



# Equity Should be Upheld in Eligibility for College, Career, and Military Readiness Outcomes Bonus Funding

**IDRA Testimony on HB 3204, presented by Altheria Caldera, Ph.D., to the House Public Education Committee, March 30, 2020**

Dear Chairman Dutton and Honorable Members of the House Public Education Committee:

My name is Dr. Altheria Caldera, and I am an Education Policy Fellow at IDRA, an independent, non-partisan, education non-profit committed to achieving equal educational opportunity for every child through strong public schools that prepare all students to access and succeed in college. We respectfully request that you consider the following recommendation as you decide on this bill.

HB 3204 proposes that career readiness outcomes funding is expanded to include graduates who are employed in minimum salary work. Our equity concern is that schools may be incentivized through this bill to not counsel “hard to reach” students toward college and skilled careers/industries, which would be a serious unintended consequence. Many students of color, immigrant students, and students from families with limited incomes attend elementary and secondary schools that do not properly prepare them for post-secondary success. In order to promote equitable college and career readiness outcomes, bonus funding should continue to target rigorous college preparation and skilled training.

## Recommendations

- Reconsider HB 3204 for inequitable impacts to college readiness counseling and resources;
- Prioritize CCMR outcomes bonus funding for schools that prepare students toward college, skilled careers, or confirmed military enlistment, not for minimum salary work;
- Enhance college counseling for students in eighth grade and through high school for postsecondary success;
- Bonus funding should prioritize preparation that leads to college success and sustainable careers; and
- Develop data monitoring systems for TEA to collect and report high school endorsement data to identify employment trends.

We recommend that the committee seriously considers the possible unintended consequences of HB 3204 to potentially reduces standards for career readiness and compromise equity in college counseling. Schools should receive actual CCMR bonus funds to graduate students into colleges or skilled career paths. It is essential that students graduate from high school with a wide array of post-secondary options, instead of graduating with only the option of low-wage work that impoverishes them. High school graduation pathways should include rigorous coursework that prepares all students for college and careers that pay a living way.

IDRA is available for any questions or further resources that we can provide. Thank you for your consideration. For more information, please contact Chloe Latham Sikes, Ph.D., IDRA Deputy Director of Policy, at [chloe.sikes@idra.org](mailto:chloe.sikes@idra.org).

## **Resources**

IDRA. (2016). Ready Texas: Stakeholder Proceedings Report. Intercultural Development Research Association. [http://www.idra.org/images/stories/IDRA\\_Ready\\_Texas\\_Report\\_Apr262016.pdf](http://www.idra.org/images/stories/IDRA_Ready_Texas_Report_Apr262016.pdf)

IDRA. (January 14, 2021). Remove Barriers to College for All Texas Students and Beyond, IDRA eNews. <https://idra.news/txEDPolicy3>

*IDRA is an independent, non-profit organization led by Celina Moreno, J.D. Our mission is to achieve equal educational opportunity for every child through strong public schools that prepare all students to access and succeed in college. 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.*