



Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2006-07

Texas School Holding Power Worse than Two Decades Ago

by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.

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IDRA is Moving!
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There has been little change in the performance of Texas public high schools in terms of keeping their students in school until they graduate with a high school diploma. School holding power in Texas remains stable but continues to be worse than it was 22 years ago. The 2006-07 overall statewide attrition rate in Texas public schools was 34 percent.

In its most recent annual attrition study, which examines school holding power in Texas public high schools, the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) found that 34 percent of the freshman class of 2003-04 left school prior to graduating from a Texas public high school in the 2006-07 school year. The current statewide attrition rate in Texas remains higher than the initial rate of 33 percent found in IDRA's landmark 1985-86 study.

With schools losing one of three students from their enrollment prior to graduation with a high school diploma, stakeholders must renew their commitment and efforts to reduce dropout rates and to improve school completion and graduation rates of

schools and their students.

This 2006-07 attrition study represents the 22nd study conducted by IDRA and the latest in a series of reports that began in the 1985-86 school year. In 1986, IDRA conducted Texas' first-ever comprehensive statewide study of high school dropouts using a high school attrition formula to estimate the number and percent of students who leave school prior to graduation. The study in 1986 was the state's first major effort to assess the school holding power of Texas public schools.

This inaugural study, entitled *Texas School Dropout Survey Project* was conducted under contract with the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the then Texas Department of Community Affairs. It examined three major research questions: (1) What is the magnitude of the dropout problem in the State of Texas? (2) What is the economic impact of the dropout problem for the state? and (3) What is the nature and effectiveness of in-school and alternative out-of-school programs for dropouts in the state?

IDRA's inaugural study found that 86,276 students had not graduated from Texas public high schools, costing the

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state \$17 billion in forgone income, lost tax revenues, and increased job training, welfare, unemployment and criminal justice costs (Cárdenas, Robledo and Supik, 1986).

Methods

Spanning a period from 1985-86 through 2006-07, the IDRA attrition studies have provided time series data, using a consistent methodology, on the number and percent of Texas public school students who leave school prior to graduation. These studies provide information on the effectiveness and success of Texas public high schools in keeping students engaged in school until they graduate with a high school diploma.

The attrition calculations were derived from public school enrollment data in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). During the fall of each year, school districts are required to report information to TEA via the PEIMS for all public school students and grade levels. IDRA's attrition studies involve an analysis

The gaps between the attrition rates of White students and Black and Hispanic students are increasing.

of ninth-grade enrollment figures and 12th-grade enrollment figures three years later. This period represents the time span during which a student would be enrolled in high school.

IDRA collects and uses high school enrollment data from the TEA Fall Membership Survey to compute countywide and statewide attrition rates by race-ethnicity and gender. Enrollment data from special school districts (military schools, state schools and charter schools) are excluded from the analyses, because they are likely to have unstable enrollments or lack a tax base for school programs.

Attrition rates are an indicator of a school's holding power or ability to keep students enrolled in school and learning until they graduate. Along with other dropout measures, attrition rates are useful in studying the magnitude of the dropout problem and the success of schools in keeping students in school. Attrition, in its simplest form, is the

rate of shrinkage in size or number. Therefore, an attrition rate is the percent change in grade level enrollment between a base year and an end year.

Historical statewide attrition rates are categorized by race-ethnicity and by gender (see boxes on Pages 13 and 14). County-level data are provided on Pages 12, 16 and 17. In addition, trend data by county is provided via IDRA's web site at www.idra.org. IDRA is including online historical county-level numbers of students lost to attrition. See box on Page 15 for statewide historical numbers. General conclusions from this year's study follow.

Latest Study Results

One of every three students (34 percent) from the freshman class of 2003-04 left school prior to graduating with a high school diploma. The class of 2007 began with

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Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program Tutors Their Stories

by Roy L. Johnson, M.S., and Linda Cantú, Ph.D.

In 1984, IDRA designed and implemented the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, a dropout prevention program, in which secondary school students who are considered at risk of dropping out of school are placed as tutors of elementary school students. The program enables the older students to make a difference in the younger students' lives and supports them with positive recognition and instruction. With a growing sense of responsibility and pride, the tutors stay and do better in school.

The primary goal of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is to reduce the annual dropout rate among tutors in the participating secondary schools. When implemented as designed, additional benefits derived from the program include: enhancing students' basic academic skills; strengthening students' perceptions of self and school; reducing student disciplinary action referrals and absenteeism; and strengthening school-home-community partnerships to increase the level of support available to students considered at risk of dropping out of school.

The key to the program's success is valuing students who are considered

at risk of dropping out of school and sustaining their efforts with effective, coordinated strategies. The program's philosophy is centered on the statement, "All students are valuable; none is expendable."

Since the inception of the program in 1984, more than 456,000 students, parents, teachers and administrators have been impacted by the program. More than 25,900 tutors have benefited from the program.

Each of the valued youth tutors succeed in ways that are, in fact, immeasurable: bringing pride to their families when before the program their experience with the school had been one of concern and worry; bringing their insights, compassion and intelligence to their tutees who now had someone to listen to them, someone who understood them better than anyone else; and bringing higher expectations to their teachers who once saw them as troublemakers or lost causes and now saw them as invaluable young people.

Some of these successes are captured in the tutors' monthly journals and case study interviews. These data, in the tutors' own voices, speak to the

power of a program that mobilizes school staff and brings out the best, the most valued essence of students, families and educators.

Here are some tutors' stories as documented through end-of-year events. Tutor's names have been changed to ensure confidentiality.

"[It] Makes me feel good knowing that I am doing something positive."

Hi everyone. Well, I want to start off by saying this program has made a big impact on my life. It has shown me that just by helping someone, even if it is just for a little while, it does make a difference in their life. Also being able to call myself a great role model means a lot to me. Hearing them tell me: "You're such a good tutor," and "I'm glad you're helping me," and "I want to be like you when I grow up" makes me feel good knowing that I am doing something positive. It has also made me more responsible. I hate to miss school because I look forward to seeing my tutees and working with them every day. The main thing it has shown me is that life isn't always about you.

Their Stories – continued on Page 4

You can learn a lot from other people. I'm glad that I have grown closer to my classmates.

– middle school tutor

"I am so proud of myself because [my tutees] are improving a lot."

How the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program has changed me. Well I think the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program has changed me a lot. It changed me in the beginning of the year because I was kind of all shy and, I guess, nervous. Now that we go to tutor every day, I am not nervous because I guess I got used to the class, the teacher and my three kids. In the beginning, I got so frustrated with the kids because they are just "little kiddos." But then, I finally realized that you have to have more patience with them, and they learn better and faster. So, I have been doing that [being patient] ever since, and I am so proud of myself because they are improving a lot, not only because I am patient but because I am teaching them.

If I ask them to read a book loud and clear, they do it. I noticed that, in the beginning, they really wouldn't pay close attention to the book, but now they do. I taught them not to fight with one another and to always listen to the teacher.

Well, my kids have been doing great. Like Anna, she really listens now. She doesn't get sidetracked like she used to. She concentrates better and has improved a lot.

Juan, I told him how to share things and to take turns with everyone, and now he does. I'm so proud of him.

And good old Abel, before, he didn't know how to read, just a little bit, and now he can read like all of the other students. When I ask someone if they want to read, he is the first one to raise his hand. So Anna and Juan get mad. I always tell them to take turns, so yeah,



Established by IDRA in 1984, the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is a cross-age tutoring dropout prevention program. Since its inception in San Antonio in 1984, this internationally-recognized program has kept more than 25,900 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 schools keep 98 percent of Valued Youth students in school, keeping these young people in the classroom and learning. For more than 22 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 456,000 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. The key to the program's success is in valuing students who are considered at risk of dropping out of school and sustaining their efforts with effective, coordinated strategies.

For more information, visit www.idra.org or contact IDRA.

Photo credit: Michael Vasquez Photography

it has really made a huge difference and all three have improved, even I have. I'm so proud of all of them!

– middle school tutor

"My parents told me to set a great example for these tutees because they look up to me."

My experience as a tutor was great for me because I am able to talk to people more and I am not as shy as before. This program was great for me. My parents told me to set a great example for these tutees because they look up to me. My experience has been great, and the field trip to the Coca-Cola Bottler was also great because I got to meet other students from different districts and schools. My experience

with the tutees was great because I got to meet each one of them. And when I finally got my tutees, I didn't know what to do. I finally got used to it and got the tutees to improve their reading, and they are reading very well. I like that they are getting better and better every time I visit them.

It has been great for me because, before, when I came to this class, every subject was hard for me, but after I came to this class I've been getting better and better. I speak up, and the teachers help me. This has been a great experience for me.

– middle school tutor

"Helping the kids learn to



Texas Education Agency- Reported Dropout Count Swells

by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.

The number of school dropouts reported by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for grades seven through 12 swelled from 18,290 in 2004-05 to 51,841 in 2005-06. The dropout rate rose from 0.9 percent in 2004-05 to 2.6 percent in 2005-06 (see table on next page).

In August 2007, TEA released its dropout and school completion report entitled, *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2005-06*. The 78th Legislature in 2003 mandated that TEA compute dropout rates according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) dropout definition.

