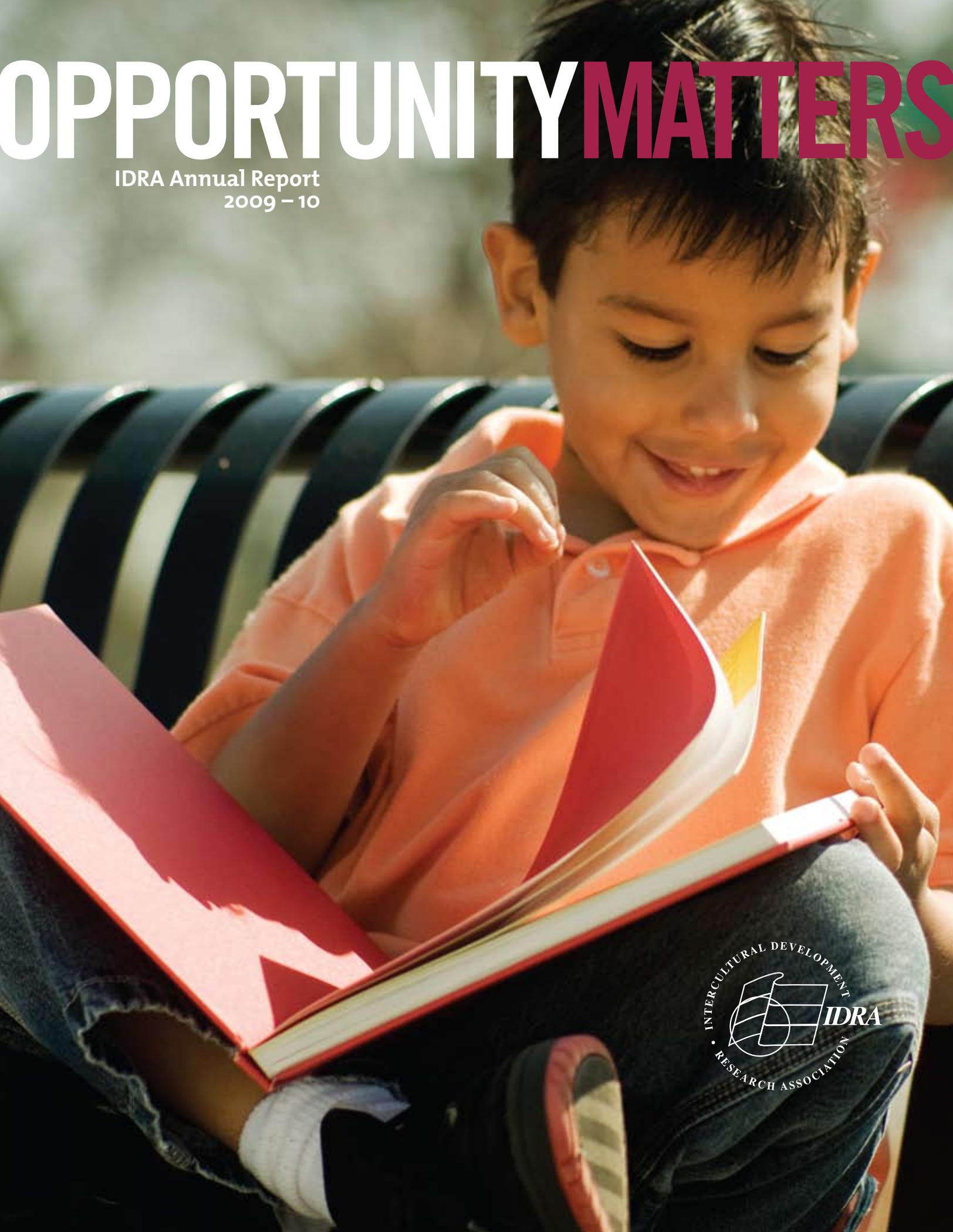


OPPORTUNITY MATTERS

IDRA Annual Report
2009 – 10





Letter from the President: **OPPORTUNITYMATTERS**

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Much has happened in Texas and in the nation since IDRA was founded back in 1973 by Dr. José Angel Cárdenas and a small group of concerned citizens.

As a nation, we have grown more diverse. Our economy has become more globalized. And a college education has come to matter for our children, now more than ever before.

But many are still denied the possibility of an excellent education. A child’s zip code or where he or she happens to be born still has too much impact on whether that child will graduate from high school and attend college.

We can no longer bear—if we ever could—the slow pace of educational change.

In 2010, thanks to the commitment of partners and funders, we worked intensively to speed the rate of change. To provide a more visible roadmap, we incorporated IDRA’s Quality Schools Action Framework throughout this work. Distilling research, best practices and field experience, this framework is a comprehensive action model that illustrates how schools, families and community leaders, working together, can achieve educational excellence and equity.

Using our model, we worked to foster cross-sector leadership in eleven states to build school—and community—capacity and coalitions for change; and across the country, to help people put actionable knowledge to work in improving schools. We promoted meaningful family engagement in our work with thousands of educators and parent liaisons; and collaborated with grassroots partners in South Texas to establish the country’s first PTA Comunitario. Partnering with schools and universities to improve teaching quality, we helped to recruit and prepare hundreds of new bilingual teachers. Focusing on the quality of curriculum and instruction, our partnerships with school districts improved outcomes in mathematics and science. And in the United States and Brazil we helped schools strengthen holding power by engaging youth leadership. The 2009–10 Annual Report highlights examples of our work and results.

From reducing dropout rates to improving teaching and learning in STEM subjects, the results clearly show why opportunity matters. They also point to the direction we must continue to head. IDRA’s strategic plan has three goals: (1) Make the case for quality schools for all; (2) Nurture sustainable connections that produce results for children; and (3) Support courageous leadership that catalyzes action and change.

With an emphasis on leadership and collaboration, the strategies speak to things that have not changed since IDRA’s founding: that securing equal educational opportunity is a social, economic and moral imperative and that even small groups of people can make a dramatic difference.

