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May 2018 IDRA Newsletter

This month's focus: Rejecting a Return to Tracking



"We must make sure that every student has access to high quality teaching and a quality curriculum that prepares them for post-secondary education." -

Dr. María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel, IDRA President and CEO

In this issue:

- Getting it Just Right! - Rigor and College Prep for All, by Paula N. Johnson, M.A.
- Rural Districts Take a 24 Percent Hit in Algebra II Enrollment - IDRA Ready Texas Study Examines Texas HB5 Graduation Requirements, by Hector Bojorquez

- Locked Gates and Hurdles on the College Path, by Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed.
- Call for Applications - 2018 IDRA José A. Cárdenas School Finance Fellows Program

Plus online tools:

- Research Study: Ready Texas study, policy brief, infographic and other info
- Classnotes Podcast episode Ready Texas Study of New Graduation Requirements - Episode 178
- Bilingual Handout: "Expecting Less is Not Better"

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Rejecting a Return to Tracking

Getting it Just Right! - Rigor and College Prep for All

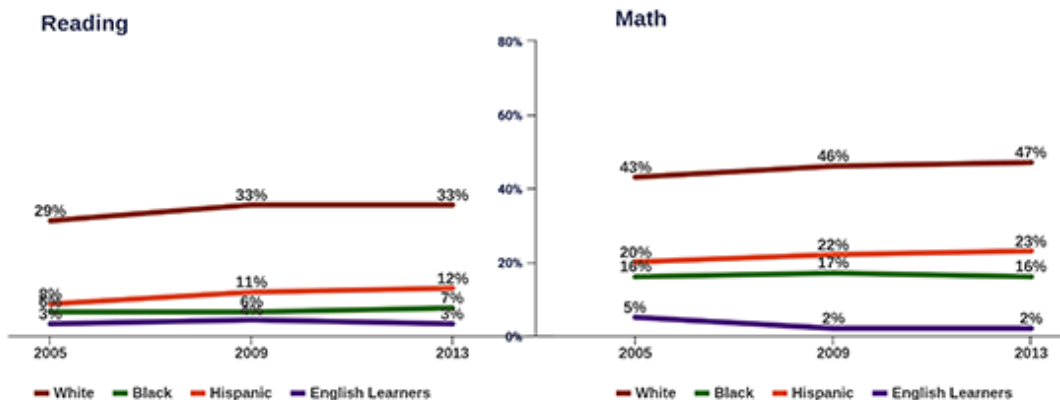
by Paula N. Johnson, M.A.

The term "rigor" in education is often defined differently depending on who you ask. A common view is that rigor requires long, complicated school assignments, but it doesn't necessarily translate into actually preparing students for college.



Paula N. Johnson describes how each student must be given an amount of rigor that is just right for challenging them. She discusses disparate college preparedness rates and the critical need to increase access to rigorous coursework. The article includes best practices for engaging students long-term with the expectation that they will go to college.

Percentage of College-Ready 12th Graders



Data source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), various years, 1992-2013 Reading Assessments & 1992-2013 Math Assessments, G12, 2018.

2018, Intercultural Development Research Association

SEE ARTICLE

Rural Districts Take a 24 Percent Hit in Algebra II Enrollment - IDRA Ready Texas Study Examines Texas HB5 Graduation Requirements

by Hector Bojorquez

Texas' foundation high school program established in 2013 by the Texas Legislature with HB5, was a substantial change to the state's graduation requirements. The bill lowered graduation requirements for math, science, English and social studies, which may potentially impact college readiness for all Texas students.



Hector Bojorquez examines the results of IDRA's [Ready Texas Study](#), conducted with support from the Greater Texas Foundation, to see how HB5 is affecting student courses and implications for college readiness. The study found that rural districts lost 24 percent in Algebra II course enrollments in the latest year of HB5; 45 districts mandated that their students pursue the plan that mirrors the previous graduation requirements; students aspire to attend college and understood that endorsements satisfy no requirements for college admission or success; parents have college-going aspirations for their children and worry if the lack of info on HB5 will affect their child's college career; and counselors are concerned that pursuing certain endorsements might derail student college plans. The downward turns in graduation requirements and increases in stakeholder dissatisfaction and confusion must be considered as Texas continues to implement HB5.

SEE ARTICLE

Locked Gates and Hurdles on the College Path

by Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed.

As IDRA celebrates its 45th anniversary, Aurelio Montemayor discusses his experiences in education, particularly with college access, among all the schools that the organization has worked with over the years. Though Texas has made strides in reducing the dropout rate, increasing college diversity, and small pockets of schools serving low-income and minority students have switched from a deficit to an asset-based approach, there is still more that must be done to support students who are not traditionally seen as "college material."



Too many educators still consider the color of a student's skin, immigration status, first language or poverty as insurmountable roadblocks to college success. Schools must err on the side of considering all children fit for college.

SEE ARTICLE

Call for Applications - 2018 IDRA José A. Cárdenas School Finance Fellows Program

IDRA is inviting research applications for the IDRA José A. Cárdenas School Finance Fellows Program. This will be the third round of this fellows program to support research that will inform efforts to secure equitable funding of public schools across the country.

Under the leadership of Dr. María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel, IDRA President & CEO, the program was established by IDRA to honor the memory of IDRA founder, Dr. José Angel Cárdenas.

IDRA will select one or more fellows who will dedicate themselves to a period of intense study and writing in school finance. We will hold a symposium that includes release of the fellows program paper. The paper and findings will be published in the symposium proceedings and disseminated to the education research and policymaker community.

Get details and help us spread the word!

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As a token of our appreciation, you can be entered into a drawing for a \$50 Amazon gift card.

[SEE SURVEY](#)

Classnotes Podcasts Related to Rejecting a Return to Tracking

Ready Texas Study of New Graduation Requirements - 178

Tracking vs. High Quality Education for All Students - 124

Why Algebra II? - 133

Higher Math for All - 87

Texas Higher Ed Commissioner on College Access - 161



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The Intercultural Development Research Association is an independent, non-profit organization. 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.

We are committed to the IDRA valuing philosophy, respecting the knowledge and skills of the individuals we work with and build on the strengths of the students and parents in their schools.