

SHARE:

[Join Our Email List](#)



This issue's focus: Student Voice



"Students are going to come back to school with very strong opinions on social issues... We have to be sensitive to and respect student voice, because, if we do not, it is very possible that students will walk out on our style of education and learning."

- Gylon Jackson, IDRA webinar "Nurturing Students' Hearts and Minds"

IN THIS ISSUE

Maybe One Day, the Pain Won't Feel the Same

We Create Hope Within Our Communities - Before and During COVID-19, Texas Chief Science Officers Advocate for STEM

IDRA Valued Youth Partnership Students Share their Experiences as Tutors

Systems in America Are Set Up to Be Racist

We Are Important, and So is Our History

Student Videos

Student Voices on Reopening Schools

Recent IDRA News

SEE NEWSLETTER PDF

Maybe One Day, the Pain Won't Feel the Same - Testimony for African American Studies Curriculum

by *Earl Williams, Trinidad Garza Early College High School in Dallas ISD*

I would like to start by thanking you all for welcoming us here today and zoning in on the echoes of a minority group that often goes unheard.

Simply put, African American Studies should be implemented because societal barriers can only be broken down through education of the seemingly uneducated. And with the current climate of our society, this education is needed more than ever.



Maybe one day, the pain won't feel the same.

Me and my people won't be lost in tears, dancing in this hurricane. Our blood won't keep getting splattered on concrete as if it's art for their eyes.

What a shame. It is 100-plus years later, and killing Black people is still a consensual crime.

KEEP READING

We Create Hope Within Our Communities - Before and During COVID-19, Texas Chief Science Officers Advocate for STEM

by CSOs *Isela Herrera, McCollum High School in Harlandale ISD, San Antonio; Shreya Chaudhary, Keystone School in San Antonio; & Elizabeth Alexander, STEM Academy in Northeast ISD, San Antonio*

The **Chief Science Officers program** emphasizes student voice across the globe for STEM engagement. CSO students create action plans that

encourage STEM throughout their community. These action plans enable students to further their STEM education, bring awareness of future career paths, and advocate for STEM. Alongside the action plan process, CSO students network with many different corporations to further advance our future endeavors in STEM fields.



During tough times like these, the entire world is searching for something. Something to take their minds off of the pain that we are seeing all around us. What we are searching for is a four-letter word: Hope.

While hope is something we need at the CSO program, we don't just look for hope; we create hope within our communities.



[KEEP READING](#)

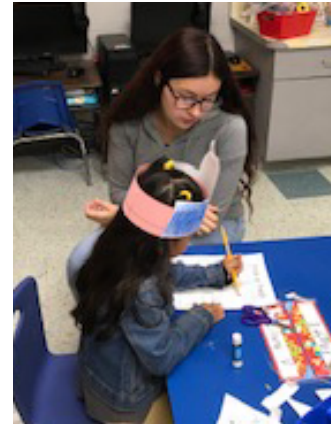
[SEE WEBINAR](#)

IDRA Valued Youth Partnership Students Share their Experiences as Tutors

Tutoring My Kids

by Serenity Nance, Kazen Middle School in South San Antonio ISD

In October 2019, we started our IDRA VYP tutoring program at Palo Alto Elementary School, tutoring kindergarteners and first graders. I was a little nervous at first because I didn't know if I was the right person for the job. After about a week of tutoring, I got the hang of it, and I stopped doubting myself so much. Of course, there was still that thought in the back of my mind telling me I was going to fail the kids, not help them enough or not even impact their lives. But I pushed all that aside and did my best.



How Tutoring Helped Me

by John Tscheulinat, Kazen Middle School in South San Antonio ISD

Tutoring in the Valued Youth Partnership has improved my leadership skills and my confidence level. Tutoring helped me always remember to be on time because if I missed the bus, I wouldn't be able to go tutor my tutees. My tutees depend on me for a lot of things like helping them with what they need to know.



[SEE VYP WEBSITE](#)

KEEP READING

Systems in America Are Set Up to Be Racist

by Alana Price, middle school student advocate in San Antonio ISD

The Black Lives Matter movement is a protest against police brutality directed toward the Black community. People across the globe fight for equal rights for the Black community and to eliminate police brutality. For many years, Black people, indigenous people and other people of color have been treated differently because of the color of their skin, which led to the Black Lives Matter movement.

The Black Lives Matter movement has shown that it isn't enough to not be non-racist. We must commit to being anti-racist. The systems in America are set up to be racist toward Black people, indigenous people and other people of color.



KEEP READING

We Are Important, and So is Our History - Testimony for African American Studies Curriculum

by Quardasha Mitchell, Trinidad Garza Early College High School in Dallas

Why we should approve the standards for this class should not be a question that I should have to answer. This course is one of the most informational, yet intriguing courses to me. Why? Because it is about the history of my people that I once knew little of and the history that is overlooked in the books that we have in school today.

I used to sit in history class and wonder, "Why don't they teach us more about the history of African Americans?" I often get angry because the history that we learn is more than just Christopher Columbus and the people who took land from the Native Americans.

We need to know the real history of African Americans because what is taught in schools about African Americans is limited.



