



GRADUATION FOR ALL

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Dropout Rates Still High: It's Time for Bold Action

Today, three out of every 10 students will not graduate with a high school diploma. Nearly one in two minority students will not cross the stage. Together we can make a difference.

Welcome!

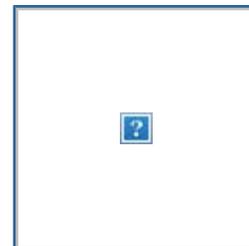
Welcome to the first issue of Graduation for All. In each monthly e-letter, we will send you up-to-date information that you can use to take action in your school and community. You can unsubscribe from this newsletter by clicking on the link at the bottom of this e-mail.

¡Usted puede recibir esta edición de Graduation for All [en español!](#)

Schools and Communities in Action

Little Rock leaders craft cross-race agenda for reform

In January, African American and Latino school and community leaders in Little Rock, Arkansas, came together as part of IDRA's [Fulfilling the Promise of Mendez and Brown](#). School, business, civic, and government leaders vowed to work together in cross-race partnerships to make quality education and graduation with a diploma a reality for every student. Fulfilling the Promise helps communities strengthen schools around [Seven Key Actions](#). Action 5 is to Strengthen School Holding Power.



Texans call for action

When [one out of three students in Texas](#) does not graduate on time with a diploma, it hurts us all. Across the state and in the capitol, Texans are calling for action. In January, at the start of Texas' legislative session, an emerging coalition of Texas-based organizations, including IDRA, Children at Risk, the Center for Public Policy Priorities, Texas Center for Educational Policy at the University of Texas, Texas Appleseed, and the Center for Education at Rice University, briefed legislators and called for statewide action around [Nine Principles](#). **Want to take up the cause in your community?** You can find quick facts in the [Texas briefing](#) and join us in adopting the [Nine Principles](#) for action. Or follow policy development at: <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/Reports/BillsBy.aspx>

New Yorkers build networks for change

Every year in New York City, 20,000 teenagers are lost from public schools. Many New Yorkers think this should be a top priority concern. ([Unheard Third 2006: Bringing the Voices of Low-Income New Yorkers to the Policy Debate](#)). On February 23, Directions for Our Youth, New York City Council's Black, Latino, and Asian Caucus, United Way of New York City, and Baruch College teamed up to convene a [Dropout Prevention Summit](#). To make sure they do more than just meet, New Yorkers set up five in-person and online [working groups](#), including academics and research, community-based organizations, schools, government and youth. To watch for their recommendations (coming soon), see: <http://www.dfoy.org/indexsummit.html>.

We want to hear from you!

Want to share a model of school-community partnership that is making a difference in your district? Let us hear from you! You can drop us a note at: gradforall@idra.org.

Toolbox

It Pays to Do the Right Thing

Are you trying to convince others in your school, neighborhood or company that it's time to do more to address the dropout problem? Two new studies can help. Both show that what's good for students is also good for the country.

At Columbia University's Teacher's College, economists found that if we cut the number of high school dropouts in half, U.S. taxpayers would reap \$45 billion. See "[The Costs and Benefits of an Excellent Education for America's Children](#)" (January 2007).

How do they say this can get done? The study looked at [five cost-effective strategies](#) for boosting high school graduation rates. The best interventions, they say, have these features: small school size; high levels of personalization; high academic expectations; strong counseling; parent engagement; extended-time school sessions; competent and appropriate personnel.

In [The High Cost of High School Dropouts: What the Nation Pays for Inadequate High Schools](#), a study by the Alliance for Excellent Education, you can find out more about the costs of national dropout rates and what's at stake for your state: <http://www.all4ed.org/publications/HighCost.pdf>.

Just the Facts

Data for every county and service center in Texas. Each year, IDRA releases detailed findings of attrition rates in Texas public schools. You can [look up rates for your county](#) or [education service center region](#) or learn about statewide attrition rates at: <http://www.idra.org/Research/Attrition/>.

A student drops out of high school every 29 seconds. More quick facts and a [policy primer](#) on the issue are available online at Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors' [Strong American Schools "Ed08" Campaign](#) launched in April and funded by The Gates Foundation and The Broad Foundation.

Listen in!

Congressional Testimony: "It's time to make graduation from high school the new universal minimum!" IDRA Executive Director, Dr. María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel, [testifies to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor](#) (April 23, 2007) on a comprehensive strategy to raise graduation rates. Here is the [written statement](#).

Around the country, support is growing for a comprehensive approach to raising graduation rates. Among other policy developments, the [Graduation for All Act](#) introduced by Representative Rubén Hinojosa focuses on increasing adolescent literacy as a cornerstone of graduation and school success. The [Graduation Promise Act](#) introduced by Senators Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), Richard Burr (R-NC) and Ted Kennedy (D-MA) seeks to raise graduation rates and academic outcomes through targeted capacity building in high-priority high schools. For an update on other proposals, check out the Alliance for Excellent Education's [Straight A's: Public Education Policy and Progress Vol. 7, #9](#).

New Podcast Series: More ways you can strengthen schools

IDRA has launched a new award-winning podcast series with a full set of tips on improving education in the United States. Several episodes focus on keeping kids in school. Go to <http://www.idra.org/Podcasts/> to listen online or subscribe (free).

Youth Voices

Quote of the month: "I am college material." What a middle school student in the [Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program](#) etched into the cover of her notebook during a college tour.



You received this e-letter either because you've expressed interest in the topic or somebody who likes you forwarded it to you. Feel free to forward it to anyone who shares a passion for every student's success.

To submit question or comment, send e-mail to gradforall@idra.org

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

Thanks for reading!

Laurie Posner
Graduation for All Coordinator
Intercultural Development Research Association
5835 Callaghan Road, Suite 350
San Antonio, TX 78228
210.444.1710

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Contact

Intercultural Development Research Association

5815 Callaghan Rd., Suite 101
San Antonio, Texas 78228
(210) 444-1710

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