We are grateful to all who share a commitment to creating excellent schools for all children. We are honored to work with so many dedicated people. We are humbled but undaunted by the enormity of the task.

You can count on us to continue to be steadfast in this work.

Dr. María “Cuca” Robledo Montecel, IDRA President and CEO
San Antonio, Texas

A Framework for Action

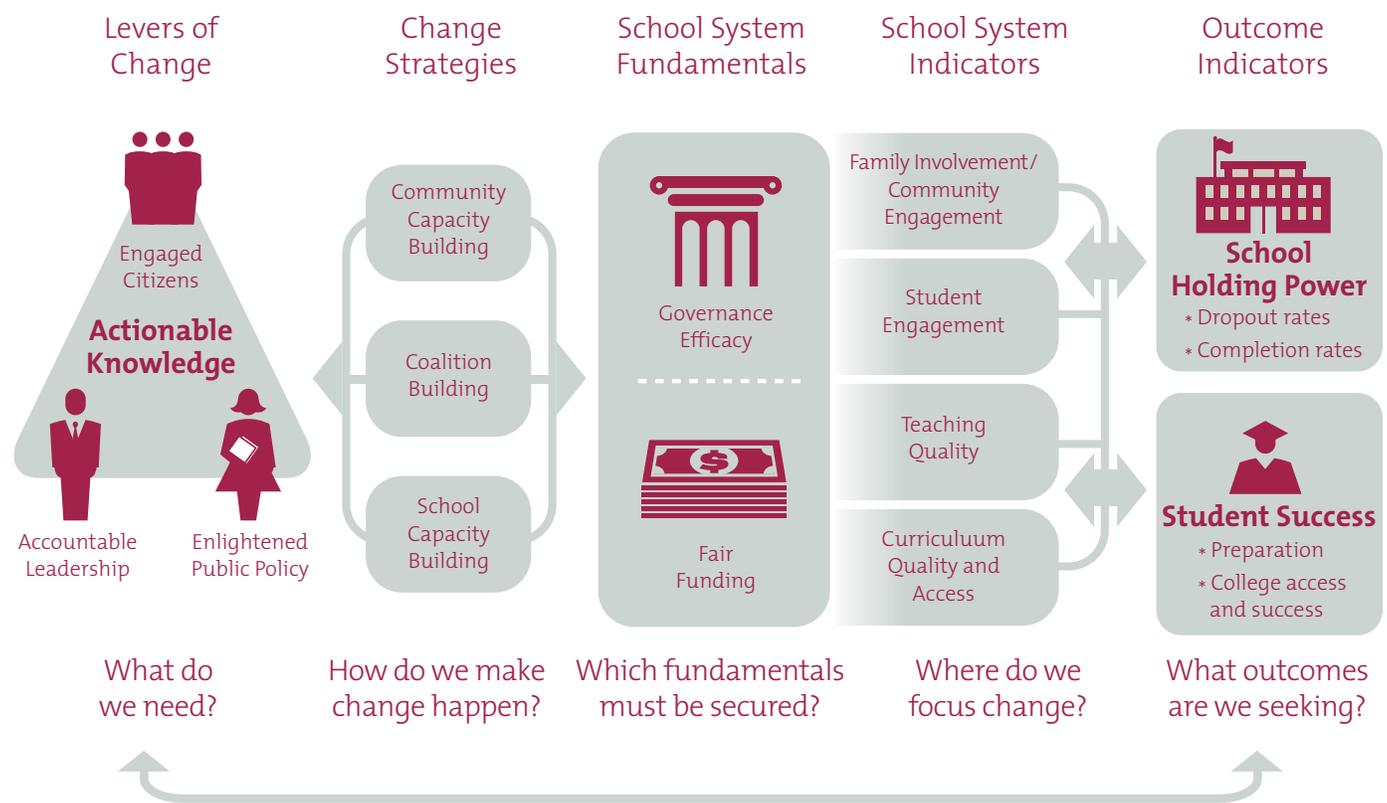
“We have a choice. Equal educational opportunity can remain a well-intended but unfulfilled promise or move to becoming the engine of shared prosperity for generations of Americans. Much depends on the clarity and the urgency with which we approach the challenge.”¹

Dr. María “Cuca” Robledo Montecel, IDRA President and CEO,
Courage to Connect: A Quality Schools Action Framework, 2010

IDRA is dedicated to creating schools that value and work for all children. With this commitment, we have partnered with hundreds of thousands of people for over three decades to identify, craft and test out strategies for transforming education. The best approaches we have found are both visionary and concrete. They are as much a calling of the heart to action as a practical roadmap for change. They value people’s strengths, create a shared vision, and build joint leadership—among educators, family and community leaders, and policymakers.

IDRA’s Quality Schools Action Framework, depicted here and woven throughout our 2009–10 Annual Report, distills this perspective, education research and field experience.

Quality Schools Action Framework™



“The Quality Schools Action Framework speaks to the need and possibility of engaging citizens, leaders and policymakers around high quality data that call all of us as members of the community to act, to establish common ground, to strengthen education, and finally and most importantly and fundamentally, to align our values with our investments in the school system: fundamentals and features that we know are needed—from teaching quality, to engaged students, engaged parents and families, and a high quality, authentic curriculum so that students in every neighborhood and of every background can in fact have equal educational opportunities.”²

Creating **New Knowledge** to Inform Policy and Practice



Putting good data into the hands of decision-makers is strengthening educational policy and practice.

IDRA produces independent research, evaluation and analyses that equip educators, policymakers and the public with the information they need to improve education. Recent reports and policy briefs include the following.

The 2010 Texas Public School Attrition Study – In 1986, IDRA conducted the first comprehensive study of dropouts in the state of Texas. Our attrition studies, conducted every year since, have kept the issue on the front burner. This year's report informed more than 650,000 people that three in ten students are lost before graduation.