Using the NCES definition, a dropout is defined as “a student who is enrolled in public school in grades 7-12, does not return to public school the following fall, is not expelled, and does not graduate, receive a General Education Development (GED) certificate, continue school outside the public school system, begin college, or die.”

In order to implement the legislative requirements for the computation of dropout rates, TEA had to make changes in some dates affecting

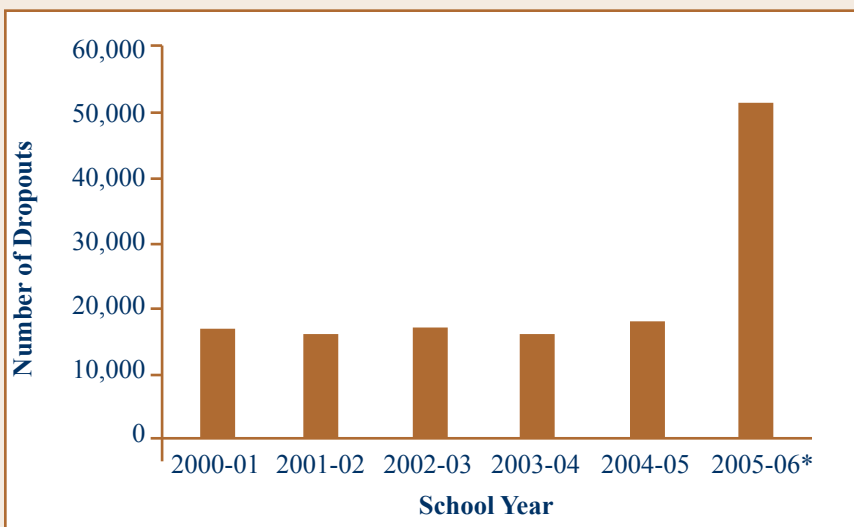
dropout status and some changes in groups of students who had not been considered dropouts previously.

What a difference a dropout definition and calculation method make. When the NCES dropout definition was used, the total number of dropouts reported by TEA increased

from 18,290 in 2004-05 to 51,841 in 2005-06 – an increase of 33,551 students or 183 percent. The dropout count was 2.83 times higher in 2005-06 than in 2004-05, and the dropout rate in 2005-06 was 2.89 times higher than in 2004-05.

TEA-Reported – continued on Page 6

Number of Dropouts, Grades 7-12, 2000-01 to 2005-06 in Texas



*The 2005-06 dropout rate was calculated using the National Center for Education Statistics dropout definition.

Source: Texas Education Agency, *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2004-05*. Texas Education Agency, *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2005-06*.

Students, Dropouts and Annual Dropout Rates in Texas, Grades 7-12, by Race-Ethnicity, 1987-88 to 2005-06

School Year	Dropouts	Students	Annual Dropout Rate (%) By Group, Grades 7-12				
			African American	Hispanic	White	Other	Total
1987-88	91,307	1,363,198	8.4	8.8	5.1	6.1	6.7
1988-89	82,325	1,360,115	7.5	8.1	4.5	4.9	6.1
1989-90	70,040	1,361,494	6.7	7.2	3.5	4.3	5.1
1990-91	53,965	1,372,738	4.8	5.6	2.7	3.1	3.9
1991-92	53,420	1,406,838	4.8	5.5	2.5	2.9	3.8
1992-93	43,402	1,533,197	3.6	4.2	1.7	2.0	2.8
1993-94	40,211	1,576,015	3.2	3.9	1.5	1.7	2.6
1994-95	29,918	1,617,522	2.3	2.7	1.2	1.1	1.8
1995-96	29,207	1,662,578	2.3	2.5	1.1	1.1	1.8
1996-97	26,901	1,705,972	2.0	2.3	1.0	0.9	1.6
1997-98	27,550	1,743,139	2.1	2.3	0.9	1.1	1.6
1998-99	27,592	1,773,117	2.3	2.3	0.8	0.9	1.6
1999-00	23,457	1,794,521	1.8	1.9	0.7	0.7	1.3
2000-01	17,563	1,818,940	1.3	1.4	0.5	0.5	1.0
2001-02	16,622	1,849,680	1.3	1.3	0.4	0.5	0.9
2002-03	17,151	1,891,361	1.2	1.4	0.4	0.4	0.9
2003-04	16,434	1,924,717	1.0	1.3	0.4	0.4	0.9
2004-05	18,290	1,954,752	1.2	1.4	0.5	0.4	0.9
2005-06*	51,841	2,016,470	3.8	3.5	1.3	1.1	2.6

*The 2005-06 dropout rate was calculated using the National Center for Education Statistics dropout definition.

Source: Texas Education Agency, *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2004-05*. Texas Education Agency, *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2005-06*.

Texas Dropout Count – continued from Page 5

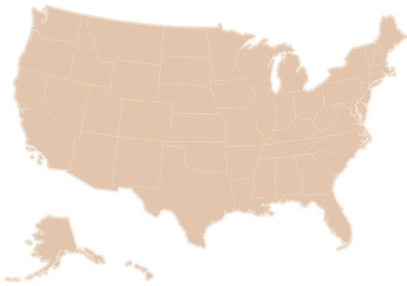
Of the 51,841 reported dropouts, 3,038 were in grades seven and eight, and 48,803 were in grades nine through 12. The seventh and eighth grade dropout rate was 0.4 percent, while the ninth through 12th grade dropout rate was 3.7 percent.

The annual dropout rates for African American students and Hispanic students were much higher than the rates for White students – the rate for African American students

What a difference a dropout definition and calculation method make. When the NCES dropout definition was used, the total number of dropouts reported by TEA increased from 18,290 in 2004-05 to 51,841 – an increase of 33,551 students or 183 percent.

was three times higher, and the rate for Hispanic students was two and a half times higher. The 2005-06 dropout rate for African American students was 3.17 times higher than the 2004-05 rate, and the 2005-06 rate for Hispanic students was 2.5 times higher than the 2004-5 rate.

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Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate

Texas Ranks 32nd in On-time Graduation in 2004-05

by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.

In 2004-05, Texas ranked 35th out of 50 states and the District of Columbia in on-time graduation from public schools. That year, Texas had an on-time graduation rate of 74.0 percent compared with 74.7 percent for the nation as a whole.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, released the 2004-05 averaged freshman graduation rates (AFGR) in June 2006. This relatively new NCES indicator of high school dropouts and completers provides an estimate of the percentage of high school students starting at ninth grade who graduate on time with a regular diploma. Data for this measure were drawn from counts of enrollment by grade and graduates in the Common Core of Data (CCD) State Non-fiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education.

The 50 states and the District of Columbia reported counts of high school graduates in 2001-02, 2002-03 and 2004-05, while 48 states and the District of Columbia reported graduate counts for 2003-04 (see table on next page for rates by state and rank orders by state). The data were reported by state education agencies for high

About three-fourths of freshmen in the United States graduated from high school on time in the three years of data reported.

school graduates between the period of October 1 and September 30 of each applicable school year.

Methods

The averaged freshman graduation rate is calculated by dividing the number of graduates with regular diplomas by the size of the incoming freshman class four years earlier and is expressed as a percent. Aggregate student enrollment data and aggregate counts of the number of diplomas awarded are used to estimate the percent of students who graduate on time.

Major Findings

Major findings include the following (also see table on next page).

- About three-fourths of freshmen in the United States graduated from high school on time in the three years of data reported.

- The averaged freshman graduation rate increased from 72.6 percent in 2001-02 to 73.9 percent in 2002-03 to 75.0 percent in 2003-04.
- From 2003-04 to 2004-05, the averaged freshman graduation rate decreased from 75.0 percent in 2003-04 to 74.7 percent in 2004-05.
- For the class of 2001-02, the averaged freshman graduation rate of public schools ranged from a low of 57.9 percent in South Carolina to a high of 85.8 percent in New Jersey. Eighteen states and the District of Columbia had rates lower than the overall average of 72.6 percent: Alabama, Alaska, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee and Washington. Nine states had rates 80.0 percent or higher: Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Utah, Vermont and Wisconsin. In 2001-02, Texas ranked 30th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia with a rate of 73.5 percent.
- For the class of 2002-03, the averaged freshman graduation rate of public

Averaged Freshman – continued on Page 21

Averaged Freshman Graduation Rates, By State, School Years 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05

