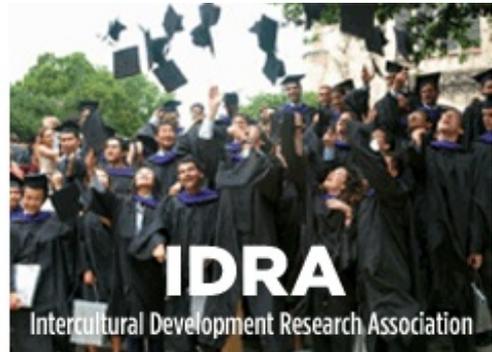




GRADUATION FOR ALL

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Money and Equity • www.idra.org • May 2010

With unemployment hovering around 10 percent, concerns about money are front and center for most of us. This is particularly true for states and schools. Across the country, districts are racing toward what many see as a “funding cliff” as the infusion of stimulus funds runs out.

If, as Gloria Steinem said “we can tell our values by looking at our checkbook stubs,” then we need to take a hard look at the funding of public schools and what it means for educational equity and excellence. This issue of Graduation for All brings you news and research on school funding and in the “Tools” section you’ll find 5 resources that cost...nothing.

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

Schools and Communities in Action

Funding Inequities Shortchange Poorer Students. Though longstanding struggles by communities, advocates and schools have helped to narrow the funding gaps in some states, a new report by Education Trust finds that hidden funding gaps not only persist, but are built into law. Looking at schools in New York City, the report found that almost 250 Title I schools (nearly half) receive less in state and local funds per student than non-Title I schools. Want to take action to close funding equity gaps? Education Trust recommends changes to Title I and a press to make reporting by funding source more transparent. To learn more, see: [Close the Hidden Funding Gaps in Our Schools](#)



Visit IDRA’s website [for a primer on school finance equity...](#)

School funding at the heart of ELL Supreme Court case. In *Horne v. Flores*, a group of English Language Learner (ELL) students and their parents filed a class action suit, alleging that Arizona violates the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, in providing inadequate ELL instruction in Nogales Unified School District. The Supreme Court disagreed, but the fact remains, as Justice Breyer pointed out in his dissent, that in a nation where 47 million people speak a language other than English at home, educational barriers must, ultimately, be addressed. [For a summary of *Horne v. Flores*...](#)

Communities and schools, however, don’t have to wait for the courts to defend the civil rights of students in their states. Southern Echo, a nonprofit organization in Jackson, provides one example of a community taking the school funding debate into its own hands, as it tests out a framework for “Justice Funding.” To visit a [working paper on the concept by Southern Echo...](#)

Funding Data at Your Fingertips. If you want to work on the issue of school finance equity, you’ll need data. The Federal Education Budget Project just updated its data on education funding, demographics and achievement. Searchable by state and district, this online tool will give you new information on per pupil expenditures, Title I funds and district-level and state-level funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Act. [To visit the FEBP database...](#)

Need another argument to promote financial aid? Economic benefits of college are greatest for low-income students. For many years, scholars have suggested that students who are most likely to enroll in college also benefit most. Research by J. E. Brand and Y. Xie finds that this just isn’t so. It turns out, as you might suspect, that less affluent students get a much bigger boost from college-going than their wealthier peers. [To see the study...](#)

Toolbox

Resources for Teachers, Students and Lifelong Learners - for Free.

How to Learn Something for Nothing a New York Times guide on free, online educational content on the web. Includes links to Academic Earth's free online university-based video courses and *Highlights for High School*, MIT opencourseware materials for high school students and teachers. [To visit the guide...](#)

Federal Resources for Educational Excellence. Thirty federal agencies providing educational resources including lesson plans for all subjects and research support for homework assignments. [To visit free federal resources online...](#)

IDRA GESA Webinars Series for Educators - Generating High Expectations for Student Achievement, featuring Dr. Dolores "Dee" Grayson and moderated by Dr. Bradley Scott, director, IDRA South Central Collaborative for Equity. [To find out more, and to register...](#)

NPR's Science Friday videos...
And Science Friday website [in English](#) and [Spanish](#)

Bill Nye the Science Guy - [for Kids and Teachers, featuring home demos and experiments](#)

Youth Voices

"Stop New Jersey Education Cuts" - New Jersey student protesting cuts to the education budget. Student protests that took place on April 27th, were among the largest grassroots demonstrations in the state in years. The Governor's office released a statement in response, expressing a "firm hope" that "students were motivated by youthful rebellion or spring fever."



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

Let us hear from you! Have a story of school-community partnership that's raising graduation rates? We welcome your comments, questions and suggestions at gradforall@idra.org. Forward to a Friend! Feel free to [share Grad4All with anyone who shares your passion for every student's success.](#)

Thanks for reading!

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