Education of English Language Learners in U.S. and Texas Schools—A 2009 Update shows that huge achievement gaps require changes in policy, teacher training, and evaluation, and it provides solutions.

Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs in Texas—A 2009 Update tracks the disturbing pattern of expansion in DAEP referrals, showing that in the last decade, more than three quarters of a million students have been sent to DAEPs. But only one out of five students are there for serious offenses.

The Status of School Finance Equity in Texas—A 2009 Update found that disparities in per student funding have doubled in Texas, depriving millions of children of critical resources.

Networks and Knowledge for Action Online

IDRA works to transform policy and practice with a broad network of partners. In addition to collaboration with educators and policymakers, in the past year, we partnered with MALDEF, LULAC, the Equity Center, TACHE and the NAACP.

Community, school and family partners are using IDRA's bilingual **OurSchool portal** (www.idra.org/OurSchool) to examine campus, district and state data. Structured around the Quality Schools Action Framework, the portal was used in city and regional gatherings in San Antonio, El Paso and the lower Rio Grande Valley during the past year.

Timely, reliable and full of stories of innovation, the **IDRA Newsletter** ensures that its more than 5,000 readers have the tools they need to create schools that work for all children. **IDRA Newsletter Plus** is a free web-based supplement to the IDRA Newsletter where readers can view videos, hear podcasts and get resources related to newsletter articles. Through e-mail, **IDRA e-News** provides updates, alerts, resources and education news that can be used to help create schools that work for all children.

IDRA's **Graduation for All** e-letter (English/Spanish) provides research and models of effective partnership to a 2000+ subscriber base, with some issues reaching tens of thousands.

IDRA's **Classnotes Podcast** series gives teachers and administrators practical information and in-depth perspectives on transforming education. Adding to a range of awards, Classnotes received a 2010 Communicator Award for creative excellence.

Recent Classnotes Podcasts:

- Three-part series on **School Change**: Episodes 42, 52 and 53
- **Counting Dropouts**: Episode 62
- **Tool for Building Quality Schools**: Episode 81

“Thank you for your report on Texas high school dropout rates. The numbers you cite dating back to 1986 are staggering. Although the number of students lost has been dropping since 2002, there is no reason that Texas shouldn't strive to cut that number by half in the next biennium. The enclosures that you submitted will be most useful to me as the 82nd Legislative Session approaches. Children of all backgrounds need the chance to succeed in life, and a quality education is that essential springboard.”

Texas State Representative Doug Miller

Levers of Change





Supporting Advocacy Organizations Along the U.S.-Mexico Border

Community members, parents and students in South Texas look up data about their schools in IDRA's OurSchool data portal.

As a grassroots network for families grows in strength and impact, together we are proving how partnerships built on trust make a difference.

With a grant from the Marguerite Casey Foundation, IDRA is helping to strengthen the capacity of MCF grantees in South Texas, west Texas and New Mexico. Aligned with the foundation's dedication to "creating a movement of working families advocating on their own behalf for change,"³ our work is helping grantee organizations articulate their transformational models, monitor progress and measure outcomes, support community leaders to be effective education advocates, and communicate with each other using an interactive online network.

Each grantee, whether working in health, housing, community development, legal services, education or civil rights, is a highly-respected anchor organization in its community. We have worked with individual grantees to develop data collection methods that capture the perspectives and concerns of low-income families, to document and communicate stories of impact, and to provide training and strategic planning sessions for board members and staff.

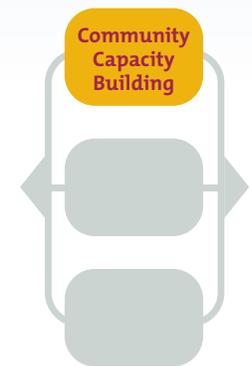
"I attribute the success of IDRA's capacity building work to a couple of fundamental differences between IDRA and other more traditional technical assistance providing firms...IDRA invests time getting to know the organization and learn what its goals are...it builds a trusting relationship that is a cornerstone to IDRA's success and establishes an authentic partnership... As a trusted partner, IDRA is very successful because it teaches organizations how to build capacity for themselves..."

Peter Bloch Garcia, Program Officer, Marguerite Casey Foundation

IDRA also has provided technical assistance and guidance to the Equal Voice Rio Grande Valley (EV-RGV) network—grantee organizations that have coalesced around the MCF Equal Voice Campaign. We have worked closely with this emerging network to synthesize findings from five town hall meetings; to develop family leadership curricula; and to provide technology-based tools for strategic planning, coordination, policy analysis and progress monitoring.

Five working groups are using their movement-building capacity to tackle housing, economic, health, immigration and education issues in the Texas Rio Grande Valley, with IDRA's strategic planning assistance. In collaboration with the EV-RGV education working group, we are helping to empower family leaders to address the dropout rates in Valley schools and expand college participation.

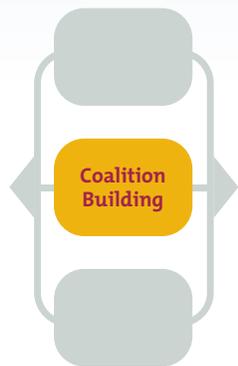
Change Strategies



Catalyzing Cross-Race Leadership for Equal Educational Opportunity in the South and Southwest



Change Strategies



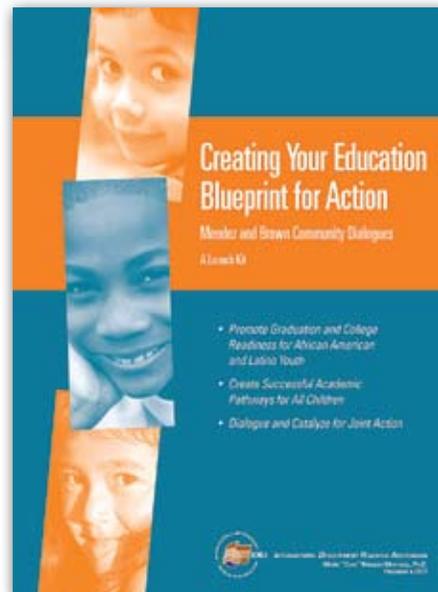
Through IDRA's Fulfilling the Promise Initiative, African American and Latino leaders come together and set a course to fulfill the promises of landmark civil rights cases.