State or Jurisdiction	2001-02		2002-03		2003-04		2004-05	
	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank
United States	72.6		73.9		75.0		74.7	
Alabama	62.1	46	64.7	43	65.0	45	65.9	42
Alaska	65.9	43	68.0	41	67.2	40	64.1	46
Arizona	74.7	26	75.9	25	66.8	42	84.7	8
Arkansas	74.8	25	76.6	21	76.8	25	75.7	30
California	72.7	33	74.1	32	73.9	31	74.6	33
Colorado	74.7	26	76.4	22	78.7	19	76.7	27
Connecticut	79.7	11	80.9	12	80.7	12	80.9	14
Delaware	69.5	39	73.0	36	72.9	34	73.1	37
District of Columbia	68.4	40	59.6	51	68.2	39	68.8	40
Florida	63.4	45	66.7	42	66.4	43	64.6	45
Georgia	61.1	48	60.8	49	61.2	47	61.7	49
Hawaii	72.1	25	71.3	39	72.6	35	75.1	31
Idaho	79.3	13	81.4	10	81.5	10	81.0	13
Illinois	77.1	18	75.9	25	80.3	15	79.4	19
Indiana	73.1	31	75.5	29	73.5	32	73.2	36
Iowa	84.1	4	85.3	4	85.8	4	86.6	3
Kansas	77.1	18	76.9	20	77.9	21	79.2	21
Kentucky	69.8	38	71.7	38	73.0	33	75.9	29
Louisiana	64.4	44	64.1	44	69.4	38	63.9	47
Maine	75.6	24	76.3	23	77.6	22	78.6	23
Maryland	79.7	11	79.2	15	79.5	16	79.3	20
Massachusetts	77.6	16	75.7	27	79.3	17	78.7	22
Michigan	72.9	32	74.0	33	72.5	36	73.0	38
Minnesota	83.9	5	84.8	6	84.7	6	85.9	6
Mississippi	61.2	47	62.7	47	62.7	46	63.3	48
Missouri	76.8	20	78.3	17	80.4	13	80.6	15
Montana	79.8	10	81.0	11	80.4	14	81.5	12
Nebraska	83.9	6	85.2	5	87.6	1	87.8	1
Nevada	71.9	26	72.3	37	57.4	49	55.8	51
New Hampshire	77.8	15	78.2	18	78.7	19	80.1	17
New Jersey	85.8	1	87.0	1	86.3	2	85.1	7
New Mexico	67.4	42	63.1	46	67.0	41	65.4	43
New York	60.5	49	60.9	48	NA	NA	65.3	44
North Carolina	68.2	41	70.1	40	71.4	37	72.6	39
North Dakota	85.0	2	86.4	2	86.1	3	86.3	5
Ohio	77.5	17	79.0	16	81.3	11	80.2	16
Oklahoma	76.0	22	76.0	24	77.0	23	76.9	26
Oregon	71.0	27	73.7	35	74.2	30	74.2	34
Pennsylvania	80.2	9	81.7	9	82.2	9	82.5	10
Rhode Island	75.7	23	77.7	19	75.9	28	78.4	24
South Carolina	57.9	51	59.7	50	60.6	48	60.1	50
South Dakota	79.0	14	83.0	8	83.7	7	82.3	11
Tennessee	59.6	50	63.4	45	66.1	44	68.5	41
Texas	73.5	30	75.5	29	76.7	26	74.0	35
Utah	80.5	8	80.2	14	83.0	8	84.4	9
Vermont	82.0	7	83.6	7	85.4	5	86.5	4
Virginia	76.7	21	80.6	13	79.3	17	79.6	18
Washington	72.2	24	74.2	31	74.6	29	75.0	32
West Virginia	74.2	29	75.7	27	76.9	24	77.3	25
Wisconsin	84.8	3	85.8	3	NA	NA	86.7	2
Wyoming	74.4	28	73.9	34	76.0	27	76.7	27

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2002 and 2003* (June 2006), *The Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate for Public High Schools From the Common Core of Data: School Years 2002-03 and 2003-04* (July 2006). U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education, Public Elementary and Secondary School Student Enrollment, High School Completions, and Staff from the Common Core of Data: School Year 2005-06 (NCES 2007-352, June 2006).

Parents Choosing Success for Their Children

Making Sure Title I Resources Improve the Education of All Children

**by Aurelio M. Montemayor,
M.Ed.**

A number of schools have sent a report to families stating, “We are not achieving the annual yearly progress that we should” (according to the *No Child Left Behind Act* guidelines). What else must schools do?

In cases where this has happened three years in a row or more, schools that are not meeting adequate yearly progress (AYP) must give families information about other public schools within the district that *are* making adequate yearly progress and to which it might be practical, useful and advantageous to send their children.

Schools also must inform families about the additional services being provided to children within the current school to support their academic achievement.

Under NCLB, schools receiving Title I funds must use their federal funds to make needed improvements. In the event of a school’s continued poor performance, parents have options to ensure that their children receive the high quality education to which they are entitled. This might mean that their children can: (1) transfer to higher performing schools in the area, or (2) receive supplemental educational services in the community, such as

In the event of a school’s continued poor performance, parents have options to ensure that their children receive the high quality education to which they are entitled.

tutoring, after-school programs or remedial classes.

Schools Informing Families

School staff (especially family liaison personnel) should inform families who want to look for another school about some key things to look for in a possible campus. The checklist below by the Minnesota Department of Education, Office of Choice and Innovation is a useful tool.

10 Things to Look for in a School

- High expectations,
- Busy students,
- Great teachers,
- Great principal,
- Vibrant parent-teacher organization,
- Children are neither invisible nor scared to be at school,
- Gut reaction that this is the school for your child,

- Rigorous curriculum,
- Families like yours are welcome, and their concerns are acknowledged, and
- You are satisfied with the school’s results on standardized tests and school report cards.

For families that choose to keep their children at their current school, there are several key things that school personnel can suggest to families:

- Look for what is working well at the school. Identify, connect to and support whatever is succeeding.
- Identify extra resources that exist and make sure your children get the support they need to succeed.
- Connect to and participate in school activities that will support the success of your children as well as the other students.
- Let the administrators and teachers know you care and are not giving up on the children or the school.

Parent Online Resources

The NCLB rules and regulations itemize several other important things a family can do to ensure an equitable and excellent education for their children. Resources online that school leaders can guide families to are listed below. A handout version of this list is available on the IDRA web site (www.idra.org).

Parents Choosing – continued on Page 10

- **Choosing a School for Your Child**

Publication ID: ED002266P

Offers step-by-step advice to parents on how to choose among the schools available to their children and identifies important factors to consider before making a decision. This booklet explains some of the public school choices now available in many communities and covers private school options that also may be available. It also highlights new options provided under NCLB.

<http://www.ed.gov/parents/schools/find/choose/index.html>

- **Extra Help for Student Success**

Brochure, Publication ID: ED002261H

Provides information about Supplemental Educational Services under NCLB. This brochure explains what supplemental educational services are, who can get these services, how to know if a child is eligible, how to find a good supplemental educational services program, what happens after a provider is selected, and how to get additional information about the program.

<http://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/involve/suppservices/services.pdf>

- **10 Tips for Parents Who Choose to Stay Put**

By the Center for Parent Leadership

What happens to parents who choose to keep their children in their neighborhood school? What can they do to secure a better education for their child? Here are 10 specific options for parents.

http://www.centerforparentleadership.org/10_tips.pdf

Tools for

Lever of Change – Actionable Knowledge

IDRA's Quality Schools Action Framework, developed by executive director Dr. María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel, shows how public education can be strengthened for all students. Most traditional dropout prevention efforts have not worked because they inappropriately focus on student characteristics or they focus on only one element of a larger system. Real success, however, requires addressing systemic factors that lead to students dropping out.

This means communities and schools working together in new ways. As shown in the action framework (<http://www.idra.org>), the levers of change fall within actionable knowledge, finding out what's happening in your own community and schools. Clear, consistent and credible data are essential to good public policy, accountable leadership and an engaged public. But knowledge alone is never enough. The critical step is to begin a cycle of knowledge and action.

A Snapshot of What IDRA is Doing

Developing leaders – IDRA recently presented "Graduation for All: The Road is Tough but Worth the Investment" at the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Education Leadership Initiative's Texas Statewide Policy Institute on Higher Education Access and Success. Elected officials were given a tool for receiving data about high schools and their communities that could be used to take local and state action.

Conducting research – Each year, for the past 22 years, IDRA has published findings from its high school attrition research (see Page 1), including the addition of a searchable online database that anyone can use to look up attrition rates for their county in Texas. These studies have used consistent research methodology, that at the time was new. But today, researchers across the country are using this methodology for state- and national-level studies of school attrition.

Informing policy – IDRA recently provided testimony before the Commission for a College Ready Texas and submitted a list of policy recommendations based on three InterAction forums IDRA held in 2004 in three distinct communities – Houston, Midland-Odessa and Edinburg – where participants looked at PK-20 pipeline issues through a framework consisting of seven areas: preparing students, college access, institutional persistence, affordability, institutional resources, graduation, and graduate and professional studies.

Tools for Action continued on next page

Action

Engaging communities—Under IDRA's Graduation Guaranteed/*Graduación Garantizada* initiative, IDRA has been piloting a school holding power portal that gives community-school action teams data on how their schools are doing on student attrition and achievement. The portal provides data on the factors (from teaching quality to curriculum access and funding equity) that affect attrition, achievement and school holding power at the campus level. The IDRA portal can be accessed at: <http://www.idra.org/portal/>.

What You Can Do

Get informed. See the report, *Every Child, Every Promise: Turning Failure Into Action*, by America's Promise Alliance, for strategies to improve the lives of youth. This is the first report in a biennial series, and it comprehensively measures the presence of the essential resources that correlate with success in both youth and adulthood (http://www.americaspromise.org/uploadedFiles/AmericasPromiseAlliance/Every_Child_Every_Promise/ECEP_Reports_-_JPEG/ECEP%20-%20Full%20Report.pdf).

