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IDRA Newsletter

This month's focus: School Integration



"There can be no doubt: We need an excellent education for all our children. And where there is no equity, there can be no excellence."

- Dr. María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel, IDRA President & CEO

This issue of the IDRA Newsletter has stories on using socioeconomic indicators as a tool for school diversity and integration, preparing teachers for working in diverse classrooms, strategies for recruiting and retaining a diverse, high-quality teacher workforce and IDRA's new scholarship endowment in Honor of Dr. Max Castillo, University of Houston-Downtown President Emeritus.

School Integration

Using Socioeconomic Indicators as a Tool for School Diversity and Integration

by David Hinojosa, J.D., and Erica Frankenberg, Ed.D.

As many schools across America have re-segregated along racial and ethnic lines, several school leaders are looking for solutions that can help reverse course. Recognizing the several academic and social benefits stemming from diverse students learning together, some school districts in the South have turned to using students' socioeconomic backgrounds (SES) to help integrate schools.



The Century Foundation reports that, nationwide, 32 of the 91 schools and districts using SES strategies are located in the southern federal Region II (Potter, et al., 2016). The [IDRA EAC-South](#) has assisted several districts with school integration plans and is available to assist others in Region II* with technical assistance in this area.

Since the late 1960s, the South has been the most desegregated region of the country for Black and White students; however, this progress has been rapidly unraveling over the past three decades (Orfield & Frankenberg, 2014). Latino students, who now out-number Black students in public schools in the South, attend 90 percent to 100 percent minority schools at higher rates than Black students. Many districts in the South were once under court orders to desegregate, but a number of these cases have ended.

Districts still valuing diverse schools must be cognizant of applicable legal standards that curtail some types of voluntary efforts. But importantly, the Supreme Court found in 2007 compelling reasons that school districts would want to adopt policies to (1) reduce racial isolation, and (2) create diverse schools. These reasons are supported by research, described below, and also were foundational to the guidance released by the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice in 2011 about race-conscious policies in K-12 schools . - [Keep reading](#)

School Integration - Preparing Teachers for Working in Diverse Classrooms

by Pamela Higgins Harris, Susan Shaffer & Phoebe Schlanger

Preparing teachers to work in diverse classrooms requires intentional thought and review. Schools and neighborhoods reflect our entrenched history of desegregation, integration and re-segregation. Persistent student achievement gaps suggest an implied correlation in disparate opportunity gaps within diverse schools and classrooms, and between diverse students and teachers (OCR, 2016).



Since the landmark ruling in 1954, *Brown v. Board of Education*, various iterations of the promise of school integration have been identified as critical to the success of students of all racial, linguistic, socio-economic and religious backgrounds (Tolsdorf, 2005; Orfield, et al.,

2014; Kahlenberg, 2012). Research confirms that all students benefit when they attend diverse schools and are taught by highly effective teachers (Bowman, 2014).

Teachers are the most important school-based factor when it comes to achievement (RSN, 2015). To eliminate the educational achievement gap, we must address opportunity gaps that persist for children and youth of diverse backgrounds...

Teachers who seek to become culturally competent educators should adopt the following strategies. - [Keep reading](#)



See IDRA's Infographic:
[Six Generations of Civil Rights and Educational Equity](#)

Strategies for Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse, High-Quality Teacher Workforce

by *Desiree Carver-Thomas and Kristin Grayson, Ph.D.*

Schools nationwide are struggling to hire a teacher workforce that reflects the racial diversity of their communities, an endeavor made even more difficult by the national teacher shortage (Sutcher, et al., 2016). However, recruiting and retaining a diverse teacher workforce that includes teachers of color is crucial. A more robust pipeline of teachers of color can help stem shortages in hard-to-staff schools (Simon & Johnson, 2015).



The [IDRA EAC-South](#) is currently assisting several districts (both those under federal desegregation orders and others who have self-identified the need to diversify their staff) in addressing these issues by helping districts use research-based solutions to recruit, hire and retain teachers of color. IDRA EAC-South is ready to assist other districts and does not operate as an enforcement agency.

Why We Need More Teachers of Color

Research shows that teachers of color tend to have higher expectations of students of color and are associated with better student achievement, lower absenteeism and fewer suspensions for students of color (Albert Shanker Institute, 2015; Holt & Gershenson, 2015). They also are important role models for all students (U.S. Department of Education, 2016)... Following are three strategies for recruitment and retention. - [Keep reading](#)



Listen to our podcast episode: [How Inclusive Education Shapes Teaching in Diverse Classrooms](#)

Classnotes Podcasts on School Integration

The Civil Rights Issue of Our Generation - Episode 88

A Discussion about Diversity Training - Episode 90

Diversity in Education - Episode 97

Six Generations of Civil Rights in Education - Episode 132

A Valuing Professional Development Model - Episode 143

How Inclusive Education Shapes Teaching in Diverse Classrooms - Episode 170

Sign up to receive free e-mail notices when new episodes are available.



IDRA Establishes Scholarship Endowment in Honor of Dr. Max Castillo, University of Houston-Downtown President Emeritus

In recognition of University of Houston-Downtown President Emeritus Max Castillo's service on the IDRA board of directors and to higher education, IDRA has established the IDRA Scholarship Endowment in Urban Education at UHD in his honor. Dr. Castillo served on the IDRA board for almost 30 years and had a 17-year tenure with UHD.

"IDRA is grateful to work for the day when we can assure educational opportunity for every child - regardless of their educational, cultural or economic background," said María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel, IDRA President & CEO.

Dr. Castillo told Skyline News: "The focus of the award should be on the important work that IDRA accomplishes every day to empower public school leadership and teachers to provide opportunities for every student to be successful and attain their highest educational goal. I am honored that this endowment is established in my honor, but I am focused on the important work of IDRA as it continues to work toward this objective."

Since his retirement eight years ago, Dr. Castillo's work continues to bring recognition to the university and positively impacts the public and higher education communities.



(From left) Interim UHD President Michael A. Olivas, College of Public Service interim dean Leigh Van Horn, IDRA President & CEO María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel, IDRA board member Othon Medina, Urban Education chair Ronald Beebe, Dr. Max Castillo



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The Intercultural Development Research Association is an independent private non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring educational opportunity for every child. 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.

IDRA works hand-in-hand with hundreds of thousands of educators and families each year in communities and classrooms around the country. All our work rests on an unwavering commitment to creating self-renewing schools that value and promote the success of students of all backgrounds.