February 16, 2001, issue, *Texas Education News* reported that in 1999-00 a total of 83,159 pupils were referred to DAEPs in Texas, with 52 percent enrolled in high school, 40 percent in middle school, and 7.3 percent in elementary school.

According to IDRA calculations, the 83,159 pupils referred last year represent an increase of 10,162 from the 1996-97 totals, a net increase of 13.9 percent in a three-year period. *Texas Education News* also reports that 41.5 percent of DAEP referrals involved Hispanic pupils, 34.6 percent involved White pupils, and 22.6 percent involved African American students. Special education pupils, who constitute only 12 percent of the state student population, represented 21.6 percent of DAEP referrals. Low-income pupils, who constitute 49 percent of Texas student enrollment, made up 51.9 percent of DAEP placements (*Texas Education News*, March 26, 2001).

As has been the case since DAEPs were created, the primary reason cited for student placements were violations involving discretionary reasons created by local school systems, rather than the serious offenses that were the original driving force behind creation of off-campus disciplinary action programs. According to the *Texas Education News* analysis, 77.3 percent of removals were based on violations of local districts' codes of conduct, and only 20 percent were for the more serious offenses that require mandatory referrals.

The *Texas Education News* summary also indicates that students spent an average of 26.5 days in DAEPs – the equivalent of 5+ weeks – with 25 percent being referred more than once during the school year.

Analyses of TAAS performance indicates that DAEP-referred students scored lower when compared to non-DAEP students, no doubt impacted by the less-qualified staffing typically assigned to most DAEP campuses.

Those data were not made available to all state policymakers to allow them to consider the implications of the findings for existing DAEP policies. Certainly no changes for reform were proposed by the state education agency despite its own access to these early findings. Any substantive changes may require future litigation to accelerate reform or another report to help guide reform proposals in the 2003 legislative session.

Internet Web Sites on Education Policy

American Association of University Women   http://www.aauw.org

Annie E. Casey Foundation   http://www.aecf.org

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)   http://www.ascd.org

Center for Public Policy Priorities   http://www.cpp.org

Children's Defense Fund   http://www.childrensdefense.org

Education Commission of the States   http://www.ecs.org

Education Week on the Web   http://www.edweek.org

Fedworld   http://www.fedworld.gov

Gallery Watch   http://www.gallerywatch.com

Intercultural Development Research Association   http://www.idra.org

James Crawford's Language Policy Web Site and Emporium
    http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/jwcrawford

Kids Count data   http://www.acef.org/kidscount

National Association for Bilingual Education   http://www.nabe.org

National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education
    http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu

National Coalition of Advocates for Students   http://www.ncas1.org

National Council of La Raza   http://www.nclr.org

National School Boards Association   http://www.nsba.org

Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs, U.S.
    Department of Education   http://www.ed.gov/offices/OBEMLA

Public Education Network   http://www.publiceducation.org

Rethinking Schools http://www.rethinkingschools.org

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL):
    U.S. Advocacy   http://www.tesol.edu/advocacy/index.htm

Texas Education Agency   http://www.tea.state.tx.us

Texas Freedom Network   http://www.tfn.org

Texas Legislature Online   http://www.capitol.state.tx.us

Thomas, Library of Congress   http://thomas.loc.gov

U.S. Department of Education   http://www.ed.gov

For many more Internet resources and links, go to the "Field Trip" on IDRA's web site.

www.idra.org

In-Grade Retention

Based on extensive review of research on the ineffectiveness of in-grade retention in spurring improved student achievement and on retention's documented relationship to students dropping out, IDRA has long recommended that the issue be given serious thought and that it be the last of all options considered. Specifically, IDRA recommends that Texas:

- Modify the state student retention policy so that in-grade retention becomes the *last option* considered,
- Eliminate the use of the TAAS as the single criteria for determining grade placement, and
- Modify grade placement committee procedures to require not a unanimous vote but a majority vote to promote students.

Some legislators were concerned with the possible disastrous effects of legislation adopted in 1999 that calls for automatic retention of third-, fifth- and eighth-grade pupils who fail to pass sections of the TAAS. They offered proposals that would either (1) delay the punitive aspects of the bill for one year or (2) modify the criteria used to make this high stakes retention decisions by requiring that local grade placement committees consider multiple criteria including grades, other test scores and other indicators of student ability.

State assessment and accountability purists argued that such safeguards are unnecessary and would ultimately weaken the state's much touted accountability system. Despite such opposition, the proposals to postpone the adoption of automatic retention, championed by Representative Sylvester Turner, and to use multiple criteria as proposed by Representative Olivo passed the House of Representatives. But they were stalled and eventually derailed by the Senate leadership's intent on maintaining the status quo in the state testing and accountability system.

High Stakes Testing and Accountability

In the area of high stakes testing and accountability, IDRA has urged a similar conservative approach, relying on literature that recommends that no single measure be used to make life altering decisions for individual pupils. Specifically IDRA recommended that:

- No single test should be used as the single or primary basis for decisions related to students' graduation or grade-

ment classes, where students who are native Spanish-speakers are mixed with native Russian-speakers. A Russian parent affirmed the effectiveness of this arrangement: "Half of the Spanish class and half the Russian class are intermingled where they must learn English."

Also vital to this school's success is the high level of involvement of parents, despite many of them leading migrant lifestyles. Russian and Hispanic parents state that volunteering is second in importance only to the teachers' involvement in assuring the success of the bilingual program. Heritage Elementary School exhibits

three of the most important elements of successful bilingual education practices: (1) a dedication to providing the most successful learning and development programs to the students; (2) teachers and staff who truly care about the students and are passionate about teaching, and (3) parents who become involved and volunteer in educational activities.

Maria Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., is the IDRA executive director. Josie Danini Cortez, M.A., is the production development coordinator. Comments and questions may be directed to them via e-mail at contact@idra.org.

IDRA Policy Briefs Available

The Intercultural Development Research Association has developed a series of policy briefs on four key issues in education. The series was released in the spring of 1999 to inform community and policy decisions during the Texas legislative session. The series and associated data are available online at www.idra.org (free) or by contacting IDRA for copies ($7 each).

*For more information, contact the
IDRA Institute for Policy and Leadership,
Dr. Albert Cortez, director,
at 5835 Callaghan Road, Suite 350 °
San Antonio, Texas 78228-1190 °
phone 210-444-1710 ° fax 210-444-1714*

Titles Include:

✔ *Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs in Texas – What is Known; What is Needed*
www.idra.org/Research/alted.htm

✔ *Missing: Texas Youth – Dropout and Attrition in Texas Public High Schools*
www.idra.org/Research/dropout.htm

✔ *Failing Our Children – Finding Alternatives to In-grade Retention*
www.idra.org/Research/ingrade.htm

✔ *Students for Sale – The Use of Public Money for Private Schooling*
www.idra.org/Research/voucher.htm

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level promotion,
- State testing data should be used as one indicator but not the single criterion for judging school effectiveness, and
- All students should be included in state assessment systems, while at the same time ensuring that those instruments are directly linked to what is taught and to the language of instruction.

Critics of the state's use of a single test score – students' performance on the exit level TAAS (first administered in the 10th grade) – have long worked to convince state leaders to alter existing state policy to consider the test as just one of several indicators used to judge students' academic proficiency.

Among additional criteria suggested have been grades, teacher recommendations, and scores on alternative assessment measures. All attempts to broaden the criteria used to make graduation decisions were once again rejected by proponents of the TAAS. This was in part out of a pervasive fear that adopting a more reasoned approach would be seen by some as a weakening of the state's stance on accountability.

Despite many test maker's insistence that no one test should be used to make life altering decisions involving individual students, state leaders continued to ignore conventional wisdom, choosing to leave existing state policies in place. Thus, they have assured that the thousands of pupils have completed all other state require-

ments will continue to be denied their diplomas. In an ironic twist, these same pupils are excluded from both graduation and dropout counts – becoming invisible students in the accountability system.

School Facilities Funding

In November-December, IDRA recommended that the legislature continue the reforms it initiated in the preceding two sessions and do the following.
- Significantly expand state support for all types of school facilities.
- Make the application process less dependent on local property wealth, and less dependent on the level of state funding available.

During the 2001 session, the legislature did provide increased funding of the school facilities program. Unfortunately, the level of funding provided 13 million, which was still seen by many people as insufficient to cover all of the state's existing school building needs. More importantly, the shortfall will have the state continuing to rank all applicants on the basis of perceived need. Thus, state support will be denied to schools that do not make it beyond the cut off – which is dictated primarily by the shortfall of state funding provided for the program.

Though the legislature may have done enough to keep itself out of the courtroom, the persistent under-funding of school facilities creates ongoing pressure for some schools to support these efforts primarily with local property tax dollars, while others,

due to relative need, are left without any type of state support.

While IDRA continues to support the prioritizing of facilities funding based on wealth and need, the state must recognize that facilities are part of what is *required in every community* and make available whatever funds are needed to make this more of a shared state and local effort comparable to that provided for non-facilities aspects of Texas public education.

Access to Higher Education

In the area of higher education access, IDRA focused on three issues: expanding financial support for student applicants, improving the process used to consider applicants to post secondary state funded institutions, and higher education accountability. Specifically, we recommended the following.
- Study the impact of recent reforms in higher education, including the Texas "10 Percent Plan," and provide additional state-funded scholarships for low-wealth pupils.
- Explore the creation of new initiatives that will strengthen coordination and alignment between kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12) education and higher education.
- Create new processes to more effectively link data collected at the K-12 and higher education levels to facilitate student tracking and information exchange.

• Accelerate the creation of a system of higher education accountability that gives significant weight to undergraduate and graduate student recruitment, persistence and graduation.

Despite some interest in all of the issues outlined above, state efforts related to higher education were primarily limited to expanding funding levels for most state colleges and universities, providing some increases in state scholarship programs, revising curriculum requirements for future college applicants, and modifying provisions related to tuition charges applicable to a small sub-group of immigrant pupils graduating from Texas high schools.

In the area of higher education funding, the legislature invested an additional 1,086.2 million, with the greatest amounts going to the two flagship universities (University of Texas and Texas A&M) and the rest receiving some more modest increases in funding.

To its credit, the legislature acknowledged and acted on the need to provide additional funding for state scholarships to support student enrollment in colleges and universities. The state increased the level of funding for the Texas Grant program by $335 million and modified eligibility (financial need) criteria to expand the pool of eligible applicants. State funding for the Teach for Texas Grant, a program designed to increase the numbers of pupils enrolling in state teacher preparation programs, was also modestly expanded by an additional $8 million.

The legislature revised higher education admissions requirements by phasing-in a new requirement. Texas students who hope to enroll in a state four-year institution must take the state's high school recommended curriculum. This is the more comprehensive graduation curriculum offered in Texas high schools that involves enrolling in additional math, language and science courses. Also, students will be required to enroll in the state's recommended program in high school as the default curriculum. They must have their parents permission to do otherwise.

Attempts to modify the extent to which state colleges and universities were allowed to use single admissions test scores such as the SAT to determine student admissions was also hotly debated. Reform proponents urged the legislature to limit the extent of value or weight that could be given to a single college admissions test (SAT or ACT) score. After extensive discussion, the House of Representatives approved the measure only to have it encounter much stiffer opposition in the state Senate where it finally died awaiting a hearing in committee, never granted by the Senate Education Committee chair.

Despite an acknowledged need for additional K-12 and higher education coordination, the legislature did not consider any bold new initiatives in this area. Policymakers also recognized the need to better align K-12 and higher education data systems but took no new action. The legislature did not address attempts to advance early state efforts to create a new, more comprehensive college and university accountability system.

Causes for this lack of action in higher education are difficult to discern. One overriding factor in many legislative discussions was the political leadership's decision to defer any proposal that required additional

HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT IDRA ACTIVITIES

In June and July, IDRA worked with **7,568** teachers, administrators, parents, and higher education personnel through **40** training and technical assistance activities and **114** program sites in **14** states plus the United Kingdom and Brazil. Topics included:
+ Adventures in Mathematics
+ Mining the Internet for Teaching Resources
+ Equity Planning and Community-Based Needs Assessment
+ Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) Strategies
+ Setting Up a Multi-age Classroom

Participating agencies and school districts included:
◇ Galveston Independent School District (ISD), Texas
◇ Cobre Consolidated School District, New Mexico
◇ Franklin School Board, Virginia
◇ Midland ISD, Texas

Activity Snapshot
As a result of the Office for Civil Rights' finding of discrimination against language-minority students, the IDRA South/Central Collaborative for Equity assisted a New Mexico school district to create and implement a correction plan. The center provided training and technical assistance to campus administrators and bilingual education and English as a second language (ESL) teachers. The training included strategies for including ESL in the classroom, offering appropriate assessment of language-minority students and validating the students' culture in the classroom. The South Central Collaborative for Equity is the equity assistance center that serves Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.

Regularly, IDRA staff provides services to:
+ public school teachers Virginia
+ parents
+ administrators
+ other decision makers in public education

Services include:
◇ training and technical assistance
◇ evaluation
◇ serving as expert witnesses in policy settings and court cases
◇ publishing research and professional papers, books, videos and curricula

For information on IDRA services for your school district or other group, contact IDRA at 210/444-1710.

state funding until late in the session. This move was prompted by the realization that the state would be hard pressed to maintain funding for existing programs, let alone reserve state monies for issues that were put off in the 1999 session, including notable increases for higher education.

In this atmosphere, policymakers who proposed any measure that required new state funding had to fight against a strong current. Many of these measures failed to make it out of committee. Those that did were often thwarted at other levels as leaders fought to keep cost related items off the legislative table.