Get involved. Is attrition a problem in your school? If so, which students are lost? When are they most at risk, and why? Does your school have the capacity ("holding power") to graduate all students and prepare them for college and work? A daunting mix of data can keep people from getting straight answers to shape a plan of action. In *What Your Community Can Do to End its Drop-Out Crisis: Learnings from Research and Practice* (http://web.jhu.edu/CSOS/images/Final_dropout_Balfanz.pdf), Robert Balfanz at Johns Hopkins University recommends a three-part plan, beginning with the data. To get started, take a look at Project U-Turn's citywide campaign, grounded in data analysis and designed to focus attention on Philadelphia's dropout crisis (<http://www.projectuturn.net/about.html>).

Get results. *A Community Action Guide-Seven Actions to Fulfill the Promise of Brown vs. Board of Education and Mendez vs. Westminster* is an IDRA booklet that details seven actions community members can take to help fulfill the promise of *Brown vs. Board of Education* and *Mendez vs. Westminster* in the education of African American and Latino students. It also includes a step-by-step tool for developing a blueprint for action in a local community. You may access the booklet free via IDRA's web site at http://www.idra.org/images/stories/A_Community_Action_Guide.pdf.

Parents Choosing – continued from Page 10

- **As a Parent, Here Are 12 Things You Should Know About and Expect from Your Schools... and Yourself**

Five pages of key and useful ideas a parent must consider to support excellent education for all children.

http://www.centerforparentleadership.org/12_tips.pdf

Continued Improvement of Schools

The information about other schools and about tutoring and other services that students receive does not replace or reduce the responsibility of the campus to improve the curriculum and instructional program offered. The wake-up call of the federal- and state-required campus report cards must be to not give up or despair but to accelerate the ability to provide an excellent education for all children.

The success of children depends on the excellence of the basic curriculum and the quality of instruction of the neighborhood public school. Even if there are viable options for particular families to choose other campuses, the families and community in the immediate vicinity of the targeted school must ensure that they have an excellent neighborhood public school – one that provides the best possible academic program and an array of learning choices and experiences ensuring that every child will be ahead.

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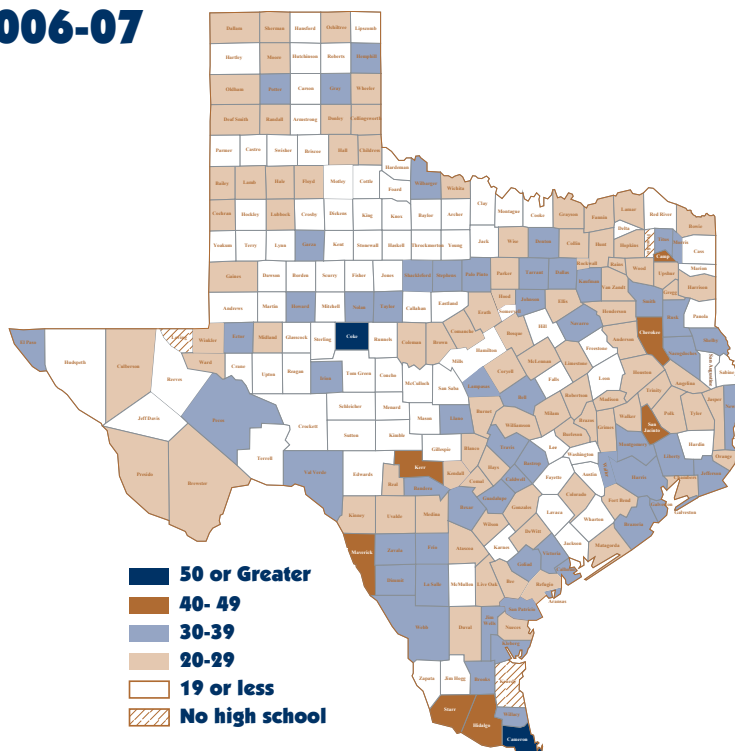
365,857 students. Of these students, 134,676 were lost from public school enrollment between the 2003-04 and 2006-07 school years. (See table on Page 14.) Numerically, 134,676 students were lost from public high school enrollment in 2006-07 compared to 86,276 in 1985-86.

The overall attrition rate has increased by 3 percent from 1985-86 to 2006-07. The percentage of students who left high school prior to graduation was 33 percent in 1985-86 compared to 34 percent in 2006-07. Over the past two decades, attrition rates have fluctuated between a low of 31 percent in 1988-89, 1989-90 and 1990-91 to a high of 43 percent in 1996-97.

The overall attrition rate was less than 40 percent in 2006-07 for the sixth time in 13 years. For the sixth consecutive year, the overall statewide attrition rate in Texas public schools was less than 40 percent. The current

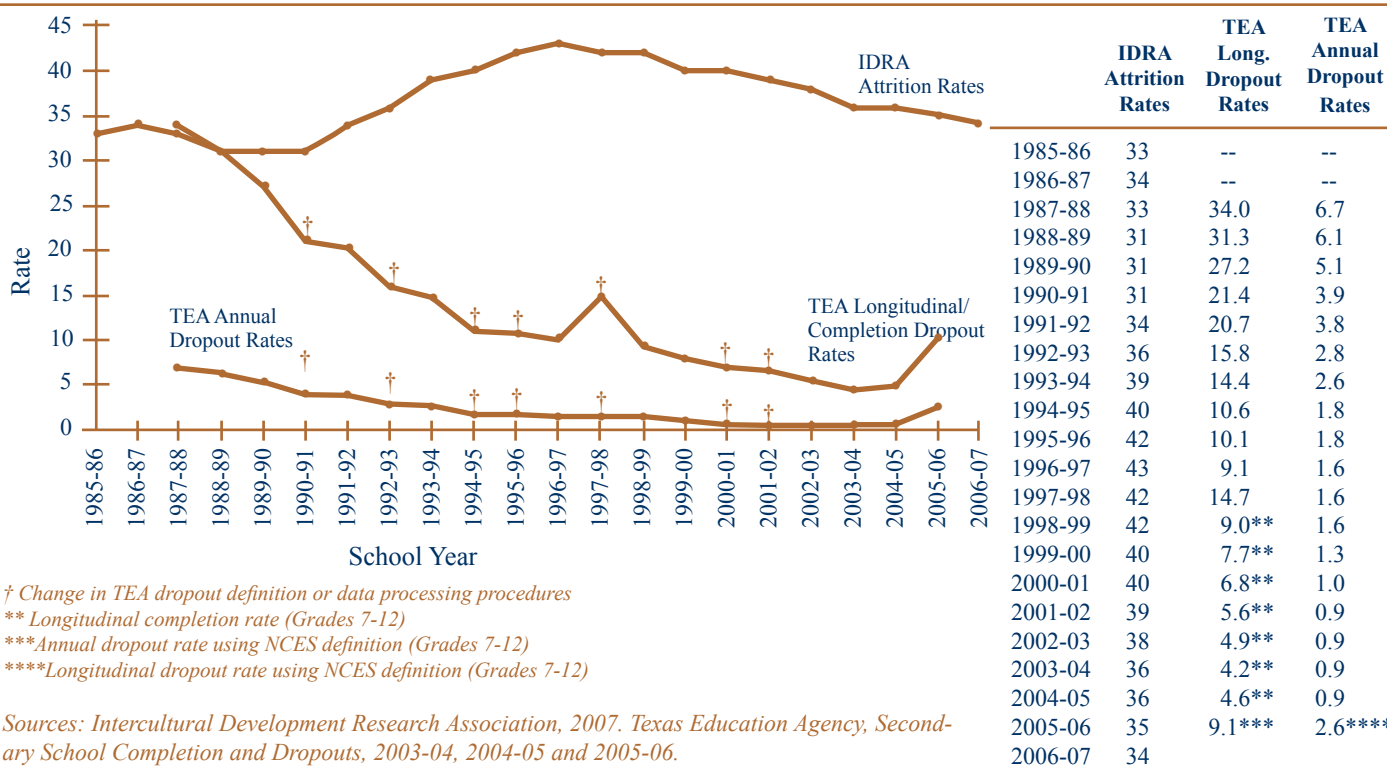
Attrition Study – continued on Page 13

Attrition Rates by Texas County, 2006-07



Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2007.

Attrition and Dropout Rates in Texas Over Time



rate of 34 percent compares to 39 percent in 2001-02, 38 percent in 2002-03, 36 percent in 2003-04 and 2004-05, and 35 percent in 2005-06, respectively. After seven consecutive years of overall statewide attrition rates of 40 percent or higher between 1994-95 and 2000-01, the overall statewide attrition rate of 34 percent in 2006-07 was the lowest since a 34 percent rate in 1991-92 and continues a downward trend over the last several years. Between 1994-95 and 2006-07, the overall attrition rate ranged from a low of 34 percent to a high of 43 percent.

The attrition rates of Hispanic students and Black students have either remained unchanged or have worsened since 1985-86. Hispanic students and Black students historically have had much higher attrition rates than White students. In 1985-86 and 2006-07, attrition rates of Hispanic students were the same (45 percent in

The attrition rates of Hispanic students and Black students have either remained unchanged or have worsened since 1985-86.

both 1985-86 and 2006-07). During this same period, the attrition rates of Black students increased by 18 percent (from 34 percent to 40 percent). Attrition rates of White students declined by 26 percent (from 27 percent to 20 percent). Hispanic students have higher attrition rates than either White students or Black students.

