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## **This issue's focus: School Leadership**



***"Principals who foster culturally-sustaining instruction and welcoming school climates show the community, through concrete action, that they believe all students and families are valuable. "***

**- Celina Moreno, J.D., IDRA President &CEO**



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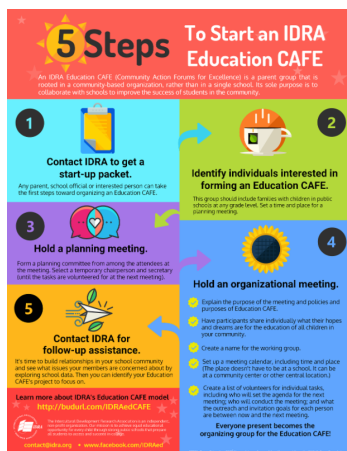
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## School Leadership

# Superintendent Dr. Daniel King Describes How Strong Family Leadership Leads to School Innovation

by Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed., featuring Superintendent Daniel King, Ph.D.

Dr. Daniel King, Superintendent of the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District (PSJA), recently reflected on the climate he cultivated among principals and other PSJA faculty. Though PSJA has an established, vibrant parent education program, he wanted more for his schools and his families.



His vision for engaged schools and families is rooted in the same ideology behind IDRA's Education CAFE model - the belief in each child's potential and that it is the school's job to provide the necessary supports, especially acknowledging the assets of the home. Dr. King has been a strong supporter of the Education CAFE in his district.

He actively models his welcoming of family leadership for all his administrators and this mindset of partnership and cooperation with families is shared by his principals.

[See Infographic](#)



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## Five Best Practices for Effective Principals and School Leadership Teams

by Nilka Avilés, Ed.D.

School leaders have a challenging job. Some have benefited from having the support of a leadership coach as they build their own capacity and that of their leadership teams. Based on research and IDRA's experience with leadership coaching, we have developed a set of best practices.

The focus is on equipping principals to be visionary leaders, student advocates, instructional leaders, collaborators and risk-taking innovators in the name of improved student achievement. Five such best practices are outlined in this article.



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## Mexican American Studies in All Grades - Administering an Innovation

*by Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed.*

The effort in Texas to establish the new Mexican American Studies (MAS) course generated a flurry of activity. Innovative educators are looking for ways to infuse MAS into all content areas and in multiple grade levels - both a challenge and opportunity for school administrators.

Research shows that MAS courses lead to improved standardized test scores, graduation rates, college attendance rates and academic mindsets, regardless of a student's ethnicity. A critical element for MAS success is administrator participation, modeling and support.

IDRA can help administrators connect to available MAS resources to seamlessly integrate these programs onto their campuses for the benefit of all students.



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## English Learner Success Depends on Strong Principal Leadership

*by Nilka Avilés, Ed.D.*

Due to demographic trends, many schools that once had few, if any, English learners, now have a sizeable English learner population. And other schools that had English learner students with a common home language now have a population speaking multiple languages.


Principals must take charge on this issue and play the role of change agents to prepare their school communities to welcome and embrace English learners. This means principals must innovate, inspire, empower and function as a servant leader to both the educational community and the neighborhoods served by their campuses.




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# IDRA EAC-South Family Engagement Online Assistance Package



Few people question the value of parents being involved in schools. But many school leaders labor with traditional strategies that have little meaning or success. This IDRA EAC-South Family Engagement Web-based Technical Assistance Package is designed to provide educators tools for embracing what, for many, is a new vision for engaging with families and community members.

**This free web-based package includes five chapters, each with a video and supporting resources, infographics, articles & podcasts.**

Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Chapter 5
				
<b>Introduction to Family Leadership in Education</b>	<b>Authentic Outreach</b>	<b>The Six Principles of Family Engagement</b>	<b>School Strategies for Family Engagement</b>	<b>Education CAFE Overview</b>
Get an overview of family leadership in education and its benefits.  5:15 min.	See how authentic family outreach differs from traditional ideas of parent outreach. And get specific strategies for implementing authentic outreach.  4:30 min.	Explore the six principles of creating meaningful family leadership in education.  4:52 min.	Get some strategies for schools that support family leadership in education which is the key path for families to influence policy and practice.  5:43 min.	Find out how Education CAFEs work and hear from members on how it has helped them and their schools.  3:08 min.