The American south and southwest are in a state of change. The south is the first region to have both a majority of low-income students and students of color.⁴ Both regions are seeing a dramatic rise in numbers of English language learners. In the face of change, some have sought to pit groups against one another: Black vs. Brown, resident vs. immigrant. IDRA's Fulfilling the Promise Initiative takes a different course.

Fulfilling the Promise recognizes the strengths of each community and nurtures relationships across race and sector to strengthen public education. In Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas, IDRA is bringing together African American and Latino leaders to make the case for quality schools for *all* children to promote pathways to graduation and college. Through community dialogue and action planning, community members and educators are learning more about two landmark civil rights cases, *Mendez vs. Westminster* and *Brown vs. Board of Education*, and are making plans to fulfill the promise of education for all children.

The initiative honors youth as partners in the blueprint planning process. In six communities, students have shared their perspective on what is working and what still must change through presentations and documentary photography.

With funding from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, in 2010, IDRA coordinated with key local, state and federal contacts, including the Southern Minority Leadership Council, the equity assistance centers for Regions 4 and 6, New Orleans Recovery School District, the U.S. Domestic Policy Council, the U.S. Department of Justice, and the Mountain Plains Training and Technical Assistance Advisory Collaborative. We also have released the community launch kit *Creating Your Education Blueprint for Action* and an online network to help communities prepare for and host local action dialogues that maximize the momentum.



“Today, I walk the same halls walked by the Little Rock Nine. Oddly enough, after almost 50 years of struggle... my school has yet to integrate.”

Brandon Love, Central High School student, “A Tale of Two Centrals,”⁵ written as part of one of the first dialogue meetings in Arkansas



Building School Capacity to Engage Parents

A comprehensive, multicultural initiative is becoming a model for creating home-school partnerships that increase academic success.

Although public schools belong to the communities they serve, campuses are sometimes cut off from the very neighborhoods and community capital that surround them. IDRA is working intensively with schools to help them strengthen these connections in ways that matter for children.

Through Family Leaders Engaged in Children's Academic Success (FLEChAS), funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, IDRA has had the opportunity to partner with eight South San Antonio school district campuses, bringing together educators, families and community-based organizations to improve students' academic success. Through professional development and school-community collaboration that complements the district's implementation of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program and other academic supports, the project helped raise student test scores in mathematics and reading across the campuses and improve student self-efficacy.

"The experience I had with the FLEChAS program was inspiring and enlightening. The training gave me the confidence to motivate and persuade teachers and staff on our campus to work in a positive manner towards re-igniting a valuable source of assistance for us, our parents and community. Together we will work for the children."

*Gloria Word, Hutchins Elementary teacher
South San Antonio school district*

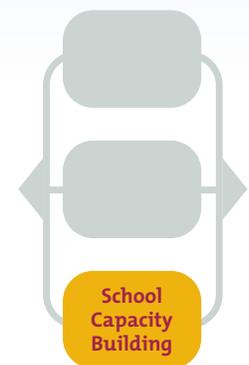
To secure these gains and affect wider change, IDRA published a seven-part *Community Engagement Series for Educators*. Released in 2010 and piloted by educators in San Antonio, this series has been adopted district-wide for all elementary teachers and principals in San Marcos CISD under the Stellar II project. Stellar II is being carried out in partnership with Texas State University and the district through a sub-award from the Texas Education Agency to increase the achievement of English language learners in science. The project improves content knowledge, effective pedagogy and meaningful parent engagement.

"We were truly inspired by your strong message and affirmations that our parents possess a multitude of assets that are key to teaching and learning and foster a positive culture of engagement within our schools and communities."

Dr. Shereen Tabrizi, Manager, Special Population Unit, State of Michigan Department of Education

Now rolled out nationally, IDRA's engagement series and approach have been featured at the Michigan Department of Education Title III Conference in Lansing and at *Pathways to Respect, American Indian Civil Rights Conference*, in Albuquerque, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education; the Office for Civil Rights; and the Department of Justice, Employment, Housing and Health.

Change Strategies



Securing Equal Rights and Civil Rights in Public Education Nationally and in a Five-State Region

School System Fundamentals Indicators



IDRA is helping states and schools end discrimination and give every child a chance.

IDRA has always played a major role in fighting for a child’s right to an education that is equitable and free from discrimination. That work continues today, through partnerships with schools and states to address inequities head on, expert testimony on school finance equity and curriculum and instructional quality, and advocacy related to college readiness and participation.

IDRA assessed new graduation plans that track individual students and progress of the State of Texas in monitoring its bilingual and ESL programs. We also conducted a study on the status of education for immigrant children who were being held indefinitely with their families at the Hutto Detention Center in Texas.

IDRA’s South Central Collaborative for Equity is working across a five-state region to ensure educational equity for all students regardless of race, sex and national origin. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, the IDRA SCCE works to ensure non-discrimination in educational policies and practices in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas (federal Region VI). The center helps state agencies and local leaders to better understand children’s educational rights, address disparities and create the conditions for students of all backgrounds to succeed.

The IDRA SCCE gets out timely, practical information to stakeholders across the region through e-letters, dynamic websites, social networks and podcasts. Thousands of state agency leaders and educators are drawing on IDRA’s online Equity Guide for schools (www.idra.org/South_Central_Collaborative_for_Equity/), with topics ranging from quality teaching for English language learners and other diverse students to dropout prevention and parent involvement. The IDRA SCCE has been a national leader in the use of podcasts to address issues of civil rights in public education and to build capacity of administrators and teachers to serve diverse student populations.