From 1985-86 to 2006-07, Native American students, Asian/Pacific Islander students and White students saw a decline in their attrition rates. Native American students had a decline of 20 percent in their attrition rates (from 45 percent to 36 percent), and Asian/Pacific Islander students had a decline of 58 percent (from 33 percent to 14 percent).

The gaps between the attrition

rates of White students and Black and Hispanic students are increasing. The gap between the attrition rates of White students and Black students has increased from 7 percentage points in 1985-86 to 20 percentage points in 2006-07. Similarly, during this time period, the gap between the attrition rates of White students and Hispanic students has increased from 18 percentage points in 1985-86 to 25 percentage points in 2006-07. See graph on Page 18.

The gap between the attrition rates of White students and Native American students has decreased from 18 percentage points in 1985-86 to 16 percentage points in 2006-07. Asian/Pacific Islander students exhibited the

Attrition Study – continued on Page 14

Longitudinal Attrition Rates in Texas Public High Schools, 1985-86 to 2006-07

Group	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	Percent Change* From 1985-86 to 2006-07
Race-Ethnicity																							
Native American	45	39	37	47	39	39	40	39	38	42	44	43	42	25	43	42	29	39	42	40	39	36	-20
Asian/Pacific Islander	33	30	28	23	22	23	21	21	21	18	18	20	21	19	20	20	14	17	16	17	17	14	-58
Black	34	38	39	37	38	39	39	43	47	50	51	51	49	48	47	46	46	45	44	43	40	40	18
White	27	26	24	20	19	22	22	25	28	30	31	32	31	31	28	27	26	24	22	22	21	20	-26
Hispanic	45	46	49	48	48	48	48	49	50	51	53	54	53	53	52	52	51	50	49	48	47	45	0
Gender																							
Male	35	35	35	34	34	34	37	39	41	43	45	46	45	45	44	43	43	41	40	39	38	37	6
Female	32	32	31	29	29	28	30	33	36	37	39	40	38	38	36	36	35	34	33	32	31	30	-6
Total	33	34	33	31	31	31	34	36	39	40	42	43	42	42	40	40	39	38	36	36	35	34	3

* Rounded to nearest whole number.

Figures calculated by IDRA from the Texas Education Agency Fall Membership Survey data.

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2007.

2003-04 and 2006-07 Enrollment, 2006-07 Attrition in Texas

Race-Ethnicity and Gender	2003-04 9th Grade Enrollment	2006-07 12th Grade Enrollment	2003-04 9-12th Grade Enrollment	2006-07 9-12th Grade Enrollment	2003-04 Expected 12th Grade Enrollment	Students Lost to Attrition	Attrition Rate
Native American	1,136	896	3,490	4,293	1,396	500	36
Male	606	436	1,796	2,161	729	293	40
Female	530	460	1,694	2,132	667	207	31
Asian/Pacific Islander	9,977	9,887	36,552	41,890	11,434	1,547	14
Male	5,266	5,096	18,991	21,760	6,034	938	16
Female	4,711	4,791	17,561	20,130	5,400	609	11
Black	53,934	36,033	163,741	181,818	59,878	23,845	40
Male	28,284	17,202	82,607	91,354	31,279	14,077	45
Female	25,650	18,831	81,134	90,464	28,599	9,768	34
White	145,272	113,974	512,893	502,449	142,313	28,339	20
Male	75,638	57,927	263,612	258,041	74,040	16,113	22
Female	70,026	56,047	249,281	244,408	68,273	12,226	18
Hispanic	155,538	96,860	452,053	515,448	177,305	80,445	45
Male	82,086	47,233	232,159	262,396	92,777	45,544	49
Female	73,452	49,627	219,894	253,052	84,528	34,901	41
All Groups	365,857	257,650	1,168,729	1,245,898	392,326	134,676	34
Male	191,880	127,894	599,165	635,712	204,859	76,965	37
Female	173,977	129,756	569,564	610,186	187,467	57,711	30

Figures calculated by IDRA from the Texas Education Agency *Fall Membership Survey* data. IDRA's 2006-07 attrition study involved the analysis of enrollment figures for public high school students in the ninth grade during 2003-04 school year and enrollment figures for 12th grade students in 2006-07. 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, 2007.

Attrition Study – continued from Page 13

greatest positive trend in the reduction of the gap in attrition rates compared to White students. In fact, rates for Asian/Pacific Islander students were 6 percentage points higher than those of White students but now are 6 percentage points lower than those of White students.

Historically, the attrition rates for ethnic minority group members, especially Hispanic students and Black students, have been higher than the overall attrition rates. For

the period of 1985-86 to 2006-07, students from ethnic minority groups account for more than two-thirds (69.9 percent) of the estimated 2.7 million students lost from public high school enrollment.

Hispanic students account for 51.0 percent of the students lost to attrition. Black students account for 17.4 percent of all students lost from enrollment due to attrition over the years. White students account for 30.1 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 2006-07, attrition rates for males have increased by 6 percent (from 35 percent to 37 percent). Attrition rates for females declined by 6 percent from 32 percent in 1985-86 to 30 percent in 2006-07. Longitudinally, males have accounted

Attrition Study – continued on Page 15

Numbers of Students Lost to Attrition in Texas, School Years 1985-86 to 2006-07

School Year	Total	Race-Ethnicity					Gender	
		Native American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Black	White	Hispanic	Male	Female
1985-86	86,276	185	1,523	12,268	38,717	33,583	46,603	39,673
1986-87	90,317	152	1,406	14,416	38,848	35,495	48,912	41,405
1987-88	92,213	159	1,447	15,273	34,889	40,435	50,595	41,618
1988-89	88,538	252	1,189	15,474	28,309	43,314	49,049	39,489
1989-90	86,160	196	1,214	15,423	24,510	44,817	48,665	37,495
1990-91	83,718	207	1,324	14,133	23,229	44,825	47,723	35,995
1991-92	91,424	215	1,196	15,016	27,055	47,942	51,937	39,487
1992-93	101,358	248	1,307	17,032	32,611	50,160	57,332	44,026
1993-94	113,061	245	1,472	19,735	37,377	54,232	63,557	49,504
1994-95	123,200	296	1,226	22,856	41,648	57,174	68,725	54,475
1995-96	135,438	350	1,303	25,078	45,302	63,405	75,854	59,584
1996-97	147,313	327	1,486	27,004	48,586	69,910	82,442	64,871
1997-98	150,965	352	1,730	26,938	49,135	72,810	85,585	65,380
1998-99	151,779	299	1,680	25,526	48,178	76,096	86,438	65,341
1999-00	146,714	406	1,771	25,097	44,275	75,165	83,976	62,738
2000-01	144,241	413	1,794	24,515	41,734	75,785	82,845	61,396
2001-02	143,175	237	1,244	25,017	39,953	76,724	82,762	60,413
2002-03	143,280	436	1,611	25,066	36,948	79,219	82,621	60,659
2003-04	139,413	495	1,575	24,728	33,104	79,511	80,485	58,928
2004-05	137,424	490	1,789	24,373	31,378	79,394	78,858	58,566
2005-06	137,162	512	1,876	24,366	29,903	80,505	78,298	58,864
2006-07	134,676	500	1,547	23,845	28,339	80,445	76,965	57,711
All Years	2,667,845	6,972	32,710	463,179	804,038	1,360,946	1,510,227	1,157,618

Figures calculated by IDRA from the Texas Education Agency *Fall Membership Survey* data.
Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2007.

Attrition Study – continued from Page 14

for 56.6 percent of students lost from school enrollment, while females have accounted for 43.4 percent.

Conclusions

Texas public schools are failing to graduate one out of every three students. Attrition rates as an indicator in a school holding power index show that the rate was 34 percent overall and higher than 40 percent for Black students and Hispanic students. The overall attrition rate has increased from 33 percent in 1985-86 to 34 percent in 2006-07.

Though the overall attrition rate has remained under 40 percent over

the last six years, improving school holding power in Texas schools is still an imperative as many of our schools have failed to keep students in schools through graduation with a high school diploma. The number of students lost from public school enrollment has increased from 86,276 in 1985-86 to 134,676 in 2006-07.

In her Quality School Action Framework, Dr. Maria “Cuca” Robledo Montecel, IDRA’s executive director, shows how communities and schools can work together to strengthen public schools’ capacities to improve the holding power of schools through the following six areas – fair

funding, governance efficacy, parent and community engagement, student engagement, teaching quality, and curriculum quality and access.