<https://idra.news/webFamEngage>

The IDRA EAC-South is the equity assistance center that provides free or low-cost technical assistance to schools in the U.S. South. With roots in the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the four federally-funded equity assistance centers help school districts build capacity to confront educational problems occasioned by race, national origin, sex and gender, and religion.

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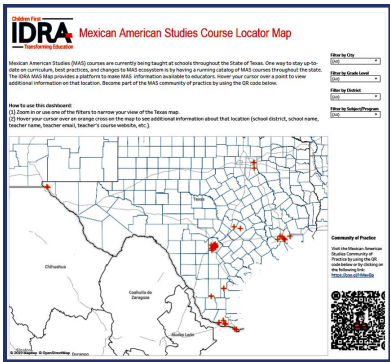


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## Mexican American Studies - IDRA Services

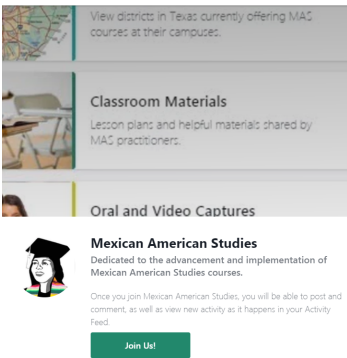
IDRA provides training that supports educators in offering Mexican American Studies in public schools. Our professional development covers a range of topics for all grades.

Topics can include the teaching of content-specific MAS courses and/or tools educators can use to incorporate cultural sustainability into any curriculum.



**MAS Course  
Locator Map**

Visit the IDRA MAS Map to search MAS courses by teacher, topic, district or city.



**Online Community  
of Practice**

IDRA's Community of Practice is a place where members can share lesson plans, resources, events, and ideas. Click the image to request access.



**Professional  
Development**

IDRA provides training and customized technical assistance that supports educators in offering Mexican American Studies coursework.

**GET INFO**

**Infographics on Serving  
Immigrant Students and Families**

**10 Strategies**  
for How Schools Should Respond to  
Help Children Impacted by ICE Raids

- 1 Provide trauma-informed care**  
Provide trauma-informed care and services for students who experience or may experience trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Ensure educators and staff are appropriately trained to recognize and respond to students' needs.
- 2 Provide counseling support**  
Have counselors, social workers and other professionals available to assist students, families, educators and staff. These professionals can respond directly to individual needs and can help to create a safe and positive school climate for everyone in a campus community.
- 3 Provide waiting space**  
Create a safe space, like a school gym, where students and families can wait if a parent is detained.
- 4 Identify bilingual liaison**  
Identify a bilingual parent liaison or family liaison to support students and families.
- 5 Connect with community**  
Connect with local community-based organizations that have expertise and resources. Distribute and post IDRA's alert on immigrant student rights: "Welcoming Immigrant Students in Our Public Schools."
- 6 Obstruct the school-to-deportation pipeline**  
Obstruct - do not facilitate - the school-to-deportation pipeline. Ensure police officers are not present on campus unnecessarily as this can traumatize students and discourage families from being on campus. Do not involve law enforcement routinely or enforce criminal penalties against students that might trigger ICE intervention. Review codes of conduct to ensure they do not contain penalties for discipline procedures related to immigration status or English proficiency.
- 7 Affirm safe spaces**  
Affirmatively have and post a statement that makes it clear that the district is a safe space for families. Many school districts have reaffirmed their policies to protect students' rights in light of uncertainty regarding federal immigration enforcement activities in their schools. Some districts have issued statements affirming the district's mission to ensure all students have a safe and positive learning environment and affirming guidance to school personnel on how to, for example, respond to requests from ICE agents for data or access to their campus.
- 8 Help students who become homeless**  
Have the district's " McKinney-Vento" district ensure that any students who become homeless as a result of a raid are given supports and legal protections afforded by the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
- 9 Provide public resources**  
Make general public resources available to families. For example, [www.immigrationhelp.org](https://www.immigrationhelp.org) has information about non-profit legal service organizations by state.
- 10 Equip school staff**  
Equip school staff with training, resources and supports. School leaders have an important role in actively affirming the welcoming environment they intend to maintain. All staff should understand the public policy procedures for collecting student information, commitment to the communities they serve, and measures for communicating with students' families.