Access to Comprehensible Instruction for Students Learning English

In this area, IDRA had recommended that state policymakers:
- Assess the implications of providing opportunities for expanded access to dual language instruction that would include all interested pupils,
- Support the creation of pilot dual language programs so the state can gauge the level of interest in such programs and the impact of these options on teacher training needs and state funding formulae, and
- Make distinctions between required and optional programs and ensure state compliance with existing state bilingual and English as a second language (ESL) statutes.

Another area where lack of legislative action was perceived as at least partially beneficial was the lack of any substantive effort to alter state requirements on how Texas public schools must address the needs of the more than 500,000 pupils who are identified as being in the process of learning English, referred to in Texas as being limited-English-proficient (LEP).

Choosing to differ from Arizona and California, Texas smartly continues to require that schools provide bilingual or ESL programs to LEP students until they develop sufficient English language skills to succeed in the all-English curriculum.

On a related note, at the urging of some school district personnel, the Texas Legislature chose to exclude students identified as recent immigrants from the state assessment and accountability systems, providing for expanded testing exemptions that could extend up to three years. The impact that this new change will have on districts with high concentrations of recent immigrant students be monitored closely by IDRA and others

to ensure that the option is not abused and does not weaken the educational programs offered to these students.

Related efforts to create a new state program to include opportunities for non-LEP pupils to acquire a second language through participation in what are commonly known as "dual language programs" was also set aside by legislative inaction.

Strongly supported by Texas' League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and other bilingual program advocates, the dual language program proposal met lukewarm response outside the minority caucuses. It was opposed in part because of concerns that it would require additional state funding to support the anticipated thousands of students who would choose to participate. Unfortunately, counter-arguments citing the social and economic benefits that could be derived from expanding the state's pool of bilingual individuals fell upon deaf ears.

Use of Public Money for Private Schooling

Perhaps more than any issue considered, the Texas Legislature's refusal to give serious consideration to any proposals that would have provided some form of state funding to subsidize student enrollment in private schools stands as this sessions' watermark. IDRA's recommendations in this area included the following.
- Public tax money should be limited to use for public schools.
- Public schools should continue to be held to high standards and be made accountable for student outcomes, including not only achievement, but also high school graduation.

In contrast to intensive debates on the concept of providing some form of state funding for school vouchers noted during the previous three legislative sessions, little time was spent on debating the issue in the 2001 session. Since its inception, most state leaders have conceded that escalating public opposition to providing state funding for private school vouchers made many voucher proponents reluctant to open the issue to debate.

One significant new development that may have contributed to growing disenchantment with school vouchers was the Office for Civil Rights' recent ruling that parents of students with special needs were giving up rights protected in public schools (e.g., that special-needs students have those special needs addressed) if they opted out of a public school environment and

enrolled in a private school setting that, by law, is not required to offer special education or similar services.

Whether impacted by or reflecting a national trend indicating that what little support for vouchers had existed was quickly ebbing, voucher proponents were notably less visible in Austin. Despite the low profile of the pro-voucher camp, voucher opponents – which includes groups as diverse as the Texas PTA, the Texas Freedom Network, the Coalition for Equity and Excellence in Public Education, major teacher groups, and IDRA – continued to closely monitor voucher-related developments and succeeded in keeping the issue in the background for most of the legislative session. Attempts to dilute the continued use of high standards and the accountability system used to rate public schools were also rebuffed.

Little Significant Progress in 2001

Taken as a whole, the 2001 Texas legislative session will not be perceived as memorable. While some improvements were made in the areas of charter schools and access to higher education, the session will most likely be remembered for what it failed to address. Some suggest that the session lacked leadership around major educational issues. Others complain of a gridlock fed by a desire to protect the state's former governor's image in the area of state education reforms. Still others blame the lack of adequate state surplus funding needed to subsidize the extensive number of changes still needed in the state's public education system. Whatever the reasons, in contrast to other years, most education reform proponents went home disappointed and hopeful of better outcomes in 2003.

Resources

Robledo Montecel, M., and A. Cortez. "Nine Priorities for Public Education Policy Reforms in Texas," *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, November-December 2000).

Texas Education News. "TEA Paints Statistical Pictures of Disciplinary AEPs for '99-2000" (March 26, 2001).

María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., is the IDRA executive director. Albert Cortez, Ph.D., is the division director of the IDRA Institute for Policy and Leadership. Comments and questions may be directed to them via e-mail at contact@idra.org.

School Accountability Ratings Questioned

The Texas Education Agency school accountability ratings released on August 16, 2001, indicated rising scores on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). To the extent that gains have been made, students are reaping the benefits of Texas' school reforms over the last three decades. These reforms have included equalized school funding, reduced class sizes, effective bilingual education programs, curriculum alignment, and strengthened early childhood education. "Many districts are showing that equitable distribution of resources can improve student outcomes," stated Dr. María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel, IDRA executive director.

However, Texas is failing too many of its children. Forty-two percent of Texas students are in districts that are rated less than "recognized" on the TAAS. Also, TAAS gains are not consistently reflected in the scores on other measures such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). NAEP data, released in August, indicate that 40 percent of Black fourth-graders in Texas and 32 percent of Hispanic fourth-graders failed to demonstrate even partial mastery of math skills, compared to 11 percent of White fourth-graders. At the eighth-grade level, 60 percent of Black children and 41 percent of Hispanic children lack basic math skills. This compares to 17 percent of White eighth-graders.

An initial review of the latest TAAS data indicates that most of Texas' large urban districts are not performing well. Yet, a significant portion of students, particularly racial and ethnic minority students, are in these districts. IDRA is concerned that a new gap may be developing between large urban districts and small rural and suburban districts.

Despite the improved dropout rate reported by TEA yesterday, IDRA's annual attrition study shows no change in the attrition rate: 40 percent of students were lost from public school enrollment between 1997-98 and 2000-01. The same was true last year. A proxy for the number and rate of students who drop out of high school, attrition data in Texas have ranged from a low of 40 percent in 1995-96, 1999-00, and 2000-01 to a high of 43 percent in 1996-97. That is, each year since 1995-96 two of every five students from a freshman class have left school prior to their graduation.

Further, TEA's estimate of 23,457 dropouts does not include students who dropped out of school to get a GED, students who were denied a diploma because they did not pass the exit-level TAAS, students who have been expelled or incarcerated, and students who claim to have transferred to other schools but for whom there is no verification of transfer. When these students are included in the dropout count, the number goes up to more than 150,000 dropouts.

Commissioner Jim Nelson stated that "The dropout rate, no matter how it is measured, remains too high." IDRA agrees. IDRA research shows that between 1985-86 and 2000-01 about 1.6 million secondary school students have been lost from public school enrollment in the state. On the average, nearly 115,000 students do not graduate each year costing the state in excess of $441 billion between 1985-86 and 2000-01.

Dr. Robledo Montecel commented: "We have reason to celebrate improvements and hard work over the last 30 years. But, we have no reason to believe that all children in the state of Texas get a quality education or equal opportunity. Until that happens, Texas cannot claim to be exemplary or even recognized. Our children, all of them, deserve better."

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Missing: Texas Youth –
Cost of School Dropouts Escalates

Roy L. Johnson, M.S.

The cumulative costs of students leaving public high school prior to graduation with a diploma are continuing to escalate. Between the 1985-86 and 2000-01 school years, the estimated cumulative costs of public school dropouts in the state of Texas were in excess of $441 billion.

In 1986, the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) conducted Texas' first comprehensive statewide study of high school dropouts. Using a high school attrition formula, IDRA's inaugural study found that 86,276 students had not graduated from Texas public high schools, costing the state $17 billion in forgone income, lost tax revenues, and increased job training, welfare, unemployment and criminal justice costs (Cárdenas, Robledo and Supik, 1986). IDRA's latest study spans a 16-year time period from 1985-86 through 2000-01 and documents the number and percent of public school students who leave school prior to graduation.

Attrition data provide the number and rate of students leaving high school prior to graduation. IDRA's attrition rate formula calculates the percent change in enrollment between ninth grade and 12th grade three years later. Attrition refers to the percent of students lost from a cohort during a

baseline and an ending period.

Research by IDRA shows that between 1985-86 and 2000-01 about 1.6 million secondary school students have been lost from public school enrollment in Texas. The statewide attrition rate has ranged from a low of 31 percent in 1988-89 and 1989-90 to a high of 43 percent in 1996-97.

On the average, nearly 115,000 students do not graduate each year, costing the state in excess of $441 billion between 1985-86 and 2000-01. The percent of students lost from public high school enrollment prior to graduation has remained unchanged over the past two years at 40 percent. Each year since 1994-95, two of every five students from a freshman class has left school before graduating.

Latest Attrition Study

The latest IDRA attrition study, completed in October 2001, reflects that two of every five students (40 percent) of the freshman (ninth grade) class of 1997-98 left school prior to high school graduation in 2000-01. An estimated 144,241 students from the class of 2001 were lost from enrollment due to attrition.

IDRA used high school enrollment data from the Fall Membership Survey

of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to compute countywide and statewide attrition rates by race-ethnicity and sex. The enrollment data from special school districts (military schools, state schools, and charter schools) were excluded from the analyses since they are likely to have unstable enrollments and/or lack a tax base to support school programs.

During the fall of each year, school districts are required to report information to TEA via the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) for all students and grade levels. IDRA's attrition studies involve the analysis of ninth grade enrollment figures and 12th grade enrollment figures three years later. This period represents the time span during which a ninth grade student would be enrolled in high school prior to graduation.

Historical Attrition Data

Historical statewide attrition rates are categorized by race and ethnicity and by gender on Page 8. General conclusions follow.

The overall attrition rate has increased by 21 percent from 1985-86 to 2000-01. The percentage of students who left high school prior to graduation increased by 21.2 percent,

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The estimated costs of school dropouts is $441 billion. The social and economic costs of the dropout problem in Texas has increased by 26 times the initial estimates.

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from 33 percent in 1985-86 to 40 percent in 2000-01. Over the past 16 years, attrition rates have fluctuated between a low of 31 percent in 1988-89 and 1989-90 to a high of 43 percent in 1996-97. Numerically, 144,241 students were lost from public high school enrollment in 2000-01 as compared to 86,272 in 1985-86.

Over the last two years, the attrition rate has remained unchanged. From 1999-00 to 2000-01, the attrition rate remained unchanged at 40 percent.

The gap between attrition rates of Hispanic students and Black students and those of White students has widened since 1985-86. Hispanic students and Black students have had considerably higher attrition rates than White students. From 1985-86 to 2000-01, attrition rates for

Hispanic students have increased 16 percent, from 45 percent to 52 percent. During this same period, the attrition rates for Black students have increased by 35 percent, from 34 percent to 46 percent. Attrition rates for White students have remained unchanged at 27 percent in 1985-86 and in 2000-01. Hispanic students have higher attrition rates than either White students or Black students.

From 1985-86 and 2000-01, Native American students and Asian/Pacific Islander students had a decline in their attrition rates. Native American students had a 7 percent decline in their attrition rates, from 45 percent to 42 percent, while Asian/Pacific Islander students had a decline of 39 percent, from 33 percent to 20 percent.

The historical attrition rates for students who are Hispanic, Black or Native American have been typically higher than the overall attrition rates. For the period of 1985-86 to 2000-01, students from ethnic minority groups accounted for two-thirds of the estimated 1.6 million students lost from public high school enrollment. Hispanic students account for nearly half (48.1 percent) of the estimated 1.6 million students lost to

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In This Issue...

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Successful Bilingual Education Programs

Student Assessment and Outcomes

María Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., and Josie Danini Cortez, M.A., and Albert Cortez, Ph.D.

Editor's Note: Last year, the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) conducted a research study with funding by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA) to identify characteristics that contribute to the high academic performance of students served by bilingual education programs. The August 2001 issue of the IDRA Newsletter began a series of six articles describing this research study's significant findings. The first installment provided an overview of the research design and methods. In the September 2001 issue we featured an overview of the schools' demographics and the major findings pertaining to school indicators. This third installment features the major findings in student outcomes.

More than two decades ago, IDRA's founder and director emeritus, Dr. José A. Cárdenas, wrote: "The evaluation design, materials, and techniques commonly used by the school are frequently most inappropriate for use with minority populations. Not only are the tools inadequate, but conclusions based on cultural and language biases can be extremely erroneous and detrimental to the student" (Cárdenas and Cárdenas, 1973).

While much has improved in the area of accountability and assessment, much remains to be done. Nowhere is this more evident than in the assessment of bilingual education programs where assessment tools and their appropriate use with limited-English-proficient (LEP) students are often found lacking. Without appropriate and meaningful assessment tools that hold the teachers and administrators accountable for student academic achievement, it is impossible to determine a program's effectiveness or impact on the students it is serving.

IDRA's research study of bilingual education programs was grounded in the premise that a "successful" bilingual education program must have evidence of student academic achievement as determined by appropriate assessment measures. Each of the 10 programs selected for this research study provided data for students in their bilingual education programs. Given that IDRA had operationally defined "stu-

dent success" as evidence of academic achievement, it was imperative that programs provide relevant and appropriate data for review. This data included student outcome indicators, such as oral and written language proficiency and content area mastery in English and the native language.

Prior to IDRA's site visits, each school submitted for review its most recent achievement data (1997-98) disaggregated by LEP and non-LEP status. Longitudinal data (three years or more), if available, were also provided. Assessment measures, as expected, varied among the 10 programs. These

programs were located in schools in California, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, Oregon, Texas, Utah, and Washington, D.C.