In her testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor earlier this year, Dr. Robledo Montecel presented three primary recommendations for achieving graduation for all students. These recommendations included: (1) at the campus level, strengthen and support school level-change through local accountability teams; (2) fund district-wide efforts that focus on elementary-to-middle and middle-to-

Attrition Study – continued on Page 18

Attrition Rates in Texas Public Schools By Race-Ethnicity, 2006-07

COUNTY NAME	ATTRITION RATES ¹				COUNTY NAME	ATTRITION RATES ¹			
	BLACK	WHITE	HISPANIC	TOTAL		BLACK	WHITE	HISPANIC	TOTAL
ANDERSON	26	19	42	24	DEWITT	33	11	45	25
ANDREWS	0	**	22	9	DICKENS	17	**	29	9
ANGELINA	25	19	41	25	DIMITT	**	45	37	37
ARANSAS	45	30	41	31	DONLEY	84	11	11	21
ARCHER	•	3	31	6	DUVAL	•	**	22	20
ARMSTRONG	•	**	55	6	EASTLAND	44	10	26	14
ATASCOSA	**	12	38	29	ECTOR	36	22	42	34
AUSTIN	17	8	46	19	EDWARDS	•	1	20	12
BAILEY	•	**	42	20	ELLIS	27	22	42	27
BANDERA	100	38	37	37	EL PASO	35	20	37	35
BASTROP	43	26	47	35	ERATH	•	18	34	23
BAYLOR	17	6	49	15	FALLS	19	**	40	15
BEE	9	1	28	20	FANNIN	31	19	29	21
BELL	48	29	42	38	FAYETTE	25	4	41	15
BEXAR	37	23	43	38	FISHER	22	1	32	14
BLANCO	50	25	28	25	FLOYD	19	13	38	29
BORDEN	•	4	33	2	FOARD	•	34	**	8
BOSQUE	3	19	28	20	FORT BEND	29	10	42	24
BOWIE	31	18	45	22	Franklin	***	***	***	***
BRAZORIA	42	28	48	36	FREESTONE	19	13	34	17
BRAZOS	38	10	38	24	FRIO	0	14	37	35
BREWSTER	33	25	25	24	GAINES	**	21	28	24
BRISCOE	•	13	12	14	GALVESTON	41	27	47	32
BROOKS	•	**	32	31	GARZA	73	**	53	34
BROWN	26	18	32	22	GILLESPIE	**	5	45	17
BURLESON	23	18	35	22	GLASSCOCK	•	12	19	13
BURNET	65	19	42	26	GOLIAD	69	16	52	33
CALDWELL	35	19	39	31	GONZALES	28	8	41	28
CALHOUN	**	30	46	37	GRAY	47	23	50	31
CALLAHAN	0	12	16	13	GRAYSON	38	23	45	26
CAMERON	65	28	51	50	GREGG	50	11	58	29
CAMP	22	41	53	40	GRIMES	34	24	19	25
CARSON	•	10	22	12	GUADALUPE	28	20	45	31
CASS	5	17	15	14	HALE	10	13	29	23
CASTRO	**	16	11	11	HALL	0	35	27	28
CHAMBERS	38	20	39	23	HAMILTON	•	12	29	15
CHEROKEE	40	31	59	40	HANSFORD	•	10	27	19
CHILDRESS	58	19	29	21	HARDEMAN	**	12	51	16
CLAY	**	17	**	15	HARDIN	26	17	28	18
COCHRAN	42	16	20	21	HARRIS	45	19	51	39
COKE	94	33	86	66	HARRISON	18	21	43	22
COLEMAN	35	24	35	27	HARTLEY	•	8	47	14
COLLIN	40	21	41	26	HASKELL	**	**	18	4
COLLINGSWORTH	11	21	38	25	HAYS	27	16	34	25
COLORADO	20	11	43	23	HEMPHILL	**	13	49	34
COMAL	50	20	35	25	HENDERSON	28	25	38	28
COMANCHE	•	15	41	25	HIDALGO	8	21	47	46
CONCHO	•	**	17	2	HILL	**	17	36	19
COOKE	1	18	35	19	HOCKLEY	**	2	30	18
CORYELL	31	26	41	29	HOOD	**	27	38	27
COTTLE	**	**	**	**	HOPKINS	35	17	35	23
CRANE	•	**	15	6	HOUSTON	36	16	46	27
CROCKETT	•	**	15	1	HOWARD	41	17	43	30
CROSBY	20	**	16	7	HUDSPETH	•	**	10	1
CULBERSON	•	**	29	22	HUNT	36	19	45	25
DALLAM	100	10	45	25	HUTCHINSON	37	7	29	14
DALLAS	42	10	54	39	IRION	100	35	34	34
DAWSON	7	7	20	14	JACK	•	13	46	17
DEAF SMITH	11	9	27	22	JACKSON	23	8	31	16
DELTA	10	12	39	12	JASPER	36	23	66	28
DENTON	48	30	60	38	JEFF DAVIS	100	10	44	15

¹Calculated 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 attrition rate results (percentages) were rounded to the nearest whole number.

** = Attrition rate is less than zero (0).

*** = No high school.

• = The necessary data are unavailable to calculate the attrition rate.

Attrition Rates in Texas Public Schools

By Race-Ethnicity, 2006-07 (continued)

COUNTY NAME

ATTRITION RATES

BLACK	WHITE	HISPANIC	TOTAL
↓	↓	↓	↓
38	21	40	32
•	**	14	12
69	24	37	35
46	26	48	31
**	10	11	8
**	**	17	9
39	35	53	39
38	22	24	23
***	***	***	***
0	15	33	17
70	25	58	40
•	0	14	4
•	**	57	14
17	13	34	27
44	18	43	38
18	**	16	8
40	24	52	28
45	**	31	20
46	31	35	32
•	**	40	34
22	2	29	7
28	14	25	19
**	19	34	18
23	32	46	33
21	17	30	20
•	**	26	3
•	19	35	26
•	34	57	37
***	***	***	***
22	9	33	21
**	4	19	13
37	22	34	27
**	25	36	14
**	2	12	6
•	**	**	**
31	11	44	29
100	47	40	41
52	10	4	11
38	16	47	29
•	**	**	**
25	11	38	26
0	**	19	**
35	1	44	24
20	16	34	22
100	7	31	17
**	12	26	18
**	7	30	11
43	28	51	34
•	8	35	27
29	30	55	32
0	11	**	1
36	18	53	30
43	24	56	36
33	35	58	35
67	27	37	36
21	15	35	29
100	2	47	27
35	22	26	22
44	25	36	27
30	28	51	32
15	16	8	16
54	24	36	26
•	**	17	8
84	16	37	35
7	26	35	25
45	19	48	32
•	**	27	26

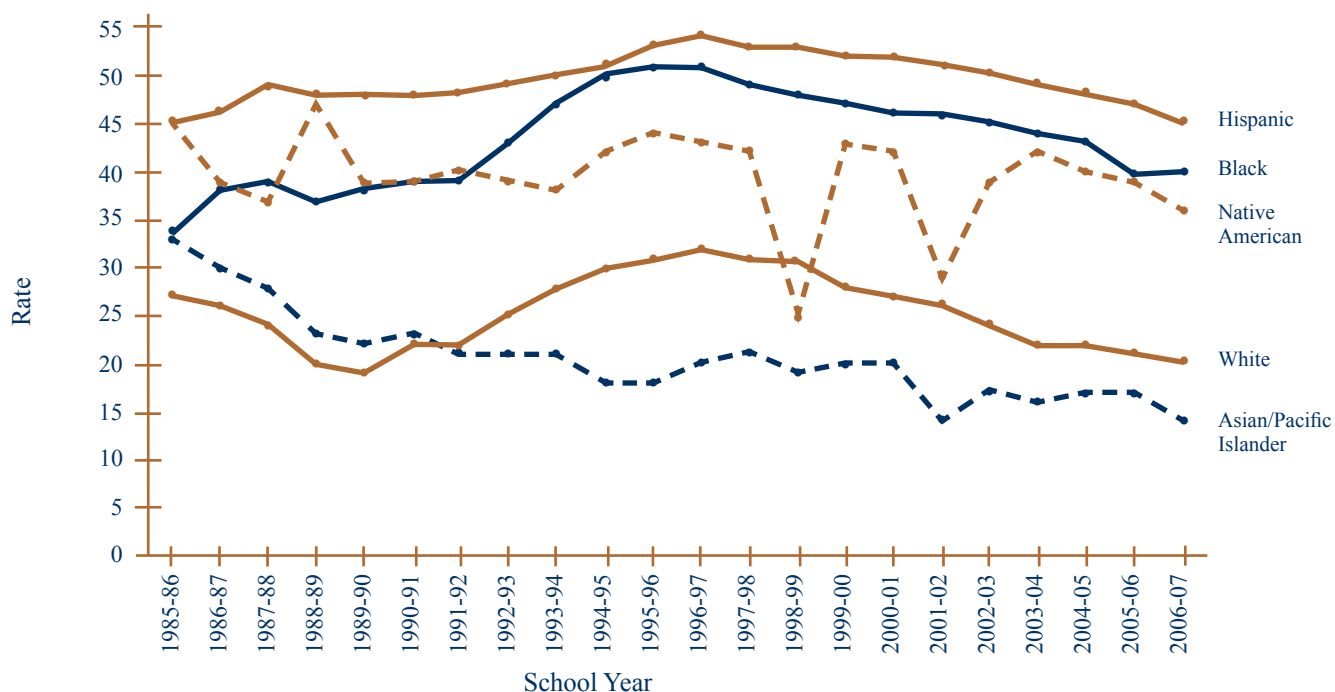
COUNTY NAME

ATTRITION RATES

BLACK	WHITE	HISPANIC	TOTAL
↓	↓	↓	↓
100	24	51	28
55	18	28	20
**	**	14	0
•	44	**	27
19	14	48	19
**	6	16	14
14	13	29	21
•	6	100	19
31	18	35	26
31	23	30	25
80	1	33	19
19	30	51	31
7	21	22	19
6	2	75	8
37	44	38	42
39	27	40	35
**	17	**	11
•	**	25	15
40	6	29	18
100	31	6	28
36	28	47	33
**	1	42	22
34	23	51	32
•	6	34	12
•	**	44	44
50	22	51	30
•	**	14	2
•	**	**	**
•	**	21	13
**	1	12	6
42	22	51	35
48	21	57	33
•	11	7	11
10	**	8	3
•	**	100	2
31	15	47	32
13	6	31	18
43	14	52	36
20	22	43	24
26	23	6	23
20	25	22	24
100	10	**	3
100	2	34	28
33	32	39	38
18	27	49	29
31	14	45	33
23	21	44	25
32	26	39	32
46	17	24	23
38	**	66	19
56	16	39	39
22	**	33	16
**	7	58	22
40	20	42	27
21	27	44	33
•	**	34	31
39	20	44	28
51	11	36	23
**	21	31	25
46	20	41	24
0	18	42	20
**	5	20	14
24	13	15	13
•	**	20	19
100	30	38	38
40	21	47	35

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2007.