When U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) conducts raids in a community, students are deeply affected. Even the threat of a raid or news of one in another part of the country can have painful lasting effects. These 10 strategies help educators serving students affected by ICE raids.

Get more info and resources, including IDRA's School Opening Alert Flier & eBook:  
• School Opening Alert Flier  
• eBook on Welcoming Immigrant Students in Our Public Schools  
• Infographic: "Welcoming Immigrant Students in Our Public Schools"  
<https://idra.news/IDRAWelcome>

Families should know:  
• The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prohibits schools from providing any outside agency including ICE with any information from a child's school file that would expose the student's undocumented status.  
• ICE agents are to refrain from enforcement actions at certain sensitive locations, which include schools as outlined in ICE's own policies.  
• Schools should not act for officials outside when providing students or interacting with families.  
• All students, regardless of immigration status, are entitled to a free public education under U.S. Supreme Court precedent.

Many school districts have reaffirmed their policies to protect students' rights in light of uncertainty regarding federal immigration enforcement activities in their schools. Some districts have issued statements affirming the district's mission to ensure all students have a safe and positive learning environment and affirming guidance to school personnel on how to, for example, respond to requests from ICE agents for data or access to their campus.

See complete IDRA's resource: "School Districts Plan Resolutions on Responding to ICE"  
<https://idra.news/IDRAWelcome>

Education and other adults in the school need to search for students who are being harassed or mistreated by other students related to their race, or perceived to be a marginalized status or that of their family.

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SEE BILINGUAL INFOGRAPHIC

**Welcoming Immigrant Students in School**

**Immigrant students are guaranteed access to free public education by the U.S. Supreme Court.**  
Certain procedures must be followed when registering undocumented immigrant children (and those whose parents are undocumented) in school to avoid violation of their civil rights as outlined in the Plyler vs. Doe decision.

- Public schools cannot deny admission to a student on the basis of undocumented status.
- Public schools cannot require students or parents to disclose their immigration status.
- Public schools cannot ask students or parents questions intended to expose their undocumented status.
- Public schools cannot require social security numbers from students or parents.
- Public schools cannot demand that parents produce driver's licenses or other identification documents that are not required.
- Public schools cannot engage in any practices that "chill" or hinder the right of access to school.

All children are **required** under state laws to attend school until they reach a mandated age.

School personnel have no legal obligation to enforce U.S. immigration laws.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents are to refrain from enforcement actions at certain sensitive locations, which include schools, as detailed in ICE's own policies.

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act prohibits schools from providing any outside agency (including ICE) with any information from a child's school file that would expose the student's undocumented status.

The only exception is if an agency gets a court order subpoena that parents can then challenge.

**What schools can do...**

- Focus on teaching all students.
- Pro-actively show parents that their children are welcome.
- Ensure teachers and staff are properly trained about protecting the rights of children and on cultural competency.
- Communicate with parents in their language.
- Share information about resources for students, families and educators in English and other languages at the school.

Review all of your enrollment and registration documents (including forms, websites, and communications with parents) to be clear that the provision of the child's social security number, birth certificate, etc., is voluntary, and that not providing such information will not bar a child's enrollment.

Adults without social security numbers who are applying for a free lunch and/or breakfast program for a student need only state on the application that they do not have a social security number.

Get more info and resources, including IDRA's School Opening Alert Flier & eBook.  
<https://idra.news/IDRAWelcome>

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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.