Assessment Measures

In reviewing the data provided by the schools, it is important to note some caveats regarding LEP student assessment – namely, that variations in assessment instruments across states, the exemption of LEP students from testing and data not reported by the category of "LEP student" – makes comparisons of achievement data across sites next

Promising and Exemplary Practices in Bilingual Education

IDRA studied programs in these states.
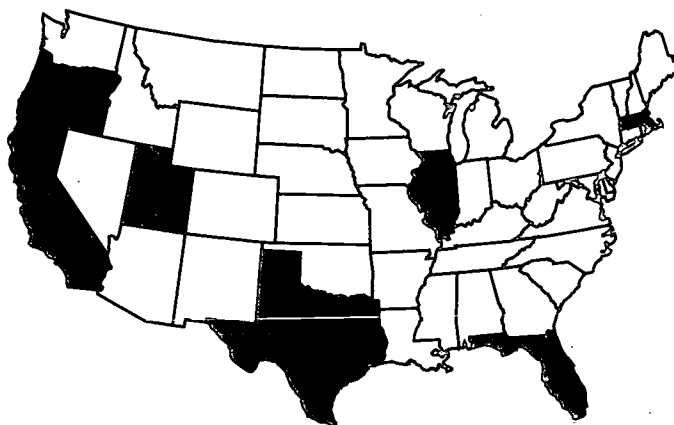
Intercultural Development Researach Association

to impossible. Exemptions for LEP students at the schools we studied were uncommon, with only one school in Texas reporting a 2 percent exemption rate. All of the other schools reported no exemptions.

In compliance with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA) regulations governing the implementation of Title VII-funded programs, there is a range of student assessment instruments across the country. Title VII grantees are required to collect common types of data, including achievement data, language proficiency data, and teacher credentialing and certification data. While these data are included in many of the evaluations submitted to OBEMLA, there is no current requirement that the grantees use any specific assessment instruments. The rationales for this usually include variations in program focus, differing state assessment requirements that may parallel or take precedence over local assessment decisions, and the belief that certain nationally-normed standardized test instruments may be better aligned with the local program curricula.

All of these are considered legitimate reasons for non-standardization. However, without a uniform standard of assessment involving common instruments, a comparative analysis across sites would be inappropriate. Any macro- or meta-analysis can only attempt to paint broad brush strokes of common assessment and evaluation practices at schools implementing bilingual education programs.

In IDRA's review of the evaluation data submitted by the schools, two things became evident: all of the schools tested their students and were committed to accountability for all students, and there was a wide range of assessment instruments used by schools.

Keep in mind that part of the selection process for this study required all of the schools to have data reflecting student performance on locally-selected achievement measures. Given the known variability across sites, specific types of data requested were not prescribed. Nevertheless, the instruments used by schools tend to cluster into three major types:

- state-mandated assessments that are part of a state assessment or accountability system;
- locally-selected instruments in English and/or the students' native language, that are nationally-normed and considered appropriate for evaluation of the program being implemented; and
- locally-developed instruments that yield data considered useful by the local project in assessing its effectiveness.

Of the schools studied, one in California, one in Illinois, one in Oregon, and two in Texas use data collected from state-required assessment programs as part of their local program evaluation. In California, the school used the Stanford Achievement Tests – required under the California Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) system. In Illinois, the school incorporated data collected as part of the Illinois G Achievement Program (IGAP). In Texas, the schools used the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), which is the state-developed criterion referenced measure used to evaluate Texas schools' performance.

Other sites used non-mandated standardized tests, including the Brigance, the California Test of Basic Skills, and the Woodcock Muñoz Battery, to obtain objective measures of student progress. Some of the sites also reported student achievement using standardized tests in the student's native languages such as the APRENDA.

In addition to achievement test data, some of the schools track attendance rates, retention, and student graduation rates for all of their students.

Assessment Practices

The assessment and evaluation practices also varied across schools. We found that the schools we studied tended to do the following:

- compile data on year-to-year progress of students enrolled in the bilingual programs and simply assess the extent and/or statistical significance of those changes (Oregon);
- compare the performance of program students against a state passing standard (Illinois, Texas);
- compare the percentage of program pupils scoring at or above a set percentile – usually the 50th percentile (California, Illinois, Oregon); and/or
- compare the program students' performance against some other standard such as "expected scores" developed by the test publishers (Oregon: Pre-LAS).

The number of years of achievement data available ranged from two to five years. The schools had compiled at least two years of data – allowing for pre-post comparisons (Oregon) or multiple year trend analyses (Illinois, Texas). Some of the data provided was longitudinal – spanning several years, while other data focused on a single year, comparing program performance levels against some local or state-selected standard.

Almost all of the sites measured students' progress in English, assessing proficiency (LAS: Brigance) and/or English reading (TAAS, CTB, SAT, IGAP, Oregon Plus). The majority of schools also assessed student achievement in mathematics (California, Illinois, Oregon, Texas).

Programs tended to compare their students' performance either against an external performance standard (state passing scores or percentiles – California, Illinois, Oregon, Texas) or against the average score for non-LEP pupils or sub-groups of other pupils, such as Title I and special education.

Unique Student Assessment Features

Schools reflected the different contextual features in their assessment measures. Some states, in addition to assessing reading and mathematics, measured student achievement in language (Illinois), social studies (Illinois),

spelling (California), and writing (Texas).

Common Achievement Level Findings

In analyzing student achievement data, there are significant observations that are common to all of the schools:
- They collected and analyzed one or more types of student achievement data, using multiple measures.
- They had procedures for assessing all of their students and for compiling, organizing, and analyzing their student data.
- They engaged in some tabulation and analysis of the data. Some had external support from external evaluators; others involved teachers in the collection and the analysis of the data to help school teams craft improvement plans.

IDRA also observed the use of multiple measures, which were culturally and contextually appropriate for the students. In addition to the yearly progress measures, there were ongoing or interim measures that were used as benchmarks and indicators of progress throughout the year. Schools used data to inform and drive their curricular and instructional practices, with administrators and teachers accepting accountability for the academic performance of their students.

Student Outcome Indicators

All of the 10 schools that IDRA studied reflected significant progress (statistically and educationally) for the students served by their bilingual education programs during the program year (1997-98). While, in some cases, there was a notable gap in the achievement of students served by the program and the regular students, especially when they were compared to the state's standards, the majority of students reflected a narrowing of the achievement gap over time.

In fact, in many cases, the growth rates for the students served in the program sites exceeded the rates of improvement for the comparison groups

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included in the reports. In a few instances, the growth rates were extraordinary, reflecting accelerated improvement rates over relatively short time frames.

Example of a Successful Bilingual Education Program

Each bilingual education program is part of a school with its own unique context and special characteristics that are clearly evident. These characteristics or "indicators of success" are described in the following profile of one school, providing a firsthand look at the inner workings of a successful program and school.

James Bowie Elementary School, Alamo, Texas

Part of the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District, James Bowie Elementary School is located in Alamo, Texas. The district is in the southern tip of Texas, known as the "Valley" (even though, geographically, the area comprises the Rio Grande river delta). The three cities that make up the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent

School District are small, the largest being Pharr.

The entire area's population is approximately 40,000 permanent residents. The population swells during the winter months because of an influx of retired individuals who migrate to the area in the winter in and return to their northern homes in the spring. Access to Mexico is via the McAllen-Hidalgo-Reynosa International Bridge, only 11 miles away.

The area is a center for winter vegetables, citrus and cotton; most of the students come from the agricultural community. Because there are three growing seasons in the Valley, most agricultural workers are not migrants but permanent residents of the area.

James Bowie Elementary School is a clean, well-lit school, very functional and conducive to learning. The classrooms are decorated with student work. Each classroom also displays some kind of cultural artwork, such as prints by Diego Rivera, Pablo Picasso and Vincent Van Gogh.

Students at the school represent

three ethnic groups, but the overwhelming majority – more than 95 percent – are Mexican Americans who speak Spanish as their native language. Anglo students represent less than 5 percent of the student body, and less than 1 percent are African-American.

Classrooms are highly student-centered at James Bowie Elementary School. Rules are posted on one wall, while student work, examples of recently introduced lessons (e.g., vocabulary words) and other educational materials are displayed prominently on other walls. Rooms are divided into "work centers" that enable the students to take advantage of a variety of learning tools.

A computer classroom is one work center, and children as young as pre-kindergarten make use of the area. In another area, the writing center introduces even the youngest students to the elements of proper writing, beginning with holding a pencil correctly and tracing various shapes. The music center allows the students to identify different instruments by sight and sound and to listen to and learn about different types of music. Pre-kindergarten classrooms always have music playing softly in the background – from classical to folk.

Impressively, 20 or more students in each classroom, working in groups, did not result in an overwhelming noise level. One IDRA researcher noted, "In every room, in the hallways, even in the music room, the sounds being produced were sounds of learning."

Teachers at James Bowie Elementary School use every teaching opportunity to relate to the prevailing culture of the area, touching on the everyday life of the children. Examples in math classes may utilize the exchange rates between dollars and pesos. Writing assignments and class discussions encourage examples from students' homes and community. Such topical basis in the everyday lives of students reinforces the importance of the area's culture.

The teachers are cognizant of the need to provide a learning environment attentive to the needs of English-learning students: classes are conducted in Spanish even though every student is bilingual. As a lesson moves along, the teacher may teach a concept in Spanish, but the students may answer in English. English-learners pick up vocabulary from Spanish-learners, and vice-versa.

In addition, the school has hired several Title I-support teachers who provide intense Spanish instruction in a pull-out program. These teachers work with those students who will be tested in Spanish.

Another IDRA researcher noted, "I had the opportunity to observe these classes and found the students completely engaged in discussion and hands-on activities before they began writing their compositions." The climate in these classes mirrors that of the regular classroom.

Much of the uniformity in class structure and equality of lesson plans is the result of collaborative planning. Teacher conference and planning periods are scheduled at the same time each day by grade level. This allows time for development and sharing of ideas on how to use curriculum and materials to augment effectiveness.

Test results are reviewed at this time, as teachers are held accountable for student learning in six-week assessments. To maximize test scores, teachers provide after-school and Saturday tutoring sessions. When they see that a student is experiencing academic difficulties, they provide one-on-one tutoring sessions for that student.

Writing assignments tend to reflect the cultural background of the students and always begin with a classwide discussion of the topic. Sometimes, the teacher assigns students to write a group story. For example, one class was prompted: *"Te he premiado $2,500.*

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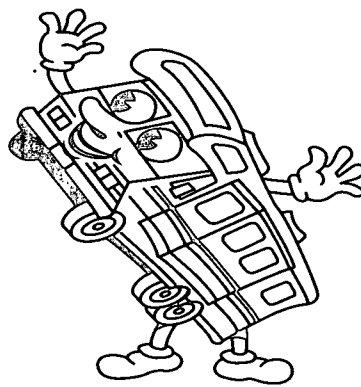
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Tutor's Success is Praised

The Coca-Cola Foundation featured a Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program tutor in it latest annual report, Freddie a 13-year-old in Brooklyn. In an interview, he said that last semester, he was absent so often that he found it nearly impossible to keep up with his eighth-grade class. "School bored him," states the report, "He was failing most of his classes – and he didn't care."

Everything changed when Freddie became a Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program tutor to three third-grade students.

Created by the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA), the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, is an internationally-recognized cross-age tutoring program in schools across the United States, Great Britain and Brazil. Since its inception in San Antonio in 1984 until 2001, the program kept more than 11,500 students in school, young people who were previously at risk of dropping out.

According to the Valued Youth creed, *all students are valuable, none is expendable*. This philosophy is helping more than 240 schools in 24 cities keep 98 percent of Valued Youth students in school, keeping these young people in the classroom and learning. For more than 17 years, IDRA and The Coca-Cola Foundation have worked together in a unique partnership that is making a visible difference in the lives of more than 129,000 children, families and educators.

In the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, secondary students who are considered at risk of dropping out of school are placed as tutors of elementary students, enabling the older students to make a difference in the younger students' lives. With a growing sense of responsibility and pride, the tutors stay and do better in school. The program supports them with positive recognition and instruction.

Freddie told the Foundation: "The third-graders think I'm an older, cooler kid, so they look up to me. I like helping people. Teaching the little kids makes me feel better about myself." His grades have risen an average of 20 points, and he is rarely absent now.

Amy Dawson is the school's teacher coordinator for the program. She told the Foundation: "For years, Freddie wasn't excited about school. This program has turned him around. It's working. Now he does care, and he's going to make it."

IDRA COCA-COLA VALUED YOUTH PROGRAM – PHILOSOPHY

1. **All students can learn.** This means all students: of all colors, of all languages, of all backgrounds, with or without designer clothes. All students can learn.

2. **The school values all students.** There are no "throw-aways." There are no students who are not important. All students are valuable.

3. **All students can actively contribute to their own education and to the education of others.** Students are not passive vessels to which we give information. Not only are they active learners but they also can become teachers of others.

4. **All students, parents and teachers have the right to participate fully in creating and maintaining excellent schools.** We are all partners in this. We all participate.

5. **Excellence in schools contributes to individual and collective economic growth, stability and advancement.** Our sense, our philosophy is that we are all "at risk" as long as students are "at risk." Different sectors in this country are realizing that. It is not only what happens to me as an individual when I drop out of school, it is what happens to *us*.

6. **Commitment to educational excellence is created by including students, parents and teachers in setting goals, making decisions, monitoring progress and evaluating outcomes.** Excellence requires involving all of the players in deciding where we are going and how we are getting there and in monitoring how we are doing.