Longitudinal Attrition Rates by Race-Ethnicity in Texas Public Schools, 1985-86 to 2006-07



Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2007.

Attrition Study – continued from Page 15

high school transition points; and (3) fund the proposed *Graduation for All Act* and comprehensive efforts that will address the issue of graduation for all students.

Through its collaboration with schools and communities in Texas and other parts of the country, IDRA is working on a number of efforts to improve school holding power. One of these efforts, “Graduation Guaranteed/Graduación Garantizada,” is emphasizing the accountability of the school in keeping students in school until they graduate with a high school diploma. This initiative includes a school holding portal that contains dropout data that neighborhoods at the local level can use to know what is going on and take action around the issue.

Another of IDRA’s efforts to improve school holding power is the dissemination of the *Graduation For*

All e-newsletter, which provides up-to-date information on dropouts and actions to improve school holding power.

School holding power is an important indicator of a school’s success and the quality of its educational services to students. Improving school holding power in our public schools is not only a Texas issue but also a national imperative since one in three of our nation’s students leave our schools prior to graduating with a diploma. Working together, all stakeholders (school personnel, parents, students, educators, policymakers, researchers, etc.) can make a difference in strengthening school holding power.

Over the next year, IDRA will release a series of additional research reports and briefs on the magnitude and economic and social costs of dropouts. Additionally, IDRA will continue its work with schools and

communities to improve their school holding power.

Resources

Johnson, R.L. “Little Improvement in Texas School Holding Power: Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2004-05,” *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 2005).

Johnson, R.L. “Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2005-06: Gap Continues to Grow,” *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 2006).

Robledo Montecel, M. “A Quality Schools Action Framework: Framing Systems Change for Student Success,” *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, November-December 2005).

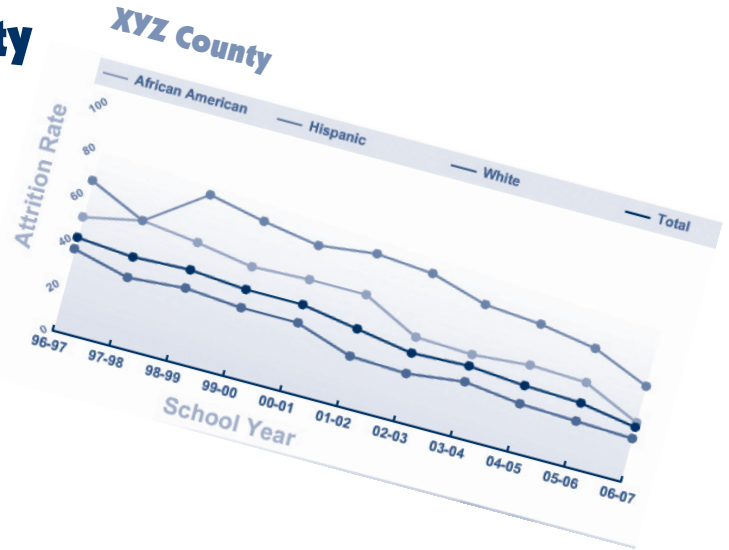
Roy L. Johnson, M.S., is director of IDRA Support Services. Comments and questions may be directed to him via e-mail at comment@idra.org.

Look Up Your Texas County

IDRA is providing dropout trend data at your fingertips.

Go to the IDRA web site to see a graph of high school attrition in your county over the last 10 years. You'll also see the numbers of students by race-ethnicity who have been lost from enrollment in your county.

<http://www.idra.org/Research/Attrition/>



Highlights of Recent IDRA Activities

In August, IDRA worked with **4,422** teachers, administrators, parents and higher education personnel through **19** training and technical assistance activities and **79** program sites in **11** states plus Brazil. Some topics included:

- ◆ ESL Strategies and Rigor
- ◆ Graduation: A Call to Action
- ◆ Learning About Schools Online
- ◆ Making Math and Science Relevant, Relational, and Rewarding for All Students
- ◆ Writing Across the Curriculum

Some participating agencies and school districts included:

- ✧ Charlotte Independent School District, Texas
- ✧ Georgia State Department of Education, Georgia
- ✧ Jefferson Parish, Louisiana
- ✧ Laredo Community College, Texas

Activity Snapshot

Under the direction of the federal court to desegregate schools and programs within them, three school districts in Arkansas sought to create an equity-monitoring form. The court also mandated the formation of bi-racial teams in the three districts to include four parents and two teachers from each of the campuses. The IDRA South Central Collaborative for Equity worked with the school districts to create the monitoring form to measure the quality of desegregation on every campus. It trained the teams to use the instrument, to conduct equity monitoring and to create an appropriate report of findings. The state department of education adopted the equity monitoring form and process, which were implemented by all districts to monitor the assignment and placement of students in classes, programs and extracurricular activities. The SCCE is the equity assistance center that serves Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and 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.

There are several ways you can receive news from IDRA. Complete the form below or online at www.idra.org. Send this form to IDRA by **fax** (210-444-1714) or **mail** (5835 Callaghan Road, Suite 350, San Antonio, Texas 78228).

Intercultural Development Research Association

Classnotes Podcast



Twice monthly, award-winning podcast for people who care about excellent and equitable education for all children.

(English, occasional Spanish)

Sign up to receive free e-mail notices when a new episode is available. IDRA Classnotes is a twice monthly, award-winning podcast for people who care about excellent and equitable education for all children. It is particularly designed for public school teachers and administrators.

This podcast series explores issues facing education today and strategies for teachers and administrators to better serve every student.

☐ **Yes. All we need is your e-mail address below.**



(English or Spanish)

Graduation for All is a new bilingual (Spanish/English) IDRA e-letter for people who are concerned about the dropout issue and want to take action.

Each month, Graduation for All will bring you up-to-date information that you can use in your school or community to strengthen school holding power – a school’s capacity to hold onto all students until they graduate. This solution-oriented e-letter is designed to help people poised to make a difference around the country to get informed, get connected and get results that turn the tide on high school attrition.

☐ **Yes. All we need is your e-mail address below.**

Please select: ☐ English version ☐ Spanish version

☐ I am a parent of a school-age child in Texas

The *IDRA Newsletter* is published 10 times a year. Each edition focuses on issues in education, striving to provide many different perspectives on the topics covered and to define its significance in the state and national dialogue.

Name: _____

Title: _____

District/Agency:

Mailing Address to Receive Newsletter: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____



Go online to www.idra.org to select which RSS feed(s) you would like to receive.

[IDRA Main News \(English\)](#)

RSS

IDRA Classnotes Podcast (English, occasional Spanish)

RSS

IDRA Media News (English)

RSS

schools ranged from a low of 59.6 percent in the District of Columbia to a high of 87.0 percent in New Jersey. Fifteen states and the District of Columbia had rates lower than the overall average of 72.6 percent: Alabama, Alaska, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, South Carolina and Tennessee. Fourteen states had rates 80.0 percent or higher: Connecticut, Idaho, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Virginia and Wisconsin. In 2002-03, Texas ranked 29th (tied with Indiana) among the 50 states and the District of Columbia with a rate of 75.5 percent.

- For the class of 2003-04, the averaged freshman graduation rate of public schools ranged from a low of 57.4 percent in Nevada to a high of 87.6 percent in Nebraska. Twenty states and the District of Columbia had rates lower than the overall average of 75.0 percent: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, California, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, South Carolina

and Tennessee. Fifteen states had rates 80.0 percent or higher: Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Utah and Vermont. In 2003-04, Texas ranked 26th among the 48 states and the District of Columbia with a rate of 76.7 percent.

- For the class of 2004-05, the averaged freshman graduation rate of public schools ranged from a low of 55.8 percent in Nevada to a high of 87.8 percent in Nebraska. Nineteen states and the District of Columbia had rates lower than the overall average of 74.7 percent: Alabama, Alaska, California, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas. Seventeen states had rates 80.0 percent or higher: Arizona, Connecticut, Idaho, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont and Wisconsin. In 2004-05, Texas ranked 35th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia with a rate of 74.0 percent.
- From 2001-02 to 2004-05, 45 of the 51 reporting states or jurisdictions

had an increase in their averaged freshman graduation rates, and six experienced declines in rates.