We are providing webinars, conferences, and technical assistance that helps local schools and districts make urgently-needed changes in teaching, learning and student outcomes. Through long-term partnerships, we ensure that schools and districts build capacity to make measurable, sustainable improvements.





And in each of the five states we are crafting district-specific solutions to historical challenges. In the past year, for example:

- IDRA assisted a Louisiana parish to establish a “trainer of trainers” approach to educate 100 percent of school personnel on the benefits of diversity; it has been certified by a federal court as being in full compliance with its directive.
- IDRA’s assistance enabled a Texas school district to change policies that negatively impacted services to English language learners, thereby complying with federal court directives to create a more equitable educational environment.
- The Mountain Plains Resource Center used the IDRA SCCE’s Six Goals of Educational Equity and School Reform to shape the state of New Mexico’s goals for increased student achievement on low-performing campuses.
- Collaborating with the Mid-Continent Comprehensive Center, the IDRA SCCE provided a leadership symposium for 75 school districts in Arkansas, with materials made available to districts across the state.
- The IDRA SCCE supported the implementation of training for teachers in Oklahoma City Public Schools to improve services for all students using the engagement model of sheltered instruction. The EBSI model focuses on building academic language for all students to improve academic achievement.

Recent Classnotes Podcasts

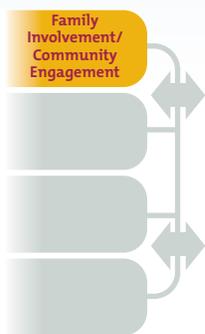
- **Helping Schools Address Issues of Race:** Episode 57
- **Latino and African American Communities Leading School Reform:** Episode 64
- **Implications of Inequitable School Funding:** Episode 68

“The FLAIR program is steeped in research-based strategies and methods that have allowed all teachers to become more aware of focusing on language and writing. It has successfully addressed the needs of all of our students, as evidenced through our most recent statewide test scores. The technology strand has opened doors wide for our teachers and students that otherwise would have remained just cracked open... This valued partnership between Keller Elementary and IDRA has been a source of inspiration to me, my teachers and to my school community.”

Sandy M. Doland, Principal,
Keller Elementary School,
Louisiana

Tapping Parent Leadership for School Success

School System Indicators



In some of the nation's poorest school districts, the power of family leadership is galvanizing change.

Although the benefits of family engagement in schools are increasingly well known,⁶ when it comes to transforming schools, low-income and minority families still rarely have a seat at the table. IDRA and its partners are hard at work to change that.

With funding from the U.S. Department of Education, IDRA's Texas Parent Information and Resource Center strengthens family leadership to improve student outcomes in Title I schools across Texas. From the mountains of El Paso to the tip of South Texas, and from the plains of Amarillo to the bustling cities of Houston and Dallas, IDRA staff have helped school leaders, parent liaisons and early childhood programs in high-need school districts to tap the power of parent leadership. Through conferences, workshops and trainer of trainers sessions, the PIRC has provided direct services to almost 10,000 people in the past year alone and put key information into the hands of more than 90,000 Texans. The IDRA Texas PIRC also has helped more than 5,000 parents in high poverty districts to strengthen their voice in and collaboration with their children's schools. In the past year, IDRA's Texas PIRC:

- Conducted "WOW" Workshop on Workshops for Parent Engagement for staff in school districts including: Brownsville, Donna, Harlingen, Houston, McAllen, Pharr-San Juan-Alamo, San Benito, Socorro and Uvalde. Community-based participants have included: ARISE, Edgewood Family Network, HIPPIY Dallas and Houston, LUPE, Mano A Mano, Proyecto Azteca, Promotoras of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, Proyecto Juan Diego, and START San Benito. The workshops empowered parents with information on educational rights and responsibilities, created a forum for critical dialogue on education issues affecting their children and challenged them to become presenters.
- Led the Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Parent Institute™, including bilingual highly-participatory sessions conducted by parents for parents with participation of family and community organizations and schools from across the state.
- Worked with the Title I priority high schools in Houston ISD, the largest school district in Texas, and also with families from small districts, such as Los Fresnos, Hidalgo and Valley View. The training and guidance prepared hundreds of families and school staff to meet both the letter and the spirit of Title I parent involvement requirements.



IDRA's Texas PIRC strengthens family leadership through technical assistance, training, and in depth collaboration with community-based organizations. Our partnership with the nonprofit ARISE to establish the ARISE South Tower PTA Comunitario in South Texas is one example.⁷ ARISE is dedicated to empowering immigrant women in the colonias (unincorporated rural communities with limited public services) to "use their gifts to improve



ARISE South Tower PTA Comunitario officers and members with Texas PTA president.

“What all of our families have in common is a deep and fervent interest in our children’s future... Families, ARISE and IDRA, our “village,” are making every effort to make sure our children get an excellent education in a safe environment.”

Lourdes Flores, President, ARISE Support Center and co-founder, PTA Comunitario

themselves, their families and their community.” With this commitment, in 2009, twenty ARISE families gathered with IDRA in a small wood-frame house to explore this new PTA model. All of the schools their children attended were either academically challenged or feeders to low-performing secondary schools. Since that time, with Texas PTA support, this grassroots chapter has grown to engage families across the colonias. PTA Comunitario visited nine public schools, doubled its membership and is building bridges among families and the neighborhood public schools that serve their children. In 2010, it became a model for other communities: Two new chapters in South Texas are in development this year.

IDRA’s Family Leadership Principles

- Families can be their children’s strongest advocates.
- Families of different races, ethnicity, language and class are equally valuable.
- Families care about their children’s education and are to be treated with respect, dignity and value.
- Within families, many individuals play a role in children’s education.
- Family leadership is most powerful at improving education for all children when collective efforts create solutions for the common good.
- Families, schools and communities, when drawn together, become a strong, sustainable voice to protect the rights of all children.