7. **Students, parents and teachers must be provided extensive, consistent support in ways that allow students to learn, teachers to teach and parents to be involved.** Each of these groups needs each other and must support each other.

For more information about the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, contact Linda Cantu at IDRA (210-444-1710) or send an e-mail to contact@idra.org.

LONGITUDINAL ATTRITION RATES IN TEXAS PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS, 1985-86 TO 2000-01

GROUP	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88	1988-89	1989-90	1991-92	1992-93	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	PERCENT CHANGE* FROM 1985-86 TO 2000-01
Race-Ethnicity															
Native American	45	39	37	47	39	40	39	42	44	43	42	25	43	42	-7
Asian/Pacific Islander	33	30	28	23	22	21	21	18	18	20	21	19	20	20	-39
Black	34	38	39	37	38	39	43	50	51	51	49	48	47	46	35
White	27	26	24	20	19	22	25	30	31	32	31	31	28	27	0
Hispanic	45	46	49	48	48	48	49	51	53	54	53	53	52	52	16
Gender															
Male	35	35	35	34	34	37	39	43	45	46	45	45	44	43	23
Female	32	32	31	29	29	30	33	37	39	40	38	38	36	36	13
Total	**33**	**34**	**33**	**31**	**31**	**34**	**36**	**40**	**42**	**43**	**42**	**42**	**40**	**40**	**21**

* Rounded to nearest whole number. Figures calculated by IDRA from the Texas Education Agency *Fall Membership Survey* data.
Rates were not calculated for the 1990-91 and 1993-94 school years due to unavailability of data.

Texas Youth - continued from page 2

attrition. Black students have accounted for 17.2 percent of all students lost from enrollment due to attrition over the years, and White students have accounted for 33.2 percent of students lost from high school enrollment over time. Attrition rates for White students and Asian/Pacific Islander students have been typically lower than the overall attrition rates.

The attrition rates for males have been higher than those of females. Between 1985-86 and 2000-01, attrition rates for males have increased by 22.9 percent, from 35 percent to 43 percent. Attrition rates for females have increased by 12.5 percent, from 32 percent to 36 percent. Longitudinally, males have accounted for 56.2 percent of students lost from school enrollment, while females have accounted for 43.8 percent.

Latest Attrition Results

Findings from the latest attrition study confirm those of earlier studies that Hispanic students and Black students are at greater risk of being lost from high school enrollment prior to tion than White students. Results

from the study also show that males are more likely to be lost from enrollment than females. Major findings of the 2000-01 attrition study include the following.

Two of every five high school students were lost from high school enrollment prior to graduation. Forty percent or two of every five students enrolled in the ninth grade in Texas public schools during the 1997-98 school year failed to reach the 12th grade in 2000-01. An estimated 144,241 students, or about 40 percent of the 1997-98 freshman class, were lost from public school enrollment by 2000-01.

Hispanic students and Black students were more likely than White students to be lost from high school enrollment in 2000-01. Fifty-two percent of Hispanic students and 46 percent of Black students were lost from public school enrollment, compared to 27 percent of White students. Hispanic students were 1.9 times more likely than White students to leave school before graduation, while Black students were 1.7 times more likely than White students to leave school before graduation.

From 1999-00 to 2000-01, three

racial-ethnic groups had a decline in attrition rates: White students had a decline from 28 percent to 27 percent, Black students had a decline from 47 percent to 46 percent, and Native American students had a decline from 43 percent to 42 percent. Two racial-ethnic groups had no change in their attrition rates from 1999-00 to 2000-01. Attrition rates for Asian/Pacific Islander students remained unchanged at 20 percent, and those of Hispanic students remained unchanged at 52 percent.

Hispanic students made up the highest percentage of students lost from public high school enrollment in 2000-01. Over half (52.5 percent) of the students lost from school enrollment were Hispanic. White students comprised 28.9 percent of the students lost from enrollment, and Black students comprised 17.0 percent.

Males were more likely to be lost from enrollment than females. For 2000-01, 43 percent of males were lost from public high school enrollment, compared to 36 percent of females. Males constituted 57.4 percent of all students lost from public school

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enrollment compared to 42.6 percent for females.

Overall, there has been a 21 percent increase in the attrition rate since 1985-86. The percent of students lost from public high school enrollment has increased by 21.2 percent between the 1985-86 school year (33 percent) and the 2000-01 school year (40 percent). The number of students lost through attrition per school year has increased from 86,276 in 1985-86 to about 144,241 in 2000-01.

Enrollment and attrition data for the 1997-98 and 2000-01 school years are categorized by race and ethnicity in the box below. Statewide and county attrition rates are presented for the three major race and ethnicity groups in the state on Pages 13 and 14. This information is also provided on the IDRA web site (www.idra.org).

Texas Education Agency Reported Dropout Rates

In August 2001, TEA released its report on school completion and dropout rates entitled, *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools, 1999-00.* In comparison with those in the past, this report provided greater specificity on school completion and various dropout rates. Published reports by IDRA and TEA reach markedly different conclusions about the number and percent of students who do not graduate from Texas public high schools.

IDRA attrition analyses show that the number and percent of students lost has increased since the mid-1980s with no change in rate over the last two years. Conversely, TEA estimates indicate that dropout rates have declined steadily during this same period.

For the 1999-00 school year, TEA reported a 1.3 percent annual (event) dropout rate, a 7.2 percent longitudinal dropout rate (grades nine through 12), a

1997-98 AND 2000-01 ENROLLMENT AND 2000-01 ATTRITION IN TEXAS

Race-Ethnicity and Gender	1997-98 9th Grade Enrollment	2000-01 12th Grade Enrollment	1997-98 9-12th Grade Enrollment	2000-01 9-12th Grade Enrollment	2000-01 Expected 12th Grade Enrollment	Students Lost to Attrition	Attrition Rate
Native American	858	574	2,538	2,922	987	413	42
Male	462	297	1,304	1,488	527	230	44
Female	396	277	1,234	1,434	460	183	40
Asian/Pacific Islander	8,068	7,287	28,630	32,221	9,081	1,794	20
Male	4,161	3,625	14,601	16,573	4,723	1,098	23
Female	3,907	3,662	14,029	15,648	4,358	696	16
Black	51,250	28,294	147,013	151,443	52,809	24,515	46
Male	27,046	13,474	73,753	76,402	28,017	14,543	52
Female	24,204	14,820	73,260	75,041	24,792	9,972	40
White	151,132	110,509	511,455	515,260	152,243	41,734	27
Male	79,298	55,817	262,956	263,804	79,554	23,737	30
Female	71,834	54,692	248,499	251,456	72,689	17,997	25
Hispanic	134,798	70,486	364,826	395,916	146,271	75,785	52
Male	71,892	34,598	187,272	202,754	77,835	43,237	56
Female	62,906	35,888	177,554	193,162	68,436	32,548	48
All Groups	346,106	217,150	1,054,462	1,097,762	361,391	144,241	40
Male	182,859	107,811	539,886	561,021	190,656	82,845	43
Female	163,247	108,339	514,576	536,741	170,735	61,396	36

Figures calculated by IDRA from the Texas Education Agency *Fall Membership Survey* data. IDRA's 2000-01 attrition study involved the analysis of enrollment figures for public high school students in the ninth grade during 1997-98 school year and enrollment figures for 12th grade students in 2000-01. This period represents the time span when ninth grade students would be enrolled in school prior to graduation. The enrollment data for special school districts (military schools, state schools, and charter schools) were excluded from the analyses since they are likely to have unstable enrollments and/or lack a tax base to support school programs.

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association.

36.6 percent attrition rate (grades nine through 12), and 23,457 dropouts (grades seven through 12).

For the 1999-00 and 2000-01 school years, IDRA showed a 40 percent attrition rate with 146,714 students lost due to attrition in 1999-00 and 144,241 students lost to attrition in 2000-01. (See the graph on Page 11 for a comparison of attrition and state dropout data.)

Using its school leaver reporting system, TEA reported that out of 1.9 million students enrolled in grades seven through 12 during the 1999-00 school year, 99 percent were accounted for. Of the 1,897,459 students, TEA reported that:

- 1,364,125 were returning students,
- 212,925 were graduates,
- 116,644 were official leavers,
- 157,818 were excluded other leavers,
- 23,457 were official dropouts,
- 7,566 were excluded dropouts, and
- 19,718 were underreported students.

For the 1999-00 school year, TEA used 46 school leaver codes to categorize students as graduates, dropouts, or other leavers. Of 518,410 leaver records, the most utilized codes included graduates (212,925), intent to enroll in a public school in Texas (132,596), intent to enroll in school out of state (35,039), and alternative program working toward General Educational Development (GED) credential (21,011). Reported moves to other educational settings included:

- No intent but documented enrollment in a public school in Texas: 18,650,
- Withdrew for home schooling: 12,721,
- Intent to enroll in a private school in Texas: 8,501,
- No intent but documented enrollment in school out of state: 7,375, and
- Official transfer to another Texas public school district: 4,643.

It is clear that a significant number of students who could be reported as dropouts are excluded from the official dropout count. Arguably, more than 150,000 students lacking documented and official transfer status could be included in the state's dropout counts.

National and State Dropout Rates

In 1999, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported an annual (event) dropout rate of 5.0 percent, a status dropout rate of 11.2 percent, and a high school completion rate of 85.9 percent for the United States (based on the states that submitted state-level data). NCES used data from the Current Population Survey (CPS) of the U.S. Census Bureau to compute national high school dropout and completion rates by various background characteristics as sex, race-ethnicity, family income, and region of the country (NCES, 2000).

NCES concluded that dropout rates have fluctuated over the past quarter of the century with an overall downward trend (see box on Page 11). NCES further concluded that Hispanic students and Black students are at greater risk of dropping out than are White students and that the percentage of students who dropped out of school each year is relatively unchanged. According to the report, there is a

PERCENT OF TEENS WHO ARE HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS
(AGES 16 TO 19; 1997)

☐ More than 20% better than state median (7 and lower)
☐ Up to 20% better than state median (8 to 9)
☐ Up to 20% worse than state median (10 to 11)
☐ More than 20% worse than state median (12 and higher)
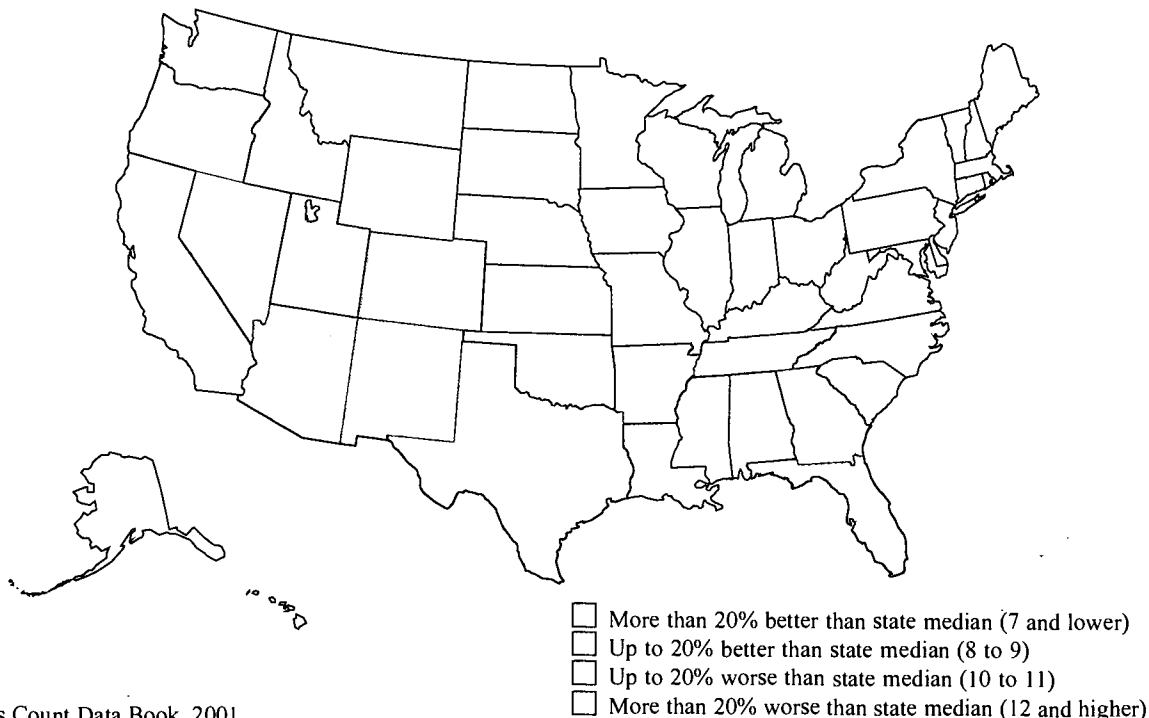
Source: Kids Count Data Book, 2001.

