



# GRADUATION FOR ALL

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## Math Paves Path • [www.idra.org](http://www.idra.org) • April 2008

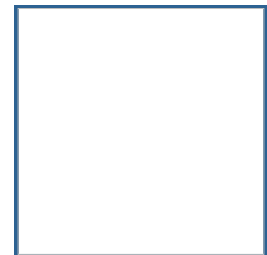
*"I believe that the absence of math literacy in urban and rural communities throughout this country is an issue as urgent as the lack of registered voters in Mississippi was in 1961... and I believe that solving the problem requires exactly the kind of community organizing that changed the South in the 1960s."* - Robert P. Moses, President/Founder of the [Algebra Project](#).

Student success in mathematics paves paths to graduation, college, a better job. This issue of *Graduation for All* brings you news of school-community partnerships to raise graduation rates and new tools to be uncompromising about mathematics access and quality preparation for every student.

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## Schools and Communities in Action

**Make Sure they Get Math.** Back in 2001, in [Students Whose Parents Did Not Go to College: Postsecondary Access, Persistence and Attainment](#), Susan Choy reported that more than three out of four high school graduates (76 percent) who took advanced mathematics courses in high school enrolled in a four-year college or university. Among students with no mathematics or low-level preparation, only 6 percent enrolled. But many students are discouraged from taking advanced mathematics and don't have access to advanced mathematics, dual credit courses and advanced placement. In a [Special Analysis report](#) on the [Condition of Education 2007](#), NCES found that public schools with the highest minority enrollment were the least likely to offer dual credit courses. They also found that students who completed middle and advanced levels of high school mathematics were far more likely to graduate. What can school, family and community partners do to improve math access for all students? - visit the Toolbox Section (below) for three tips.



**Knowledge for Action - Join us for IDRA's [Annual Parent Leadership in Education Institute](#)**, Thursday, April 24 in San Antonio. Through this dynamic bilingual institute, parent leaders and liaisons from around the state of Texas will look together at education issues facing school districts, learn about successful strategies in parent leadership and network to improve student success. Parent Leadership in Education will take place: Thursday, April 24, 2008, 8:45 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Embassy Suites Hotel - Northwest. [Click here to find out more or to register online](#). Participants will use IDRA's School Holding Power portal to examine how well schools are preparing students for graduation and college and what they can do to partner with and strengthen schools.

**Take a tour of the portal.** Whether or not you can attend the institute, *Graduation for All* readers are invited to visit IDRA's Texas School Holding Power portal ([register free here](#)) and to use it to support your work to strengthen schools. Want to know more about the portal and steps school-community partners can take to strengthen school holding power? - Visit...[www.idra.org/School\\_Holding\\_Power/](http://www.idra.org/School_Holding_Power/).

**Youth Groups in D.C. to Tackle High Dropout Rates.** Critical Exposure and the D.C. Alliance of Youth Advocates are teaming up this year to plan a city-wide strategy for convening youth groups in the District of Columbia to address the dropout issue there. Critical Exposure, a non-profit that teaches students to use the power of documentary photography and their own voices to advocate for equity and excellence in public education, and DCAYA will partner with local youth programs and help students document what keeps them in school, what might cause them to leave and what factors can support them. To keep up with the initiative or sign up for Critical Exposure's new Photo-of-the-Month e-newsletter visit: [www.criticalexposure.org](http://www.criticalexposure.org).

**Picture Equity, Excellence.** IDRA partnered with Critical Exposure and Albuquerque Public Schools in our work with youth in New Mexico on the Fulfilling the Promise of Mendez and Brown initiative. Click here, to [visit the gallery of student work](#). IDRA is convening upcoming Mendez Brown Community Blueprint Dialogues gatherings in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. To learn more, visit <http://blueprintsforaction.idra.org/> or write to us at [gradforall@idra.org](mailto:gradforall@idra.org).

## Toolbox

**State of the State (New Texas Indicators, Data).** Did you know that the number of Texas children (3-4) enrolled in public pre-kindergarten is on the rise? Did you know that more children are enrolled in bilingual/ESL programs today than in 2000, but fewer are in special education? To give us clear and critical facts on these and other questions, the Center for Public Policy Priorities has just released *The State of Texas Children 2007* on the well-being of children in every county in Texas. For an online profile of the state and county snapshots, visit: [www.cppp.org/factbook07/county\\_select.php](http://www.cppp.org/factbook07/county_select.php).



### Make Sure They Get Math - *What Can I do?*

**TIP #1: Get the Facts and Get Math.** Make sure your school offers advanced mathematics to every student and prepares and encourages them to take these courses. To find out more, see: [“Making Mathematics Work for All Children: Issues of Standards, Testing and Equity”](#) by Alan H. Schoenfeld. See also: [“Can Everyone Master Mathematics?”](#) By Jack Dieckmann, M.A., and Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed.

**Tip #2: Make math meaningful.** For ideas, see: [“Making Math Real for Students”](#) by IDRA MathSmart! designer, Kathryn Brown and listen in to a Classnotes podcast interview with Kathy on the [Five Dimensions of Mathematical Proficiency \(Episode 16\)](#).

**Tip #3: Engage parent and community involvement, leadership.** See [“Community Conversations about Math Learning and Teaching”](#) by Kristin Grayson, M.Ed., and Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed. Check out [fun activities at Ed.Gov that parents can use with children from pre-K to grade five](#) to sharpen their math skills and [at-home math activities parents and children can do](#).

## Youth Voices

**“Teaching is a matter of heart. The more you have, the less likely you are to fail.”** - Chicago tutor, [IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program](#)

You received this e-letter either because you’ve expressed interest in the topic or somebody who likes you forwarded it to you. Have a story of school-community partnership that’s raising graduation rates? - Let us hear from you. To submit question or comment, send e-mail to [gradforall@idra.org](mailto:gradforall@idra.org). Feel free to [forward Grad4All](#) to anyone who shares a passion for every student’s success.

The [Intercultural Development Research Association](#) is an independent, private non-profit organization whose mission is to create schools that work for all children.

Thanks for reading!

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