Recent Classnotes Podcasts

- **The Family Friendly Principal:** Episode 56
- **What Parents Should Know about Their Schools:** Episode 66
- **Parents as Leaders in Education:** Episode 72

¡YA! Es Tiempo – July 2010

Leveraging partnerships with the Equal Voice - Rio Grande Valley network, community-based organizations, schools, the Marguerite Casey Foundation, and Univision’s Es el Momento Campaign, in July 2010, IDRA gathered more than 140 parents, community leaders, students, educators, public officials, and policymakers for a day of dialogue, action and network building to improve the quality of education for all of the 450,000 children who live in the lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas. A panel of community leaders, school officials, and students described the unique education needs and assets of the Rio Grande Valley and how local, state and federal actions can help address these needs. Juan Sepúlveda, director of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, presented findings from the initiative’s national listening tour. And using IDRA’s OurSchool data portal, participants examined data about their schools and discussed strategies they will use to improve schools for children and youth in the Rio Grande Valley.

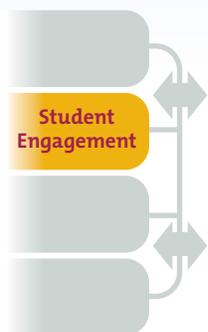
Following this gathering, over 70 percent of participants told us they felt more capable to partner and communicate with their school in support of their child’s learning, and help their school and community take action to improve overall achievement. The EV-RGV working group on education and ¡YA! Es Tiempo participants are now working toward a region-wide family gathering in 2011.

Strengthening School Holding Power in the United States and Brazil



Valued youth tutors from South San Antonio High School join Mayor Julián Castro for a city-wide Conversation on Education, held in September 2010

School System Indicators



The IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program keeps 98 percent of participating tutors in school.

They came to believe that school was a waste of time. They often felt invisible. Or if they *were* visible, they felt that they were seen as a burden or a problem. This began to change when their schools took up a whole new approach. Rather than push students who were struggling further to the edges, schools would see their strengths. Educators would value, support, and engage them as tutors and role models. And more than 30,000 youth would show that when given a chance, they too, rise to the occasion.

The IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in April 2009. An internationally-recognized cross-age tutoring program, it engages secondary school students, who are considered at risk of dropping out of school, as tutors to elementary school students. Extensively tested, using a longitudinal, quasi-experimental design, this research-based program has been recognized by numerous awards and publications, including Slavin and Fashola's *Show Me the Evidence! Proven and Promising Programs for America's Schools*.⁸

As of this year, the program has been implemented in 550 schools in the continental United States, Puerto Rico, the United Kingdom, and Brazil, benefiting more than 30,000 secondary students and impacting the lives of 650,000 parents, teachers and young people.

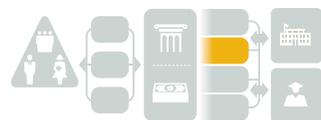
The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program shows that when students are placed in responsible roles and are supported in their efforts, powerful benefits occur. Valued youth tutors stay in school, improve their literacy and thinking skills, develop self-esteem, feel they belong in school, and enhance their class attendance.⁹ And schools shift to a practice of valuing youth once considered at risk.



María Robledo Montecel, IDRA President, and Ingrid Saunders Jones, Chair of the Coca-Cola Foundation at the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program National Institute in Atlanta, where Kennedy Middle School and the foundation received the 2010 A+ Award from Atlanta Partners For Education (APFE)

“In 1999, we looked around the world, to find the very best [educational] programs. After analyzing some 20 different projects with the advice of a group of educators...we decided that this program was the one because it could result in the greatest improvement for education in our country. Then...we saw so many lives change... we know there is a multiplier effect.”

Marco Simões, Vice-President, Communications and Sustainability, Coca-Cola Brazil, Rio de Janeiro



Seeding the Future of Early Education

Curricula and pedagogy that value diversity and a new bilingual “big book” series are helping teachers serve our youngest English learners.

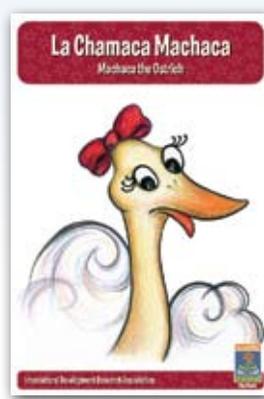
Since the early 1970s, when IDRA designed one of the nation’s first bilingual curricula for children who are English language learners, we have been dedicated to making sure that every child has the best possible start in school. Building on this work, with a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, IDRA partnered with Head Start early childhood centers to research and articulate a model of how early childhood programs can become “centers of excellence.”

At an Early Childhood Center of Excellence, classrooms are vibrant, interactive places that prepare children of all backgrounds to thrive.

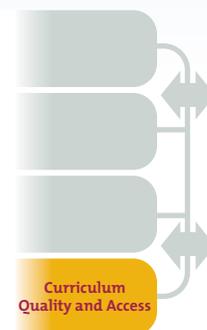
Grounded in this model, IDRA is helping early childhood centers and preschool teachers to create dynamic, child-ready centers—and is bringing best practices to the field.

With *Semillitas de Aprendizaje*™, IDRA has launched a new professional development series for preschool teachers, early childhood centers, families, and the field. From bilingual big books to small readers, new curricula and a cartitas (“letter’s home”) set, the series is designed to help teachers foster literacy, numeracy and social-emotional development, while valuing children’s home language and culture.

The Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Early Childhood Educator Institute™ has become the nation’s premier gathering place for educators and parents, committed to strengthening early education for English language learners. Hundreds gathered at IDRA’s 17th Institute in April 2010 to share best practices. At the heart of this gathering, parents led sessions on how they are building school-family bonds to better serve all children.



School System Indicators



Recent Classnotes Podcasts

- **Bilingual Stories for Young Learners:** Episode 80
- **Supporting Parents of Preschoolers:** Episode 73



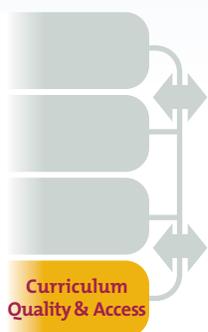
On June 16, 2010, the Edgewood community celebrated the rededication of the Dr. José Angel Cárdenas Early Childhood Center. Named after IDRA’s founder and director emeritus, this state-of-the-art school creates an environment of educational excellence serving thousands of bilingual families and their children in San Antonio’s Edgewood school district.