ATTRITION AND DROPOUT RATES IN TEXAS OVER TIME
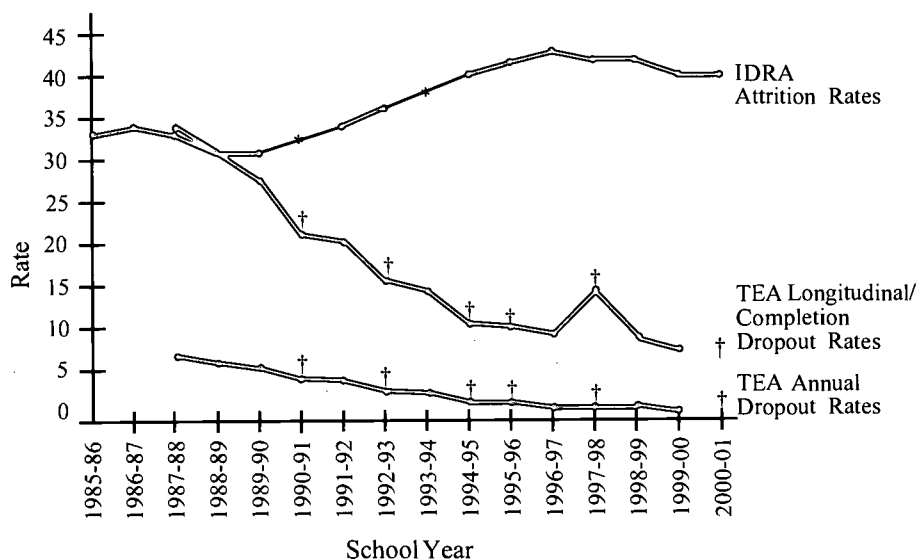
	IDRA Attrition Rates	TEA Long. Dropout Rates	TEA Annual Dropout Rates
1985-86	33	--	--
1986-87	34	--	--
1987-88	33	34.0	6.7
1988-89	31	31.3	6.1
1989-90	31	27.2	5.1
1990-91	*	21.4	3.9
1991-92	34	20.7	3.8
1992-93	36	15.8	2.8
1993-94	*	14.4	2.6
1994-95	40	10.6	1.8
1995-96	42	10.1	1.8
1996-97	43	9.1	1.6
1997-98	42	14.7	1.6
1998-99	42	8.5**	1.6
1999-00	40	7.2**	1.3
2000-01	40	--	--

† Change in TEA dropout definition or data processing procedures
* Rates were not calculated for the 1990-91 and 1993-94 school years due to unavailability of data.
** Longitudinal completion rate

considerable gap in the high school completion rates of White students (91.2 percent), Black students (83.5 percent) and Hispanic students (63.4 percent).

NCES is working with state education agencies and school districts across the country, through the National Cooperative for Elementary and Secondary Statistics and the Common Core Data collection, to develop a national database of public school dropout rates. The number of participating states using consistent data definitions and collection procedures has increased from 14 in 1991-92 to 37 in 1997-98. Through 1996-97, 38 states including the District of Columbia reported event dropout data. The most recent report, which presents event dropout rates for the 1997-98 school year, presented rates for 37 states and the District of Columbia. Rates for the state of Texas were not presented, perhaps due to the growing discrepancy between the rates reported by TEA and NCES.

In 1996-97, NCES reported that Texas had a national comparison annual dropout rate of 3.6 percent. This rate

was higher than the 1.6 percent reported by TEA in its annual state report for that year, primarily due to dropout definitions and calculation methodologies. A state comparison of the percent of teens who are high school dropouts is presented in the box on Page 10.

NATIONAL DROPOUT COMPLETION RATES IN THE U.S. BY RACE-ETHNICITY, OCTOBER 1999

MEASURE	TOTAL	WHITE, NON-HISPANIC	BLACK, NON-HISPANIC	HISPANIC ASIAN/	PACIFIC ISLANDER
Event (Annual) Dropout Rate (percentage of youth ages 15 to 24 who dropped out of grades 10 to 12, October 1998 to October 1999)	5.0	4.0	6.5	7.8	5.0
Status Dropout Rate (percentage of youth ages 16 to 24 who were dropouts in 1999)	11.2	7.3	12.6	28.6	4.3
Completion Rate (percentage of youth age 18 to 24 who were high school completers in 1999)	85.9	91.2	83.5	63.4	94.0

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1999.

Looking Forward

As this report shows, the estimated net loss in revenues and related costs to the state of Texas continues to escalate. In 1986, IDRA estimated that the issue of school dropouts was costing the state $17.12 billion in foregone income, lost tax revenues, and increased job training, welfare, unemployment and criminal justice costs. By 1998, 13 years later, the estimated costs were $319 billion. By 2001, 16 years later, the estimated costs of school dropouts is $441 billion. The social and economic costs of the dropout problem in Texas has increased by 26 times the initial estimates.

IDRA has repeatedly called for changes so that schools are held accountable based on the number of students they are graduating. *"All students must be valued and accounted for,"* summarized Dr. María Robledo Montecel, IDRA's executive director, and Dr. Albert Cortez, director of the IDRA Institute for Policy and Leadership (2000).

In the November-December issue of the *IDRA Newsletter*, Robledo Montecel and Cortez outlined what is needed in order for the state dropout estimates to be credible, specifically:

- Change the definition of who is considered a school dropout to exclude GED, non-verified transfers and other non-verified leavers from high school graduation counts;
- Require reporting of numbers of students graduating with a high school diploma to help verify reported dropout counts; and
- Include longitudinal dropout rates in the state accountability rating systems.

In addition, obviously, there needs to be a new sense of urgency to prevent students from dropping out of school. A review of the research on effective dropout prevention strategies, including IDRA's own research over the past 16 years, shows that certain components are vital to successful dropout prevention. These components are outlined in IDRA's policy brief, *Missing:*

Did You Know?

On the average, dropouts are more likely to be unemployed than high school graduates and to earn less money when they eventually secure work.
– U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, The Condition of Education 1999

High school dropouts are more likely to receive public assistance than high school graduates who do not go on to college.
– U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, The Condition of Education 1998

Two-thirds of inmates in the Texas prison system are high school dropouts.
– Texas Department of Criminal Justice, 1998

The percentage of young adults dropping out of school each year has stayed relatively unchanged since 1987.
– U.S. Department of Education, National Center of Education Statistics, Dropout Rates in the United States 1999

Historically, the General Educational Development (GED) credential was established as a means of offering a high school credential to World War II veterans who might have interrupted their schooling to go to war.
– U.S. Department of Education, National Center of Education Statistics, Dropout Rates in the United States 1999

Over the last quarter of a century, approximately 30 to 40 percent of GED test-takers have been ages 16 through 19.
– U.S. Department of Education, National Center of Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics 1999

Between 1985-86 and 2000-01 school years, the estimated cumulative costs of public school dropouts in the state of Texas were in excess of $441 billion in foregone income, lost tax revenues, and increased job training, welfare, unemployment and criminal justice costs.
– Intercultural Development Research Association, 2001
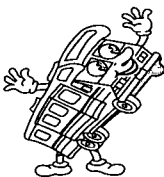
For more facts and statistics, go to the "Field Trip" on IDRA's web site.

www.idra.org

Texas Youth – Dropout and Attrition Rates in Texas Public High Schools, as follows (1999):

- *All* students must be valued.
- There must be at least one educator in a student's life who is totally committed to the success of that student.
- Families must be valued as partners with the school, all committed to ensuring that equity and excellence is present in a student's life.

- Schools must change and innovate to match the characteristics of their students and embrace the strengths and contributions that students and their families bring.
- School staff, especially teachers, must be equipped with the tools needed to ensure their students' success, including the use of technology, different learning styles and mentoring programs. Effective professional devel-

ATTRITION RATES IN TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS:
BY RACE-ETHNICITY, 2000-01

COUNTY NAME ⇩	ATTRITION RATES[1] BLACK ⇩	WHITE ⇩	HISPANIC ⇩	TOTAL ⇩	COUNTY NAME ⇩	ATTRITION RATES[1] BLACK ⇩	WHITE ⇩	HISPANIC ⇩	TOTAL ⇩
ANDERSON	49	30	64	38	DENTON	49	35	56	38
ANDREWS	55	21	29	25	DEWITT	40	19	59	35
ANGELINA	21	17	47	23	DICKENS	29	**	55	15
ARANSAS	77	26	50	34	DIMMIT	33	7	32	30
ARCHER	**	13	79	14	DONLEY	38	**	15	4
ARMSTRONG	•	19	100	22	DUVAL	•	15	28	27
ATASCOSA	36	20	34	28	EASTLAND	33	21	35	24
AUSTIN	41	16	53	28	ECTOR	58	27	45	38
BAILEY	**	**	39	22	EDWARDS	•	3	10	7
BANOERA	100	34	39	36	ELLIS	35	29	49	34
BASTROP	61	37	60	47	EL PASO	38	19	41	39
BAYLOR	55	12	27	17	ERATH	42	28	59	36
BEE	61	11	43	33	FALLS	34	26	46	32
BELL	37	29	48	35	FANNIN	38	21	49	24
BEXAR	40	27	49	42	FAYETTE	41	9	47	20
BLANCO	•	22	49	27	FISHER	44	12	19	15
BORDEN	•	**	68	**	FLOYD	39	**	38	22
BOSQUE	**	25	36	26	FOARD	•	33	54	40
BOWIE	43	17	65	27	FORT BEND	40	25	55	36
BRAZORIA	46	36	57	42	FRANKLIN	14	21	61	26
BRAZOS	52	29	61	45	FREESTONE	29	26	47	28
BREWSTER	•	10	30	22	FRIO	100	12	31	29
BRISCOE	40	**	12	3	GAINES	41	26	38	32
BROOKS	•	**	31	28	GALVESTON	41	32	52	37
BROWN	53	22	47	29	GARZA	21	17	45	27
BURLESON	43	27	37	32	GILLESPIE	67	18	47	26
BURNET	44	38	55	42	GLASSCOCK	•	13	53	26
CALDWELL	37	35	54	43	GOLIAD	100	18	49	30
CALHOUN	56	37	59	49	GONZALES	42	20	49	37
CALLAHAN	75	19	13	19	GRAY	**	20	30	21
CAMERON	65	27	52	51	GRAYSON	35	28	58	31
CAMP	21	10	63	23	GREGG	42	26	57	33
CARSON	•	**	10	**	GRIMES	34	34	64	41
CASS	21	21	72	22	GUADALUPE	48	29	59	42
CASTRO	**	2	17	11	HALE	40	12	44	34
CHAMBERS	37	19	33	23	HALL	**	21	36	25
CHEROKEE	33	27	59	34	HAMILTON	•	21	42	23
CHILDRESS	**	9	22	13	HANSFORD	•	**	53	17
CLAY	100	15	38	17	HARDEMAN	**	8	40	15
COCHRAN	**	20	42	34	HARDIN	18	16	**	15
COKE	90	27	78	56	HARRIS	52	29	60	46
COLEMAN	**	10	26	11	HARRISON	18	22	38	21
COLLIN	40	25	58	30	HARTLEY	•	37	75	43
COLLINGSWORTH	53	**	35	7	HASKELL	45	**	38	12
COLORADO	28	20	54	32	HAYS	46	30	50	39
COMAL	65	28	53	36	HEMPHILL	100	26	82	59
COMANCHE		31	38	33	HENDERSON	24	27	51	28
CONCHO	•	**	**	**	HIDALGO	25	28	52	51
COOKE	45	25	66	32	HILL	36	30	56	35
CORYELL	48	37	45	40	HOCKLEY	19	4	36	21
COTTLE	63	7	4	22	HOOD	**	32	61	35
CRANE	**	20	28	22	HOPKINS	33	24	31	25
CROCKETT	**	**	33	14	HOUSTON	34	7	65	23
CROSBY	**	3	26	15	HOWARD	58	22	56	38
CULBERSON	•	23	37	34	HUDSPETH	•	**	41	33
DALLAM	61	11	41	20	HUNT	56	30	63	37
DALLAS	52	30	63	47	HUTCHINSON	**	19	31	21 •
DAWSON	18	6	41	29	IRION	•	7	27	12
DEAF SMITH	69	**	48	32	JACK	**	22	14	20
DELTA	58	17	18	23	JACKSON	35	13	38	21

[1]Calculated by: (1) dividing the high school enrollment in the end year by the high school enrollment in the base year; (2) multiplying the results from Calculation 1 by the ninth grade enrollment in the base year; (3) subtracting the results from Calculation 2 from the 12th grade enrollment in the end year; and (4) dividing the results of Calculation 3 by the result of Calculation 2. The ɔn rate results (percentages) were rounded to the nearest whole number.

** = Attrition rate is less than zero (0).

• = The necessary data are unavailable to calculate the attrition rate.

