



GRADUATION FOR ALL

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Welcome to Graduation for All! • www.idra.org • November 2007

Dropout Rates High: It's Time for Bold Action. Welcome to [Graduation for All](#) - a monthly e-letter providing research, tools and resources for people concerned about the dropout issue and taking action to strengthen schools. To unsubscribe, click the link at the bottom of this e-mail.

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Schools and Communities in Action

Rural Trust highlights need to focus on rural areas and strengthen school-community partnerships. *Why Rural Matters 2007*, fourth in a series of biennial reports by Rural Trust, finds that enrollment in rural schools is up by 15 percent, rural instructional expenditures per pupil are lowest in Southern states, and rural graduation rates are below 70 percent in 10 states. Click [here](#) for links to the report and a summary of major findings. To improve policy and outcomes, Rural Trust is [strengthening ties among schools and communities and building youth civic engagement](#). To learn more about Rural Education Working Groups in Mississippi, Arkansas, West Virginia, North Carolina and other states, [click here](#).



Fulfilling the Promise in Southern States: African American and Latino leaders to focus on joint action to raise graduation rates. This coming year, IDRA will be expanding *Fulfilling the Promise of Mendez and Brown: African American and Latino Community Dialogues for Action* by convening dialogues with leaders in Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi. Begun in Texas and convened this past year in New Mexico and Arkansas, Fulfilling the Promise engages cross-race, cross-sector leaders in local and regional forums to craft a shared agenda for improving public school outcomes for all students. Through this initiative, communities identify strategies based on strengths and develop blueprints for local, state and regional action. Upcoming gatherings in the southern states, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, will focus on cross-race planning and action to raise graduation rates. To find out more, visit IDRA's [Mendez and Brown web site](#) or tune in to "[The Need for Cross-Race, Cross-Sector Dialogues](#)," Episode 6 of IDRA's Classnotes Podcast series. If you're in Alabama, Louisiana or Mississippi and want to get involved, write to us at: gradforall@idra.org.

Engaging Parents - Lessons from Five Parent Information Resource Centers In Kentucky, parents are honing their leadership skills to strengthen school site councils, local school boards and scholastic audit teams. In Maryland, parents are partnering with teachers, administrators and community leaders to develop annual action plans that link family and community activities to school improvement goals. In Texas, parents, students and educators are studying school performance data online and developing strategies for improving graduation rates. These and other practices are featured in "[Engaging Parents in Education](#)," a new publication by the U.S. Department of Education that profiles five parent information and resource centers, including the [IDRA Texas PIRC](#), and best practices in parent engagement.

Partner with Parents. Want to know more about how teachers and administrators can use *Engaging Parents in Education* to strengthen family-school partnerships? Listen in to [Engaging Parents](#) (Episode 21 of IDRA's Classnotes Podcast Series) for a conversation with Aurelio Montemayor, M.Ed., director of the IDRA Texas Parent Information and Resource Center ([PIRC](#)), interviewed by Bradley Scott, Ph.D., director of the [IDRA South Central Collaborative for Equity](#).

Student Voices

"When minorities are not encouraged to take advanced placement classes, a defacto segregation line is created. The dream of Brown and Mendez was not only to make education equal for all races but to also give hope to improving education as a whole." - High school student, Little Rock, presenting to Fulfilling the Promise of Mendez and Brown: Blueprints for Action, convened by IDRA in Little Rock, Arkansas, January 2007

"We won't fulfill the Brown and Mendez cases if we don't create a positive dialogue about race... The Brown case says that segregation by law is gone but it is still inside our hearts and maybe not because we want it to be, but because it is what we've been around all our lives. From the start of this country, we have been segregated and we need to start examining and changing our own culture to make what Brown fought for so hard is true, not only in law, but in practice." - High school student, Little Rock Arkansas, Fulfilling the Promise gathering

Toolbox

"New Majority" of Low Income Students in Southern Public Schools.

A new report by the Southern Education Foundation (SEF) finds that "for the first time in more than 40 years, the South is the only region in the nation where low-income children constitute a majority of public school students." For a copy of the full report (*A New Majority: Low Income Students in the South's Public Schools*) visit the Southern Education Foundation (SEF) online www.southerneducation.org.



QuickLinks:

PBS is offering free resources for preK-12 educators online at: <http://www.pbs.org/teachers/>. Here you can also link to resources available through your local PBS station.

Jump onto [Route 21](#), developed by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills for resources on infusing 21st century skills into education.

Curriculum Quality Matters: Catalyze Quality Science Teaching for Every Student.

Two new IDRA Classnotes Podcasts zero in on quality science instruction and how even small changes in teaching can open doors for students, particularly for girls, minority students and English language learners. Tune in to: "Science is a Key to Life" IDRA Classnotes Podcast Episode 22 and "Science in Early Childhood Bilingual Classrooms" IDRA Classnotes Podcast Episode 20 at <http://www.idra.org/Podcasts/>.

Need resources but in too big of a rush for a podcast? Jump to the resources page for any IDRA Classnotes podcast and you'll find scores of links to research, information and best practices to support your work. Here's a link, for example, to the [resources page for "Science in Early Childhood Bilingual Classrooms."](#)

IDRA is moving! Please note our new address as of December 1, 2007: **5815 Callaghan Road, Suite 101, San Antonio, Texas 78228**. Visit us in our new location! Our phone, e-mails and web site addresses will remain the same: 210-444-1710, contact@idra.org

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. 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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