KEEP READING

Student Videos

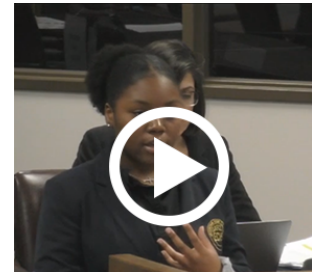
See our [video gallery](#) featuring testimony for African American Studies presented before the Texas State Board of Education.



Testimony Highlights by Multiple Students



Testimony by Earl Williams



Testimony by Quardasha Mitchell

Student Voices on Reopening Schools

In early June, IDRA kicked off our series of webinars on reopening schools by inviting students to share their experiences during COVID-19 school closures and their concerns about returning to school this fall. Highlights are below.

"I feel very emotional. The way school ended, going from eighth grade to high school, I lost a third of my friends who I won't be able to see or talk to again. We didn't get to say goodbye."

- Lena Rivas, freshman, Northside ISD

"Logically, I know we shouldn't go back to school. And it is horrible to force students to be confined together for eight hours a day in our current climate. But emotionally, I cannot handle the isolation anymore."

- Kennedy Kearns, senior, Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City ISD

"I think that going back to in-person teaching is a good idea. But at the same time, why would you put students in danger of catching COVID? Especially teachers, who have families to go to?"

- Gracie Hernández, recent graduate, Northside ISD

"I've felt extremely overwhelmed with school having to move online so quickly as well as watching the pandemic and civil unrest unfold and the killing of these innocent lives. But I hope that our voices will be heard, and it will bring some light to the situation."

- Clarissa Tavera, junior, San Antonio ISD

"Touching on the topics of civil unrest and immigration, I feel like these topics should be openly talked about in school, considering in my particular environment there are many minorities affected by civil unrest and immigration."

- Juliana Cruz, senior, Dallas ISD



"Along with civil unrest, I believe students should be spearheading efforts to reform school policing policy."

- Melanie Harrell, recent graduate, San Antonio ISD

"I try to focus on being grateful that, though it sadly had to come through violence or talking extreme measures to get lawmakers' attention, we are making change. And I am part of that generation making change."

- Dejjia Nunn, sophomore, Judson ISD

[SIGN UP FOR EMAILS](#)

Recent IDRA News

[How to Submit Public Comments to the U.S. Department of Education - Tell the Department of Education about the dangers of excluding students from receiving CARES Act relief](#) , July 1, 2020

[Supreme Court Ruling Widens the Door to Use Public Funds for Vouchers and Religious Schools](#) , July 1, 2020

[New Partnership Launches the Texas Early Childhood English Learner Initiative](#), June 24, 2020

[How Equity Audits Reveal Harmful Education Policies - Classnotes Podcast Episode #202](#), June 23, 2020

[IDRA Lauds Supreme Court Decision to Keep DACA Alive, Urges Schools to Affirm Immigrant Rights](#), June 18, 2020

[IDRA Praises Supreme Court Ruling Affirming Rights of LGBTQ Employees to be Free From Discrimination](#), June 15, 2020

[IDRA Statement in Support of Black Lives](#) , June 5, 2020

[IDRA Valued Youth Partnership Tutors Will Lead in New Ways - Now more than ever, reconnecting with students is critical. IDRA can help!](#), June 4, 2020

[Minneapolis School Board Unanimously Votes to Terminate Contract with Police Department](#) , June 3, 2020

[Minneapolis School Board Resolution Would End Contract with Police Department](#) , June 1, 2020

[Chief Science Officer Teens Get Creative to Promote STEM While Navigating School Closures](#) , May 27, 2020

IDRA In the News

Austin school board OKs \$1.65 billion budget amid calls to divert district police funds, Melissa B. Taboada, Stephenville Empire-Tribune, June 23, 2020

Groups Call for Austin ISD to Shift Money from Policing In Schools To Building Community, by Sangita Menon, KUT, June 22, 2020


As COVID-19 Strains School Budgets, Texas' Historic Education Cuts Give Lessons, by Laura Isensee, Houston Public Media, June 18, 2020

IDRA feature focuses on Valley's digital divide, by Luis Montoya, Rio Grande Guardian, June 13, 2020

Watch: During COVID-19, nonprofit pivots to address digital divide, by Steve Taylor, Rio Grande Guardian, May 27, 2020

Watch: Arise Adelante helps colonia families navigate the digital divide, by Steve Taylor, Rio Grande Guardian, May 22, 2020

Commentary: Not aiding DACA students merciless, by Celina Moreno, for the San Antonio Express-News, May 14, 2020




School Reopening Webinar Series
free webinars

- Student Perspectives on a Changing School Climate**
June 16, 2020 - Watch recording!
- Nurturing Students' Hearts and Minds**
June 23, 2020 - Watch recording!
- Partnering with Families to Reopen & Reimagine Schools**
July 15, 2020, at 11:30 am to 1:00 pm cdt
- Getting Schools Ready to Support Students Facing a New World of Challenges**
July 22, 2020, at 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm cdt

<https://idra.news/WebinarSeries> 

School Reopening Webinar Series

[LEARN MORE](#)



Intercultural Development Research Association **IDRA**

Learning Goes On

A COVID-19 Resource for Education

See our COVID-19 resource for education web hub with free webinar series, school resources and policy updates.

[SEE WEB HUB](#)

July 8, 2020

[SIGN UP FOR EMAILS](#)



[SIGN UP FOR EMAILS](#)

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.