ATTRITION RATES IN TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS:
BY RACE-ETHNICITY, 2000-01 (CONTINUED)

COUNTY NAME	BLACK	WHITE	HISPANIC	TOTAL
JASPER	20	19	47	20
JEFF DAVIS	100	62	67	70
JEFFERSON	43	21	55	35
JIM HOGG	·	25	33	33
JIM WELLS	30	5	36	30
JOHNSON	54	38	59	41
JONES	21	19	29	22
KARNES	51	3	40	27
KAUFMAN	52	43	63	46
KENDALL	72	24	65	35
KENT	**	**	**	**
KERR	83	32	66	44
KIMBLE	·	24	60	36
KING	·	29	·	35
KINNEY	**	30	25	23
KLEBERG	61	2	42	35
KNOX	53	15	21	20
LAMAR	46	31	62	35
LAMB	**	8	41	24
LAMPASAS	76	25	51	33
LA SALLE	·	79	29	39
LAVACA	23	9	34	13
LEE	27	16	46	25
LEON	34	19	18	21
LIBERTY	33	39	70	42
LIMESTONE	6	32	17	24
LIPSCOMB	·	**	23	1
LIVE OAK	33	10	36	23
LLANO	·	40	68	43
LUBBOCK	26	12	40	24
LYNN	**	36	35	31
MADISON	65	44	64	51
MARION	31	48	100	41
MARTIN	44	3	60	35
MASON	·	**	52	12
MATAGORDA	43	21	54	37
MAVERICK	·	20	40	41
McCOLLUCH	8	18	37	26
McLENNAN	49	29	60	41
McMULLEN	·	16	14	14
MEDINA	75	25	45	37
MENARD	·	16	30	22
MIDLAND	42	12	46	27
MILAM	35	19	44	28
MILLS	67	21	46	27
MITCHELL	3	9	25	15
MONTAGUE	·	15	30	16
MONTGOMERY	32	35	54	37
MOORE	51	13	52	34
MORRIS	30	28	66	30
MOTLEY		**	85	24
NACOGDOCHES	40	25	54	33
NAVARRO	56	25	67	39
NEWTON	35	35	38	34
NOLAN	34	15	43	27
NUECES	37	23	42	36
OCHILTREE	·	28	56	38
OLDHAM	·	**	42	41
ORANGE	34	23	29	24
PALO PINTO	57	30	48	33
PANOLA	32	25	64	29
PARKER	16	38	51	39
PARMER	61	3	30	21
PECOS	89	4	30	26
POLK	25	32	51	33
POTTER	53	30	57	39
PRESIDIO	·	22	41	40
RAINS	45	40	17	39
RANDALL	60	21	36	23
REAGAN	25	12	40	27
REAL	·	29	**	24
RED RIVER	14	22	37	21
REEVES	67	13	39	36
REFUGIO	**	5	33	17
ROBERTS	·	16	**	9
ROBERTSON	28	18	62	29
ROCKWALL	32	31	59	34
RUNNELS	14	18	32	24
RUSK	32	25	52	29
SABINE	1	35	·	30
SAN AUGUSTINE	35	22	33	28
SAN JACINTO	58	54	87	57
SAN PATRICIO	37	36	46	42
SAN SABA	44		48	17
SCHLEICHER	·	**	35	23
SCURRY	48	14	48	29
SHACKELFORD	·	16	25	18
SHELBY	22	17	58	22
SHERMAN	·	22	28	23
SMITH	42	27	66	38
SOMERVELL	·	17	9	16
STARR	·	40	51	51
STEPHENS	24	21	41	25
STERLING	·	**	30	**
STONEWALL	**	20	**	10
SUTTON	·	10	17	14
SWISHER	51	19	48	34
TARRANT	45	31	57	39
TAYLOR	33	26	52	33
TERRELL	·	57	26	37
TERRY	17	12	53	38
THROCKMORTON	·	**	63	**
TITUS	28	27	60	38
TOM GREEN	45	15	49	31
TRAVIS	54	28	63	46
TRINITY	26	39	68	39
TYLER	31	27	**	28
UPSHUR	20	33	42	32
UPTON	100	6	21	14
UVALDE	·	24	58	51
VAL VERDE	18	16	42	38
VAN ZANDT	52	31	55	34
VICTORIA	44	21	51	39
WALKER	49	23	62	40
WALLER	33	28	61	38
WARD	48	11	28	21
WASHINGTON	59	19	59	34
WEBB	100	30	39	39
WHARTON	37	5	39	25
WHEELER	31	**	**	**
WICHITA	43	30	47	34
WILBARGER	85	27	51	40
WILLACY	**	3	43	41
WILLIAMSON	52	30	52	35
WILSON	38	14	46	29
WINKLER	13	14	26	20
WISE	19	27	49	31
WOOD	32	22	56	24
YOAKUM	**	**	42	21
YOUNG	27	22	53	26
ZAPATA	·	37	29	29
ZAVALA	·	34	37	37
TOTAL	46	27	52	40

opment can help provide these tools.

IDRA's Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program incorporates these components (see Page 7). It has demonstrated that successful dropout prevention can be achieved.

With the value of a high school diploma becoming increasingly more important in opening doors to post-secondary education, career opportunities, and earning power, the economic consequences of leaving school without a high school diploma are exceedingly severe. The goal of ensuring that all students leave our schools with a high school diploma is a worthy goal to accomplish. As accountability standards increase in our state so must our expectations that our students will remain in school receiving a quality education that culminates in the receipt of a high school diploma.

The challenge of increasing the holding power within our public schools and increasing the number and percent of students who receive a regular high school diploma must be undertaken and met by dedicated educators, institutions and families. The bar of excellence must be raised to graduate our students with a quality education and a high school diploma to compete in this global economy.

Resources

Cárdenas, J.A., and M. Robledo, J. Supik. *Texas School Dropout Survey Project: A Summary of Findings* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 1986).

Robledo Montecel, M. "$319 Billion and 1.2 Million Students Lost," remarks to the Texas State Board of Education, Committee on Planning (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 1999).

Supik, J. and R. Johnson. *Missing: Texas Youth – Dropout and Attrition Rates in Texas Public High Schools* (San Antonio, Texas:

Internet Web Sites on Dropout Prevention

K-12 Practitioners' Circle nces.ed.gov/practitioners
AmeriCorps www.cns.gov/americorps/index.html
America's Promise www.americaspromise.org
American Association of School Administrators www.aasa.org
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
    www.ascd.org
Children's Defense Fund www.childrensdefense.org
Communities in Schools www.cisnet.org
Council of Chief State School Officers www.ccsso.org
Council of the Great City Schools www.cgcs.org
Center for Research on Students Placed at Risk
    scov.csos.jhu.edu/crespar/CReSPaR.html
Education Commission of the States www.ecs.org
Educational Testing Service www.ets.org
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities www.hacu.net
Intercultural Development Research Association www.idra.org
Kids Count Data www.acef.org/kidscount
National Coalition of Advocates for Students
    www.igc.org/ncas/soa.htm
National Coalition of Secondary School Principals www.nassp.org
National Council for Community and Education Partnerships
    www.edpartnerships.org
National Council of LaRaza www.nclr.org
National Dropout Prevention Center and Network
    www.dropoutprevention.org/
National Middle School Association www.nmsa.org
National Service-Learning Clearinghouse www.nicsl.coled.umn.edu
National Mentoring Partnership www.mentoring.org
National Research Council www.nas.edu/nrc
Public Education Network www.publiceducation.org
RAND www.rand.org
School City www.schoolcity.com
Think College, U.S. Department of Education
    www.ed.gov/thinkcollege
U.S. Department of Education www.ed.gov
W.K. Kellogg Foundation www.wkkf.org

HOW SCHOOL DROPOUTS ARE COUNTED

The U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is the principal federal agency responsible for the collection, analysis and reporting of data on the condition of education in the United States. Dropout data from NCES examines rates within racial and ethnic groups, across gender groups, and across states and geographical regions. NCES defines the various types of dropout rates as follows.

❖ *Event rates* describe the proportion of students who leave school each year without completing a high school program. This type of dropout rate describes the number and percent of students who drop out of school on an annual basis.

❖ *Status rates* provide cumulative data on dropouts among young adults within a specified age range (usually: 15 to 24 years of age, 16 to 24 years of age, or 18 to 24 years of age). These rates, which are higher than event rates because they include all dropouts, reveal the extent of the dropout problem in the population.

❖ *Cohort rates* measure what happens to a cohort of students over a period of time. Furthermore, these rates provide repeated measures of a group of students starting at a specific grade level over time. These rates provide longitudinal data on a specific group of students, including background and contextual data.

❖ *High school completion rates* describe the proportion of students who receive a high school diploma and/or alternative methods of school completion, namely the GED certificate.

In addition, *attrition rates* measure the number of students lost from enrollment between two points in time (e.g., ninth grade and 12th grade enrollment four years later). Attrition data are similar to cohort data.

SOURCES OF DROPOUT DATA

Annie E. Casey Foundation produces Kids Count Data Book. This is an annual national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the United States. The foundation uses data from federal sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Education Statistics.
   410-547-6600; http://www.aecf.org

Intercultural Development Research Association releases Texas attrition data each year in October.
   210-444-1710; http://www.idra.org

National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education collects and reports multiple education data, including dropout data.
   202-502-7300; http://nces.ed.gov

U.S. Department of Education releases the annual National Education Goals Report and other data.
   1-800-USA-LEARN; http://www.ed.gov
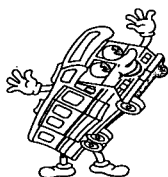
For more information visit the IDRA Field Trip

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¡Como vas a compartir este dinero? [You have been awarded $2,500. How are you going to divide up this money?]." One student began discussing how his uncle had won some money, and that if this had happened to the student, he would give the money to certain groups of people. Other students joined in the discussion. After 10 to 15 minutes, the teacher asked them to come to a consensus. The students decided that they would help out their families, their church and the poor children of Mexico. The teacher then proceeded to model the writing process, and wrote a group story as a class.

Again, an IDRA researcher commented: "It is discussion like this that leads me to believe that the English-learning students are being served, not only academically but also culturally. Every lesson I observed touched on the everyday life of the children."

One unique aspect of the bilingual program at James Bowie Elementary School is the "One World, One Culture" class. This is an enrichment class that

> "Every lesson I observed touched on the everyday life of the children."

all students attend once a week as part of a Title-1 schoolwide project. In this class the lessons are structured to teach self-respect and pride in Hispanic cultures as well as a diverse array of other cultures.

The teacher of this class is specially trained in diversity and very knowledgeable in the areas of history and geography. Because she immediately captures the students' attention, everyone looks forward to the class. There is also a hands-on component that usually takes the form of a writing assignment.

One observed lesson focused on the importance of older family members [... vari]ous cultures. The teacher began

> "The school has set up various committees for the sole purpose of promoting unity among staff, students and their families in community involvement."

a discussion of grandparents, asking specifically about the children's grandparents and how they were regarded in their own families and culture. The final assignment had each student design and create a card for his or her grandparents to be presented to them on Grandparents' Day.

Another unique program at the school is the music (*Estudiantina*) program. During music class, students in third, fourth and fifth grades begin learning how to play various instruments, such as the violin, guitar, mandolin, or piano. Each student is provided an instrument. They play Spanish songs with which they are all familiar, songs they hear on the radio, in the community, at weddings and other special occasions. At the same time, they learn the foundations of music and theory. The *Estudiantina* requires after-school practice sessions, and the group performs often throughout the Rio Grande Valley.

Students participate year-around in cultural events in the community such as parades, social functions and holiday celebrations where the choir, drill team, folkloric dance troupe, *Estudiantina* and other groups perform. As one teacher put it, "The school has set up various committees for the sole purpose of promoting unity among staff, students and their families in community involvement."

Lessons in all classes tend to be interconnected across disciplines, which is accomplished by using literature-based lessons. When a teacher introduces a story, a discussion is held and then a semantic map is created. The students' work then reflects the connections across the curriculum. Discussions and research on topics under study are facilitated by access to computers – at least two in each classroom and separate computer labs available to all children.

Students with special needs are served in the regular classrooms. They are not singled out, rather they mix with the rest of the class. The teachers may afford them more individualized attention, but their inclusion in discussions and group assignments is the same as other class members.

Children at James Bowie Elementary School are fortunate that bilingualism is inherent in the culture of the Valley. Spanish and English are both spoken in conversations throughout the area, often blended together in the same sentence. Children in bilingual classrooms receive instruction in Spanish, but they carry on regular conversations with their friends in English. Bilingualism in the area, coupled with the school's comprehensive bilingual program, is a main reason the school has earned national recognition for the performance of bilingual students.

Teachers keep a closely monitored portfolio of each student's work that is shared with the student's parents on a weekly basis. Most of the work included is work created by the student, not worksheets that he or she has completed. This portfolio is also reviewed by the school administration. Together, teachers and staff monitor students' progress so that any needed modifications are made as soon as possible and instructional time is not lost. Parents must sign and return the portfolio so that the teacher may document that they are aware of their child's progress. Communication with parents is in both Spanish and English.

It is evident that all the teachers at James Bowie Elementary School believe their students are important. The school's vision and goal is the success of all its students as reflected in the school motto, "All students can learn." Students are treated with respect and

dignity, and the students treat their teachers in the same manner.

Throughout the entire school, banners in both Spanish and English are displayed, reinforcing that each student is important. A sense of pride is evident everywhere in the school. This sense is engendered and reinforced by the teachers and staff and creates a bond among the students, parents and school personnel. This bond perpetuates the high standards expected from each student and gives families as well as the entire community a stake in the school's success.

Resources

Cárdenas, J.A., and B. Cárdenas. *The Theory of Incompatibilities: A Conceptional Framework for Responding to the Educational Needs of Hispanic Americans* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 1977).

Robledo Montecel, M., and J.D. Cortez. "Successful Bilingual Education Programs: 10 Schools Serve as Models," *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, September 2001).

Robledo Montecel, M., and J.D. Cortez. "Successful Bilingual Education Programs: Criteria for Exemplary Practices in Bilingual Education," *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, August 2001).

María Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., is the IDRA executive director. Josie Danini Cortez, M.A., is the production development coordinator. Albert Cortez, Ph.D., is the director of the IDRA Institute for Policy and Leadership. Comments and questions may be directed to them via e-mail at contact@idra.org.

Intercultural Development Research Association, 1999).

Texas Education Agency. *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools, 1999-00* (Austin, Texas: Texas Education Agency, Division of Research and Evaluation, August 2001).

U.S. Department of Education. *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1999* (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, November 2000).

U.S. Department of Education. *The Condition of Education 2001* (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, June 2001).

Roy L. Johnson, M.S., is the director of the IDRA Division of Evaluation Research. Comments and questions may be directed to him via e-mail at contact@idra.org.

HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT IDRA ACTIVITIES

In August, IDRA worked with **7,222** teachers, administrators, parents, and higher education personnel through **35** training and technical assistance activities and **118** program sites in **14** states plus the United Kingdom and Brazil. Topics included:
+ Educational Equity and School Change
+ English as a Second Language Resources on the Internet
+ Parent Leadership Development
+ Modeling Reading Comprehension Strategies
+ Classroom Management

Participating agencies and school districts included:
◇ Louisiana Department of Education
◇ Tyler Independent School District (ISD), Texas
◇ Chicago Public Schools, Illinois
◇ Oklahoma City Public Schools, Oklahoma
◇ Longview ISD, Texas

Activity Snapshot

The Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) has been working with several schools to redesign and re-energize their reading programs to be more responsive to the characteristics of their diverse learners. In this three-year IDRA reading program, known as **FLAIR** (Focusing on Language and Academic Instructional Renewal), IDRA provides technical assistance that includes classroom demonstrations and observations of effective teaching strategies, coaching for success, nurturing of innovations, and guidance for finding funding options. FLAIR capitalizes on each school's strengths to increase reading scores, weave reading throughout the curriculum and recapture students' love of reading. The participants have become reinvigorated by this new instructional method that is based on three principles: active involvement, validating students and guidance.

Regularly, IDRA staff provides services to:
+ public school teachers
+ parents
+ administrators
+ other decision makers in public education

Services include:
◇ training and technical assistance
◇ evaluation
◇ serving as expert witnesses in policy settings and court cases
◇ publishing research and professional papers, books, videos and curricula

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For information on IDRA services for your school district or other group, contact IDRA at 210/444-1710.

Prevent Harassment and Violence

Editor's Note: On September 19, 2001, U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige called on educators to take a leading role in the prevention of harassment and violence. Citing news reports of acts of intolerance, Paige wrote to the leaders of the nation's schools, colleges and universities urging them to take important steps to protect students from harassment and violence. The IDRA South Central Collaborative for Equity is the federally-funded equity assistance center that serves schools in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. It is helps educators, parents and communities provide all students with equitable educational opportunities regardless of race, sex, national origin and economic level. Following is the text of the Secretary's letter.

Dear Colleague:

I write to ask your help in responding to a problem that has arisen following the terrible events of the past several days and that threatens some of our nation's students. There have been increasing news reports of incidents of harassment and violence directed at persons perceived to be Arab Americans or of Middle Eastern or South Asian origin, including children. Arab-American parents have publicly expressed fear about the safety of their children at school. These occurrences are extremely disturbing to me and are of major concern to the Department of Education.

All of us are justly outraged at the destruction and loss of life in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania. However, violence and harassment against innocent people based solely on their race or national origin only compounds hatred and must not be condoned or tolerated. Each incident has a ripple effect in our schools and our communities, creating fear and tensions that ultimately affect us all. I am concerned that young people are particularly susceptible to copying inappropriate conduct at a time when fear and anger are heightened.

We are all committed to making sure children across America can attend school in a safe and secure environment free from physical threats and discrimination. School officials, working closely with students, parents, and community groups, play a critical role in ensuring that race-based harassment and violence have no place in schools.

Harassment in schools can take many forms, from abusive name calling to violent crimes directed at a student because of his or her race or ancestry, the country of origin of the student's family, or the student's cultural traditions. If ignored, harassment can jeopardize students' ability to learn, undermine their physical and emotional well-being, provoke retaliatory violence, and exacerbate community conflicts. The message we must send out to parents and students is that such conduct is unconditionally wrong and will not be tolerated in our schools.

I take this opportunity to highlight our responsibilities under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin by recipients of federal financial assistance. Schools, colleges, and universities are responsible under Title VI for providing students with an education environment free from discrimination.

Racial or ethnic harassment is unlawful. It can deny or limit a student's ability to receive or participate in the benefits, services, or opportunities in a school's program – simply speaking it denies students the right to an education free of discrimination. The existence of a racially hostile environment that is encouraged, accepted, or tolerated by a school, college, or university constitutes different treatment of students on the basis of race.

In response to last week's events specifically, I urge you to make sure that assemblies, classroom discussions, and other school activities held to honor victims of the tragedies do not inadvertently foster the targeting of Arab-American students for harassment or blame. Encourage students to discuss diversity constructively and to express disagreement over ideas or beliefs in a respectful manner. Have a system in place to intervene if particular students exhibit feelings or conduct that could endanger others. Encourage all students to report threats of racial or ethnic harassment.

Through our words and the example of our own conduct, we must remind our children that harassment of and violence toward any individual because of his or her race or national origin is never acceptable. In addition, we must emphasize during this difficult time in our nation's history that our feelings of anger and sadness must not be directed at innocent Arab Americans, or other individuals having no connection to last week's events. Working together, we can make sure that our children get a good education in a safe environment that does not tolerate violence and hatred.

Thank you for your help on this most critical issue.

Sincerely,
Rod Paige

For more information contact IDRA at 210-444-1710 or send an e-mail to contact@idra.org. To request assistance from the SCCE ask for Dr. Bradley Scott at IDRA.

Every Student Counts

María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel, Ph.D.

The *San Antonio Express-News* has helped this community address the issue of dropouts through its recent series of in-depth articles by Lucy Hood, Edmund Tijerina and Sharon Hughes with photos by Edward Ornelas.

The series correctly concluded what the Intercultural Development Research Association and many others, have been reporting for more than a decade.

In 1986, IDRA conducted Texas' first comprehensive statewide study of high school dropouts, which showed that one out of three students were dropping out before graduating. Our studies show that since 1986 the estimated cumulative number of Texas high school dropouts is [1.6 million] students—with an estimated net loss to the state of [$441 billion]. Clearly, the number of students dropping out of school is too high.

According to data compiled by the Texas Eduction Agency, 348,903 students were enrolled as ninth graders in Texas high schools in 1997. Four years later; only 220,324 seniors were enrolled.

Texas has long tried to ignore the problem, and failing that, has tried to get rid of it by undercounting the numbers of students who drop out of school before graduating. The *Express-News* series that focused on one San Antonio high school showed that students didn't simply transfer to different schools; most of the missing students dropped out before graduating.

Why are the numbers important? If we don't count the students, the students don't count.

All students count. Schools that succeed know this. Such schools don't blame their students for the dropout rate, but look for ways to make school work for all young people.

Schools that work for everyone value children, promote high expectations, create support systems and include families and communities in meaningful ways. Students are neither seen nor treated as problems to be "fixed" or as time bombs that may explode at any moment.

San Antonio has many committed and dedicated educators who are helping to make schools work for all students. Our community was the birthplace of one of the most successful dropout prevention programs in the country—the IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program.

The program, which has become a national network of schools, is a cross-age tutoring program that takes students who are considered to be at -risk situations and places them as tutors of younger students. Since its inception in 1984, the program has helped schools keep 98 percent of program participants in school.

The challenge of ensuring that students do not drop out of school will not be overcome with a series of articles, one educational program, concerned families or even dedicated and committed educators working alone.

The challenge will be met when we count all students and when all students count, when apathy turns to outrage and when outrage leads to action.

IDRA

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Creating schools that work for all children,
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IDRA Newsletter

Inside this Issue:

Successful Bilingual Education Programs

Indicators of Success at the School Level

María Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., and Josie Danini Cortez, M.A.

Editor's Note: Last year, the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) conducted a research study with funding by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA) to identify characteristics that contribute to the high academic performance of students served by bilingual education programs. The August 2001 issue of the IDRA Newsletter began a series of six articles describing this research study's significant findings. The first installment provided an overview of the research design and methods. In the September 2001 issue, we featured an overview of the schools' demographics and the major findings pertaining to school indicators. This third installment in the October 2001 issue presented the major findings in student outcomes. This fourth installment features the major findings in student outcomes and assessment.

As IDRA visited, interviewed, and surveyed the teachers and administrators, parents and students in 10 different bilingual education programs and their schools, one thing become evident: leadership is an essential ingredient in the formula for student success. Leadership manifests itself in different ways, such as commitment to students, valuing of students and their families, and openness to innovation and change. But, one aspect was evident in all of the individuals involved with the programs: each had the ability to inspire and see what was possible.

Lee Bolman and Terrence Deal write of this ability in *Leading with Soul*: "Perhaps we lost our way when we forgot that the heart of leadership lies in the hearts of leaders. We fooled ourselves, thinking that sheer bravado or sophisticated analytic techniques could respond to our deepest concerns. We lost touch with a precious human gift – our spirit." This aspect of leadership is difficult to measure but immediately recognizable. And it is this aspect that is critically needed to achieve equity and excellence for all students.

IDRA researched school- and classroom-level indicators of successful bilingual education programs. Our extensive review of other research provided a strong theoretical framework with indicators conducive to successful programs for limited-English-proficient (LEP) students. IDRA framed these indicators as research questions in areas of leadership, vision and goals, school climate, linkages, school organization and accountability, professional development, parent involvement, staff accountability and assessment, staff

selection and recognition, and community involvement. This article provides IDRA's major findings in five of the 10 school-level indicators. The remaining five will be presented in the January 2002 issue of the *IDRA Newsletter*.

IDRA's primary research question for this study was, "What contributed to the success of a bilingual education classroom as evidenced by LEP student academic achievement?" In addition to the student data, qualitative and contextual research questions for other indicators emerged from our extensive review of the research and IDRA's own history in bilingual education.

Five main questions guided the research for school-level indicators. Each question had a more detailed subset of questions. The questions that guided the research for five of the school level indicators follow.

Leadership – How evident is leadership at the school level, and what are the characteristics (Carter and Chatfield, 1986; Lucas et al., 1990)?
*   Is the school leadership well-informed of the rationale for bilingual education, and does it share an active commitment to bilingualism?
*   Does the school leadership pro-actively involve the community and

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Bilingual teachers were never isolated from the rest of the faculty. They, along with the bilingual program, were fully integrated into the rhythm and essence of the school.

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private sector in the design and development of the bilingual program?
*   Does the school leadership support educational equity and excellence for all students?

Vision and Goals – How evident are the vision and goals at the school level, and what are the characteristics (Villarreal and Solís, 1998)?
*   Do a vision and a set of goals exist that define the achievement level expected of all students, including LEP students?
*   Are the vision and goals communicated to students, and do they guide the instruction?

School Climate – What are the characteristics of the school's climate (Lein et al., 1997; Ogbu and Matute-Bianchi, 1986)?
*   Does the school climate communicate, in concrete ways, high expectations

to LEP students, a sense of family, a high level of trust among all school personnel, and shared responsibility and decision making?
*   Are student linguistic and cultural diversity valued and celebrated?
*   Is innovation introduced and managed with careful attention to the process of participation and ownership at all levels of the institution, families and the broader community?
*   Do the adaptations keep the positive vision that all children can achieve to their maximum potential and be fully fluent in English without sacrificing their native language?
*   Are the challenges accepted by everyone and reflect ongoing respect and validation of all participants, even those who disagree with the changes?
*   Is the climate safe and orderly?

Linkages – What linkages exist between central office and school-level staff, and how are they characterized (McLoed, 1996)?
*   Are linkages to central office staff facilitated by clear roles and responsibilities of central office staff?
*   Does the central office staff provide leadership, credibility and respect for

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Bullying and Teasing in Elementary School

Aurora Yáñez, M.A.

If left unchecked or unaddressed, bullying and teasing during childhood may develop into dysfunctional behaviors that are detrimental to society and to the person. Bullying and teasing are harmful to the classroom environment by hindering the delivery of instruction and the social development of students.

Dan Olweus, a professor of psychology at the University of Bergen in Norway defines bullying, "A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time to negative actions on the part of one or more other students" (Froschl et al., 1998). Olweus explains that negative actions can include words, physical contact and making faces, gestures, and intentional exclusion from groups. Teasing is a form of banter.

Teasing and bullying are a continuum of intentionally hurtful behavior that, if not stopped, can make younger children feel unsafe. If left unchecked in older children, teasing and bullying can be used to exert power over others and may lead to committing sexual harassment, which is illegal (U.S. Department of Education, 1999).

While some attempts have been made to link bullying and teasing at the elementary school grades to sexual harassment behaviors during adult life, there is no solid evidence that sexual harassment is one of the resultant dysfunctional behaviors. In any case, it is important for administrators and teachers to address bullying and teasing continuously (Yáñez-Pérez, 1999).

Bullying and teasing can also lead classmates and adults to attach labels to the students involved. The literature on high expectations is replete with information on the detrimental effect of pre-rely labeling students especially at the elementary school level. We would do a disservice to students if we start labeling and perceiving them negatively from this early age.

Teasing and bullying are manifested differently by gender. Males tend to be victims of physical bullying, and females tend to be victims of exclusion (NCES, 2000). Teasing and bullying are pervasive in school lunchrooms, playgrounds, hallways and classrooms. Teachers and other adults tend to ignore the conduct, giving children the impression that it is acceptable to engage in this type of behavior (Banks, 1997; and Gropper and Froschl, 2000). However, teachers and other adults can and must stop it.

Teachers and parents can use the following practices to address these behaviors in the elementary school grades. Once teachers have assured themselves that this behavior is being addressed and not in the upswing, it is probable that it will not escalate later in the students' lives. To address the issue of teasing and bullying, teachers and parents can:
• Intercede when an incident happens,

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Answer the question of the month!
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This month's question is...
What are you doing to encourage student leadership in your school?

www.idra.org

do not ignore it;
* Have discussions about teasing and bullying;
* Provide opportunities for boys and girls to interact in positive ways; and
* Show they care.