Transforming Teaching and Learning in Science and Mathematics in Diverse Schools

A spotlight on teaching and learning in STEM subjects is producing dramatic results in student learning and school outcomes.

School System Indicators



The National Center for Education Statistics studies of 12th grade found that the nation has made no significant gains since 2005 in closing racial/ethnic achievement gaps in mathematics. Also 12th graders test far below the international average in science.¹⁰

IDRA's Math Smart! and Science Smart! models were created to build school capacity to engage minority and English learners in quality math and science instruction. IDRA developed and piloted full models with four school districts in Texas, and key elements have been successfully implemented in urban and rural campuses across Texas and Louisiana.

Math Smart! and Science Smart! work by building on teachers' existing strengths and creating professional learning communities that promote changes campus-wide. Emphasis is placed on culturally-relevant teaching practices and teaching methodologies that increase content knowledge through reflection and refinement. Research-based exemplary practices are shared through in-classroom assistance and other technical assistance that includes the integration of technology.

With the Texas Education Agency, Texas State University and the San Marcos school district, IDRA provided professional development for teachers, focusing on English language learners, strengthening the elementary and middle school science program, and modeling equity, access and excellence in education across all areas for all students. As a result, hundreds of participants are collaborating in the successful delivery of instruction to ELLs, engaging these students in an inquiry-based approach based on the most current research findings on academic achievement. Teachers are effectively using a variety of ESL techniques, and students are increasingly making predictions, estimations and hypotheses and devising the means to test them. The campuses in this district have improved student academic

achievement on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and other assessment measures.

Through a partnership with Pharr-San Juan-Alamo school district to implement Math Smart! and Science Smart! at three campuses, teachers strengthened relationships with students, improved the integration of academic language and worked more cohesively as a professional community. All three campuses improved student passing rates on the TAKS. Passing rates increased for African American, Hispanic and White students. And English language learners at PSJA High School and PSJA North High School saw significant improvements, in each case the passing rate improved to 42 percent from the upper 20s. Building on this work, in the past year, our partnership has:

- increased the capacity of teachers and administrators to engage all students by focusing on their assets to enhance learning;
- promoted collaboration in a professional learning community, supporting the district's mission to enhance the math and science curriculum and increase student academic achievement; and
- created systemic changes in policy and instructional practices to eradicate achievement gaps.

Two campuses—one in AYP Stage 3 and another in AYP Stage 5 became recognized campuses.¹¹

Recent Classnotes Podcasts

- **Pitfalls and Promises of Interactive Science Notebooks:** Episode 79
- **Creating Dynamic Math Classrooms:** Episode 77
- **College for All:** Episode 75





Andrea Tejeda and her kindergarten bilingual students when she first completed her certification in 2007. Today, she teaches fifth grade bilingual education at Harlandale school district.

Redesigning Teacher Preparation for a New Texas

IDRA's Transitions to Teaching projects are preparing a new generation of teachers to serve a dramatically different state.

To change the state of education in Texas, better preparation for today's classroom is essential. IDRA has teamed up with university, K-12 and community partners to address this need. The result is a teacher preparation strategy that is equipping a large cadre of new teachers to serve a more diverse student body, engaging seasoned teachers as mentors, and building networks for ongoing growth and support.

IDRA's Transitions to Teaching programs, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, create routes to accelerated certification that prepare mid-career professionals and recent college graduates for work in high-need school districts across the state. The Math and Science Smart (MASS) project prepares, places, and retains secondary math and science teachers, with an additional credential to teach ESL. The Transitions project helps to prepare and certify recent graduates and mid-career professionals to become bilingual/ESL elementary teachers. A third program, Caminos, prepares teachers with a combined bilingual/ESL and special education certification to teach in high-need school districts.

Without exception, the projects emphasize an asset-based approach, preparing teachers to recognize and build on their students' academic, cultural and linguistic strengths. And early on, they provide direct classroom experience to teachers, blending the theoretical with the practical.

In collaboration with more than twenty college and university partners, IDRA is providing mentoring, organizing discussion groups, and forming peer cohorts to support new teachers. This past year, IDRA worked in collaboration with Teach for Dallas ACP serving Dallas ISD, Houston ACP serving Houston ISD, Fort Worth ISD, Pasadena ACP serving Pasadena ISD, Laredo Community College ACP, Northwest Vista College ACP, Our Lady of the Lake University, Tarleton State University and other institutions to identify and recruit program candidates.

To date, more than 500 teachers have been selected to participate in these projects, most of whom are already working in high-need districts across the state. This past year, IDRA also launched a new interactive network online to support teachers beyond their certification and placement.

Recent Classnotes Podcasts

- **Reflections on Bilingual Education Today and Beyond:** Episode 65
- **The Teacher as a Culturally Proficient Coach:** Episode 58
- **Learning and Mentoring with Teachers and Students:** Episode 71

School System Indicators



“Yo quise ser maestra para poder ayudarlos a completar sus sueños.”

“I wanted to be a teacher to help them fulfill their dreams.”

Cecily Flores, IDRA Transitions participant, speaking about her bilingual pre-kindergarten students at Edgewood ISD in San Antonio



Strengthening Youth Voice and Leadership to Transform Schools



Joseph Cuellar and Ray Romero at the Edgewood Family Network TECNO 2.0 lab

Outcome Indicators



IDRA is helping schools build stronger bonds with students so that youth voice and leadership become an integral part of transforming schools.

Modeled on the success of its Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, IDRA has taken up a number of projects that amplify youth perspectives and nurture youth leadership. From grassroots technology centers, at which youth build and share technology expertise, to institutes on mathematics, dropout prevention, and college access that bring youth perspectives to the fore, these projects are helping students succeed academically while playing a role in reform.