The addition of the averaged freshman graduation rate has expanded the number of indicators of school holding power. Along with traditional indicators of high school dropouts, completers and graduates – event dropout rates, status dropout rates, status school completion rates, attrition rates – the averaged freshman graduation rate provides unique information about the ability of public schools to hold on to students and provide them a quality education leading to a high school diploma and subsequent enrollment into postsecondary education.

Resources

National Center for Education Statistics. *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2002 and 2003* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, June 2006).

National Center for Education Statistics. *The Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate for Public High Schools From the Common Core of Data: School Years 2002-03 and 2003-04* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, July 2006).

National Center for Education Statistics. *Public Elementary and Secondary School Student Enrollment, High School Completions, and Staff From the Common Core of Data: School Year 2005-06* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, June 2006) NCES 2007-352.

Roy L. Johnson, M.S., is director of IDRA Support Services. Comments and questions may be directed to him via e-mail at comment@idra.org.

the NJHS. I could never dream that I would be in the NJHS. My parents are really proud of me. They are really glad that I'm not doing anything stupid. I am helping little kids with their work, and they give me more respect. This is what the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program means to me.

– middle school tutor

Roy L. Johnson, M.S., is director of IDRA Support Services. Linda Cantú, Ph.D., is an education associate in IDRA Field Services. Comments and questions may be directed to them via e-mail at comment@idra.org.

read was the best thing that could happen to me."

What the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program means to me. At first, I thought it was going to be easy and I thought I was going to get paid for doing nothing. Once I started, it was not easy working with the kids and helping them because they really did need my help. I could not blow them off, and I didn't. This was my job, and I was going to do it the right way, the way my teacher coordinator taught me to do it.

Helping the kids learn to read was the best thing that could happen to me. I felt warm in my heart when they would go home and tell their parents that I helped them with their work or that they learned a new word. This program means a lot to me because I'm making a difference in the tutee's school life. The other reason the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program means so much to me is because I really didn't have a lot of good grades. I had mostly Cs, and now thanks to my teacher coordinator, I now have been on the honor roll and I am in

High School Allotment

Last year, the Texas Legislature adopted a measure to fund an initiative to help prepare and graduate all Texas students from high school. Your high school allotment funds can be used for:

- ❖ College readiness programs to prepare underachieving students for college.
- ❖ Programs that encourage students toward advanced academic coursework.
- ❖ Programs that give students opportunities to take academically rigorous coursework, including four years of mathematics and science.
- ❖ Programs that align the curriculum for grades six through 12 with post-secondary curriculum.
- ❖ High school completion and success initiatives in grades six through 12 approved by the commissioner.

How IDRA can help you

- ❖ Identify and implement dropout prevention and college readiness models with proven success.
- ❖ Build capacity to increase academic rigor and raise student achievement in mathematics and science.
- ❖ Provide tailored professional development that goes beyond “one-shot” workshops to build capability, particularly in the areas of mathematics, science and for English language learners.
- ❖ Evaluate new practices and results for accountability and continuous improvement.

IDRA three-day “Graduation Guaranteed” planning process

IDRA’s Graduation Guaranteed plan is designed to create educational opportunities for English language learners and other underserved students and to better prepare students to succeed in college and the world of work. It includes:

- ❖ **Analyzing** data to inform the planning process.
- ❖ **Conducting** a needs assessment around a set of general educational risk factors that are highly predictive of dropping out.
- ❖ **Studying** education-related factors that contribute to increased graduation rates and readiness for college.
- ❖ **Building** a shared understanding of all stakeholders as to the rationale for introducing changes.
- ❖ **Identifying** the impact that your school proposes to see

after one, two and three years; start with the end in mind.

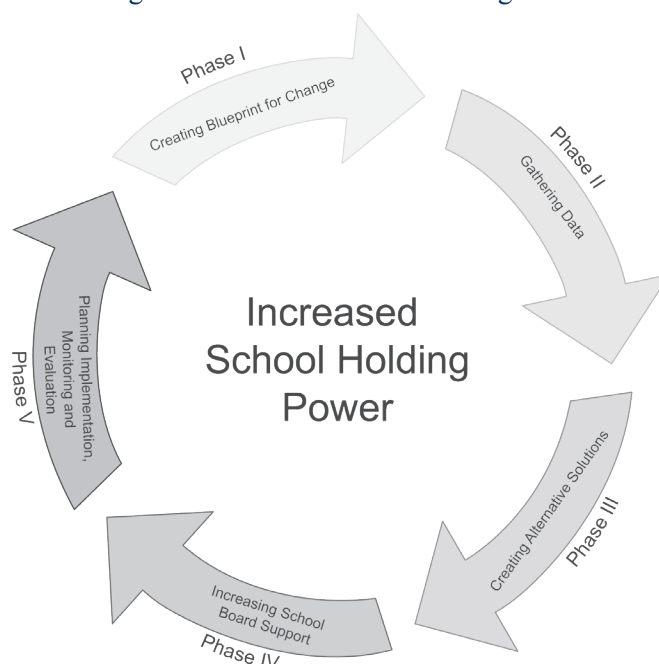
- ❖ **Constructing** a logic model that explains the inputs, activities, benchmarks and expected results. This logic model is essential to communicate, develop ownership and be instrumental in creating an evaluation and accountability system.
- ❖ **Exploring** the world of research-based school practices that address specific student populations and selecting and adjusting those practices to your context and needs.
- ❖ **Selecting** and phasing in practices that support major objectives of the plan.



Technical assistance possibilities

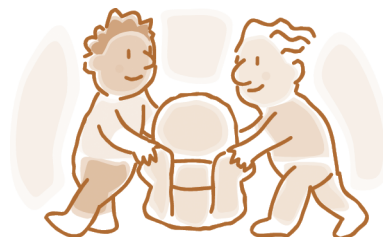
Support your dropout prevention and school holding power planning efforts with an IDRA action plan for the next three years that can include:

- ❖ Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program
- ❖ Building an Early Warning System to Revisit and Improve School Practices
- ❖ Increasing Students’ Readiness for College



High School Allotment – continued on Page 23

IDRA is moving!



Please note our new address:

**5815 Callaghan Road, Suite 101
San Antonio, Texas 78228**

**Our phone, e-mails and web site addresses
will remain the same:**

210-444-1710 • contact@idra.org • www.idra.org

Effective December 1, 2007

High School Allotment – continued from Page 22

- ❖ Partnering with Your Community and Parents
- ❖ Creating a Committed and Supportive School Culture
- ❖ Math Smart!
- ❖ Science Smart!
- ❖ Engagement-Based Sheltered Instruction
- ❖ Evaluation

Who will benefit?

These training packages are designed to help school administrators and teachers improve student success and create educational opportunities for English language learners and other underserved students and to better prepare students to succeed in college and the world of work.

The Texas Education Agency has indicated that it will require separate accounting in the same manner as other allotments. TEA rules for implementation are pending, and the agency has stated: “Districts should closely adhere to the language

in Section 39.114. Districts/campuses may fund **effective** high school completion and college readiness programs that have been **successful**.”

Why is IDRA unique?

The Intercultural Development Research Association is an independent, private non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening public schools to work for all children.

We are committed to the IDRA valuing philosophy, respecting the knowledge and skills of the individuals we work with and build on the strengths of the students and parents in their schools.

IDRA's professional staff members...

- ❖ Are fluent and literate in English and Spanish.
- ❖ Have many years of classroom, administrative, research and community engagement experience.
- ❖ Have graduate degrees – master’s and doctorates – from respected universities.

Free!



IDRA has launched a new podcast series designed to be a tool for public school teachers and administrators as well as to provide insights into key issues in education in the United States.

Online Now



Episode 20: “Science in Early Childhood Bilingual Classrooms” IDRA Classnotes Podcast – Dr. Rosalinda Barrera, dean of the College of Education at Texas State University in San Marcos, draws a vivid picture of the need for schools to actively integrate science instruction into the earliest grades for second language learners.



Episode 19 : “Fostering Student Engagement English Language Learners” IDRA Classnotes Podcast – Kristin Grayson, M.Ed., an IDRA education associate outlines the engagement-based sheltered instruction model that she developed at IDRA that is helping teachers learn, reflect and adapt instructional strategies so that all their students are engaged and learning the content and academic language.



Episode 18 : “U.S. Supreme Court Decision on Race” IDRA Classnotes Podcast – Bradley Scott, Ph.D., director of the IDRA South Central Collaborative for Equity, clarifies the recent court ruling that applies only to voluntary desegregation plans and that race can sometimes be used to achieve diversity for the benefit of children’s effective education.

Episode 17: “A Conversation about Single Sex Education” IDRA Classnotes Podcast – Kathy Rigsby, assistant director of the Interwest Equity Assistance Center in Denver, takes a moment during a conference of the Association for Gender Equity Leadership in Education to discuss this issue that has sparked so much dialogue around the country.

www.idra.org/podcasts

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through research • materials development • training • technical assistance • evaluation • information dissemination*