There are many resources available that address student teasing and bullying. Two publications in particular give examples of teasing and bullying behaviors as well as practical advice on how to address the issue. These are: *Quit it! A Teacher's Guide on Teasing and Bullying for Use with Students in Grades K-3* (Froschl et al, 1998) and *Girls and Boys Getting Along, Teaching Sexual Harassment Prevention in the Elementary Classroom* (Montgomery et al., 1993).

Children who experience teasing and bullying feel unsafe, uncomfortable and excluded both inside and outside of the classroom. It is important for children to understand that incidents might occur by accident the first time, but if they do not stop the behavior when they have been asked to stop then it is purposeful. One way to stop this pattern is for adults and children to be clear that these behaviors will not be tolerated.

The Intercultural Development Research Association's South Central Collaborative for Equity is the equity

> "Most Americans do not take bullying very seriously – not even school personnel, a surprising finding given that most bullying takes place in schools. If Americans think at all about it, they tend to think that bullying is a given of childhood, at most a passing stage, one inhabited largely by boys who will, simply, inevitably, be boys."
>
> – *Psychology Today,* September-October 1995, p. 52

assistance center funded by the U.S. Department of Education to serve the educational equity needs of Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas in the areas of race, gender and national origin equity. The center provides teacher training and assistance on preventing and dealing with teasing and bullying in schools. For more informa-

tion contact Dr. Bradley Scott, SCCE director, at IDRA (210-444-1710).

Resources

Banks, R. "Bullying in School," ERIC Digest (Champaign, Ill.: University of Illinois at Urbana, Champaign Children's Research Center, 1997).

Froschl, M., and B. Sprung, N. Mullin-Rindler. *Quit it! A Teacher's Guide on Teasing and Bullying for Use with Students in Grades K-3*. A joint publication of Educational Equity Concepts, New York, N.Y.; Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, Wellesley, Mass.; and National Education Association, Washington, D.C. (New York, N.Y.: Educational Equity Concepts, Inc., and Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1998).

Gropper, N., and M. Froschl. "The Role of Gender in Young Children's Teasing and Bullying Behavior," *Equity and Excellence in Education* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., April 2000).

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IDRA Newsletter

CUMULATIVE INDEX
JANUARY 2001 - DECEMBER 2001

IDRA Newsletter Focus Issues

Each issue of the *IDRA Newsletter* concentrates on one particular topic. In 2001, the topics included the following.

the program?

School Organization and Accountability – How is the school organized (Villarreal and Solís, 1998; McLoed, 1996)?
* Is the school organization based on the most efficient way of maximizing the impact of instruction?
* Is the program an integral part of the school's academic plan?
* Are small organizational arrangements (e.g., families, academic teams) created to increase communication among teachers, parents and students?
* Is there strong accountability for the success of all students?

IDRA conducted onsite classroom observations; held structured interviews with teachers, administrators and parents; and administered surveys at each of the participating schools. Below are the major findings for each area.

Leadership

All of the schools we studied had strong and visible leadership. While the principals varied in their leadership styles, all had some common traits:
* total and unwavering commitment to their students' achievement and to an excellent bilingual education program that was fully integrated into the school;
* open and frequent communication among the principal, faculty and staff;
* pro-active involvement of faculty, staff and the community in the bilingual program;
* professionalism, skills, and knowledge;
* well-informed of the rationale for bilingual education;
* valuing of all individuals – students, faculty and staff;
* ability to inspire, motivate and validate;
* openness to innovation and change;
* access provided to current research and best practices;
* ability to identify, secure, and mobilize resources; and
* port for faculty and staff.

Did You Know?

There are about 3.5 million limited-English-proficient students in the United States – a conservative estimate as reported in 1996-97 by the nation's state education agencies that receive Title VII federal funds.

Forty percent of U.S. teachers reported having LEP students in their classrooms in 1994, but only 29 percent of these teachers had received any training at all in how to serve them.
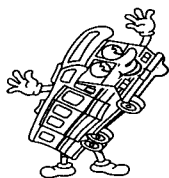
For more facts and statistics, go to the "Field Trip" on IDRA's web site.

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Teachers and administrators we interviewed believed that their schools' administration supported teacher autonomy. Also important was the involvement of English as a second language (ESL) and bilingual education teachers in the schools' decision-making process as well as their autonomy in the decisions they made in their classrooms.

Vision and Goals

All of the schools had visions and goals that were published and evident throughout the schools, setting clear expectations for the achievement of all students. Furthermore, these visions and goals manifested themselves in the day-to-day work of the principals, faculty, staff, parents and families. In some cases, the visions and goals were developed by the principals, faculty, staff and parents, adding a dimension of ownership and buy-in.

Surveys showed that the schools had visions that embraced the goals of bilingual education with a mission inclusive of all students and their families.

In one instance, an IDRA researcher commented:

The school is innovative in the way it deals with a multitude of languages and cultures as it prepares students to transition into a new country and a new language. The school has a way of

valuing differences and acknowledging potential in every student.

Another IDRA researcher observed:

This school is successful because of the commitment and the integrity that the teachers have toward the bilingual program at their school. They attribute their success to the clear and focused program that is articulated throughout the campus and to the support that the principal provides. All of the teachers say that the success is due to the fact that they value learning a second language and because of the *calidad de los maestros en esta escuela* [The quality of the teachers at this school].

School Climate

While school locations varied greatly – from inner-city urban to rural and isolated – the intrinsic character and climate of the schools shared some common traits:
* All of the schools were safe and orderly;
* All of the administration, faculty, staff, parents and students felt responsible for maintaining a safe and orderly climate;
* "Order" operationally looked different in the different settings: "orderly

chaos" in some, structured and well-defined in others; but the underlying "order" of well-defined expectations, responsibilities and roles were clear and understood by all;

• "Safe" included personal safety as well as safety to innovate, change and communicate;

• All of the schools affirmed and valued racial and cultural differences; and

• All of the schools had a climate of caring, belonging and friendliness.

Teachers and administrators reported a positive school climate that nurtured and maintained cultural diversity and mutual respect.

Linkages

The central office staffs provided strong leadership and respect for the bilingual programs IDRA studied. There were clearly articulated roles and responsibilities among central office staff as well as frequent and open communication between central office and school staff. All of the schools reported strong support from someone in central office for their program and their school.

In addition to the vertical linkages, there was evidence of horizontal linkages as well, with teachers working in teams, sharing, exchanging, communicating and focusing on achievement of all students. Bilingual teachers were never isolated from the rest of the faculty. They, along with the bilingual program, were fully integrated into the rhythm and essence of the school.

Teachers and administrators reported a high degree of collaborative work between faculty and staff:

• "There is master coordination in this school, collegiality, and a deep sense of purpose as well as a tremendous sense of trust and loyalty among the staff and administration."

• "We are doing... team teaching. During the day, we exchange classes in first grade: I teach in Spanish to the other teacher's students, and she

teaches my children in English."

• "Teachers are more united – all teachers work with all children. All teachers are responsible for working in the bilingual education program."

• "We [elementary school teachers] have a lot of communication with the middle school."

School Organization and Accountability

The bilingual program was an integral part of the schools and their academic plans. It was evident that faculty and staff held themselves accountable for the success of all students, including LEP students. Surveys showed that teachers and administrators saw bilingual education as an integral part of their schools.

At one school, an IDRA researcher observed:

The bilingual program is an integral part of the school. When a parent signs up [for his or her child] to attend the school, they know that Spanish will be the mode of instruction in grades kindergarten to two and that from grades three to eight, the students will be receiving bilingual instruction. The students do not transition out of the program, and they are expected to achieve at or above the state standards. All of the teachers hired for the school must speak Spanish with native-like fluency.

In another case, an IDRA researcher stated:

Teachers hold themselves accountable for the success of each student. During the classroom observations, it was evident that the teachers knew exactly the level of skills of each child.

Example of a Successful Bilingual Program

Strong leadership, clear and well-articulated vision and goals that fully integrate bilingual education into the school, safe and positive school climate, strong linkages across grade levels, and a school organization and accountability

that holds teachers and administrators responsible for the success of all students are five indicators that were found in the research sites. One example of such a program is found at Paul Bell Middle School in Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Paul Bell Middle School, Miami-Dade County, Florida

Opened in September 1997, Paul Bell Middle School, is a state-of-the-art facility built on a 16-acre tract in Dade County, Florida. The facility consists of eight building clusters constructed around a courtyard, with office and auditorium spaces centrally located. The area in which the school is located is one of rapid residential and commercial growth, due west of Miami on the western side of Sweetwater.

Every classroom at the school is clean, well-lit and conducive to learning. The students take pride in their school and maintain it well. Student work is displayed throughout the classrooms, as is literature about the topic currently being discussed. There is an abundance of printed material on the walls, but it does not create a distraction. Everything on the walls is needed during the lessons. Student work is also highly visible in hallways and common areas.

It is evident that learning is taking place at Paul Bell Middle School. Whether answering the teachers' questions or interacting with each other, students are always respectful. They are always on task throughout the entire lesson.

An IDRA researcher noted:

Students were not afraid to ask questions. They did not feel embarrassed if they did not understand something the teacher was explaining. Students felt comfortable discussing the lesson with the teachers as well as with each other.

Paul Bell Middle School is a bilingual school where language instruction is offered in Spanish, mathematics, geography and science. A

variety of exceptional learning resources is available to students here, from the media center and language and computer laboratories to specialized resource rooms and exceptional student facilities. The school boasts a variety of remarkable pre-vocational areas, including business, work experience, family and consumer sciences, health education and graphics and technology labs.

The goal of the ESL program at Paul Bell Middle School is to facilitate the acquisition of English, maintain proficiency in the home language and promote the acquisition of language arts skills. To achieve these goals, all English-learning students are strongly encouraged to register in the bilingual program. The ESL program's main focus is to develop English language proficiency.

Inclusion in the bilingual program maintains the English-learners' proficiency in the home language and helps develop their language arts skills. The presence of the students in bilingual courses enriches the multicultural experience for all students. It ensures that bilingualism will be maintained and breaks down the isolation that sometimes is experienced by English-learning students.

The goal of the bilingual program at the school is to develop bilingual, biliterate and bicultural students capable of leadership and success in the multilingual society of the global economy. To become bilingual and biliterate, or to maintain these skills and abilities, students must not only learn the language, they must also use their native language to learn.

To that end, the bilingual program at Paul Bell Middle School requires one class period of Spanish language arts curriculum and two class periods of basic subject area instruction in Spanish. The Spanish language arts curriculum further develops and enriches the language arts skills while familiarizing the students with Hispanic culture.

Content areas taught in Spanish vary from grade to grade, however, curricular learning objectives of all courses are the same regardless of the language used for instruction. Additionally, literature and fine arts are emphasized as teaching tools in all curricular offerings, thus exposing students to the richness of their bicultural heritage.

Technology instruction and utilization is integrated throughout Paul Bell Middle School. Every teacher has a computer in his or her classroom, and every student has access to one. Computer centers are located in classrooms, the library, various laboratories, resource rooms, the media

HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT IDRA ACTIVITIES

In September, IDRA worked with **9,063** teachers, administrators, parents, and higher education personnel through **59** training and technical assistance activities and **177** program sites in **15** states plus the United Kingdom and Brazil. Topics included:

+ *Re-Energizing Teaching and Learning: IDRA's Middle School Mathematics Teacher Leadership Institute*
+ Cultural Sensitivity in Addressing Student Academic and Behavior Problems
+ *WOW: Workshop on Workshops*
+ Curriculum Development for Dual Language Programs

Participating agencies and school districts included:
◇ Arkansas Department of Education
◇ Dallas Independent School District (ISD), Texas
◇ St. Charles Parish, Louisiana
◇ Tempe School District, Arizona
◇ La Joya ISD, Texas

Activity Snapshot

Through the national Goals 2000 Initiative, the U.S. Department of Education has established parent-information and resource centers (PIRCs) across the country to bring together parents, schools, universities, community organizations and businesses to support underserved student populations. IDRA operates the center that serves Texas, called *Reform in Education: Communities Organizing Networks for Emerging Collaborations with Teachers* (RE-CONNECT). The center's work is based on the valuing-principle that recognizes all parents as teachers and leaders regardless of economic condition or background. A primary focus for RE-CONNECT is families of preschool children ages birth through 5 and parents of school-age children. The center also engages in special initiatives to reach low-income, minority and limited-English-proficient parents. Some of the tools used by RE-CONNECT for its support activities include parent-to-parent training, parent institutes, video conferences for educators on parent involvement and leadership, materials dissemination and a web site (at www.idra.org).

Regularly, IDRA staff provides services to:
+ public school teachers
+ parents
+ administrators
+ other decision makers in public education

Services include:
◇ training and technical assistance
◇ evaluation
◇ serving as expert witnesses in policy settings and court cases
◇ publishing research and professional papers, books, videos and curricula

For information on IDRA services for your school district or other group, contact IDRA at 210/444-1710.

center and other facilities. Computer students also maintain a web site. Media students prepare and broadcast the morning announcements – in both English and Spanish – from the school's studio.

The school's language arts curriculum is at the heart of its bilingual instruction. Literature is the springboard for all other activities in the classroom. Multicultural selections from classical and modern works comprise the bulk of subject matter studied. Reading and composition are infused throughout all of the disciplines, with the language arts classes supporting and reinforcing the curriculum pursuits of the other disciplines.

Paul Bell Middle School's approach to teaching English-learners has allowed success for all students in a bilingual, bicultural environment. The program's exemplary practices make it a model for bilingual education.

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