IDRA's TECNO 2.0 project is a recent example of this work. Serving the Edgewood community in San Antonio, the project was undertaken in partnership with the school district and community-based nonprofits, including the Edgewood Family Network, and funded by the Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation and the IDRA Texas PIRC.

“I didn’t think I could get into college and now I do.”

Joseph Cuellar, senior, after participating as a Youth Tekie and peer counselor in TECNO 2.0

TECNO 2.0 was designed to support first-generation Hispanic high school students and their families by helping them recognize their potential to attend college, navigate college entrance systems, and complete college and financial aid applications. Much of this objective was accomplished by training a cadre of technology-savvy students, “Tekies,” to host sessions, provide technical assistance, and mentor and guide their peers through questions from “Why should I go to college?” to “Where do I apply?”

The project served more than 1,000 low-income Hispanic and other minority 11th and 12th graders. Surveys found that 95 percent of students who were provided services by youth Tekies felt the information was helpful and would assist them to attend college. Survey results were shared with administrators and counselors to support conversations and guidance on college.



Funders Who Have Helped Make IDRA's Work Possible

Administration for Children, Youth and Families	The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	National Urban Coalition
The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation	The Ford Foundation	The Primerica Foundation
Anheuser-Busch Companies, Inc.	The General Sciences Foundation	The Rockefeller Foundation
The Annie E. Casey Foundation*	George Washington University	Southwestern Bell
ASPIRA of New York	The Houston Endowment, Inc.	Texas Department of Community Affairs
The AT&T Foundation	JP Morgan Chase Foundation*	Texas Education Agency
The Carnegie Corporation	The Lilly Endowment	Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation*
The Challenge Foundation	League of United Latin American Citizens	Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation*	Marguerite Casey Foundation*	U.S. Department of Education*
The Children's Trust Fund of Texas	The Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Clemson University – NDPC	The National Coalition of Advocates for Students	U.S. Department of Justice
The Coca-Cola Foundation*	The National Endowment for the Humanities	University of Houston
The Coca-Cola Company	National Education Association	The W.K. Kellogg Foundation*
The Danforth Foundation	National Institute of Mental Health	Wachovia Foundation
The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation	The National Science Foundation	Wells Fargo Foundation*
The Edward Hazen Foundation		The William Randolph Hearst Foundation

* Grants during current period.

- 1 Robledo Montecel, M. "Holding On to the Goal of Quality Education for Every Child" in Robledo Montecel, M., & C.L. Goodman (Eds). *Courage to Connect – A Quality Schools Action Framework*. (San Antonio: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2010.)
- 2 Robledo Montecel, M., & C.L. Goodman (Eds). *Courage to Connect – A Quality Schools Action Framework*. (San Antonio: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2010).
- 3 Marguerite Casey Foundation (<http://www.caseygrants.org/>).
- 4 Suits, S. *A New Diverse Majority: Students of Color in the South's Public Schools* (Atlanta, Ga.: Southern Education Foundation, 2010).
- 5 Love, B. "A Tale of Two Centrals," *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2007).
- 6 Henderson, A., and K. Mapp. *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections on Student Achievement* (Austin, Texas: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 2002).
- 7 Montemayor, A.M. "ARISE South Tower PTA Comunitario – A New Model of Parent Engagement," *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio: Intercultural Development Research Association, April 2010.)
- 8 Slavin, R.E., & O.S. Fashola. *Show Me the Evidence! Proven and Promising Programs for America's Schools* (Thousand Oaks, Calif: Corwin Press, 1998).
- 9 Cárdenas, J.A., and M. Robledo Montecel, J.D. Supik, R.J. Harris. "The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program: Dropout Prevention Strategies for At-Risk Students," *Texas Researcher* (Texas Center for Educational Research, Winter 1992) 3, 111-130.
- 10 National Center for Education Statistics. *The Nation's Report Card: Grade 12 Reading and Mathematics 2009 National and Pilot State Results November* (Washington, D.C.: Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, 2010) http://nationsreportcard.gov/grade12_2009_report/ and <http://nces.ed.gov/pressrelease/reform/pdf/reform.pdf>.
- 11 Under the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB), all public school campuses and school districts in Texas are evaluated for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Title I schools that do not meet "adequate yearly progress," or AYP, face sanctions. Stage 3 means the school missed AYP for the same indicator for fourth consecutive year; and Stage 5 means the school (missed AYP for the same indicator for sixth consecutive year).

Statement of Financial Position

August 31, 2010

Assets

Total current assets	\$ 827,641
Assets designated for development and research	13,942,304
Other assets	207,009
Total assets	14,976,954

Liabilities and Net Assets

Total current liabilities	83,298
Net assets—undesignated	322,461
Net assets—designated for development and research	13,942,304
Net assets—temporarily restricted	628,891
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 14,976,954

Statement of Activities

Year Ended August 31, 2010

Support and Revenue

Foundations and governmental	\$ 3,096,248
Program Revenue	1,181,926
Interest and other	354,325
Total Revenue	4,632,499

Expenses

Program services	4,170,289
Management and general	25,835
Total Expenses	4,196,124

Change in net assets	436,375
Net assets, beginning	14,457,281
Net assets, ending	\$ 14,893,656

The Statement of Financial Position as of August 31, 2010, and Statement of Activities for the year ended August 31, 2010, are part of IDRA's financial statements. The complete audited financial statements are available upon request to IDRA.



About IDRA



The Intercultural Development Research Association is an independent, private non-profit organization dedicated to improving equal educational opportunity for every child. IDRA strengthens and

transforms public education by providing dynamic training; useful research, evaluation, and frameworks for action; timely policy analyses; and innovative materials and programs. Each year, IDRA works hand-in-hand with thousands of educators, community members and families. All our work rests on an unwavering commitment to creating self-renewing schools that value and promote the success of students of all backgrounds.

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