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## IDRA Newsletter – Supporting Diverse Students

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## Recent News

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## Federal Departments of Education and Justice Release Discipline Resources for Schools

by Morgan Craven, J.D.

In 2014, the Obama Administration's Departments of Education and Justice issued guidance intended to help school districts across the U.S. address race-based discrimination in public schools that acknowledged the need to reduce harmful discipline practices, especially those that disproportionately impact Black students.



Unfortunately, the Trump Administration rescinded this guidance in 2018 in favor of selective research that culminated in a report incorrectly asserting that reducing punitive, exclusionary discipline increases school violence.

IDRA and other advocates across the nation have called for the Departments of Education and Justice to issue new discipline guidance that will bring back vital resources from the 2014 guidance and address discipline gaps.

The U.S. Department of Education has recently released resources – not official guidance – to help schools combat school discipline disparities. This article describes the key elements of the new resources and lists five things that all who are invested in the success of students should continue to push for.

[Keep reading Federal Departments article](#)



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## School Voucher Schemes Continue to Grow in the South

by Terrence Wilson, J.D.

Recent attempts from pro-voucher policymakers have capitalized on the frustrations of parents that were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and currently accelerated by cultural grievances to advance vouchers rather than focusing on improving public schools using evidence-based strategies like IDRA's Quality Schools Action framework.

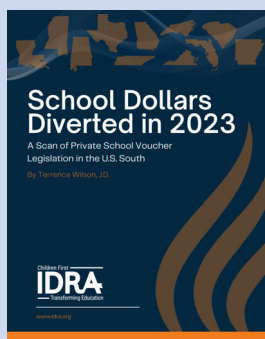
Research shows that voucher programs are harmful for numerous reasons, from draining funds from already stressed public schools to their history of exacerbating current patterns of segregation.

In 2023, several states attempted to create new voucher programs or expand current offerings. Among lessons learned, this article lists IDRA's recommendations for stopping the spread of vouchers.

**See infographic: [5 Reasons Private School Vouchers Would Hurt Students](#)**



Keep reading [School Voucher Schemes](#) article



## See IDRA's new eBook

### [School Dollars Diverted in 2023 – A Scan of Private School Voucher Legislation in the U.S. South](#)

by Terrence Wilson, J.D.



## Advocacy Tools

Join IDRA's [Southern Education Equity Network](#) to connect with advocates across the U.S. South.

## IDRA 50th Anniversary Gala



**We are excited to welcome  
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation  
as our 50th Anniversary Presenting Sponsor!**





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## IDRA 50th Anniversary Reception in Washington D.C.

In July, IDRA hosted a 50th Anniversary Reception in Washington, D.C., along with host committee partners Legal Defense Fund, MALDEF, National Coalition on School Diversity, and Seek Common Ground.

The reception featured a keynote address from U.S. Department of Education Deputy Secretary Cynthia “Cindy” Marten and remarks by Congresswoman Teresa Leger Fernández, Congressman Joaquin Castro, IDRA President & CEO Celina Moreno, and IDRA National Director of Policy, Advocacy and Community Engagement Morgan Craven.

IDRA’s reception was a celebration of 50 years of fighting for and with young people and families for excellent and equitable schools. It was also a call to action to continue that fight through strong partnerships and strategic planning.



**New Classnotes Podcast Episode**

**Advocates of Color and Community Power**

Decisions about education made by state-level lawmakers impact millions of students. But few people have input into those decisions, especially those in communities of color. IDRA's groundbreaking Education Policy Fellows Program set out to change that dynamic. With this program, IDRA trains advocates with a commitment to and experience with communities of color to influence state laws and lead a powerful network of impacted communities.

As we closed our second cycle of the program, we sat down with our five fellows to reflect on their experiences.

Morgan Craven, J.D., IDRA National Director of Policy, Advocacy and Community Engagement, led the conversation with fellows: Steve Kemgang, Diana Long, Jonathan Peraza Campos, M.S., Alisha "Tuff" Tuff, and Ruth M. Youn. In the second of three episodes, they describe the challenges of being advocates of color working in policymaking spaces and the changes they would make to make the policy process more accessible for communities.

The IDRA Education Policy Fellows Program that operated from November 2022 through July 2023 was generously supported by The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the Kresge Foundation.



[Visit Podcast Webpage](https://idra.news/Pod236)

## Recent Statements

### Students' Racial Diversity Should be Celebrated, Not Minimized or Erased

Supreme Court Ignores History & Precedent in Finding UNC and Harvard Affirmative Action Programs Unconstitutional

[See Statement](#)

### Court Sides with UNT by Reversing Anti-Immigrant Tuition Challenge

Fifth Circuit Court Decision Reverses District Court Order in *Young Conservatives of Texas v. Neal Smatresk et al.*

[See Statement](#)

## Recent News

### Recent Media Coverage

**State Laws That Impact the School Year by Focus on South Texas**, FOX29, August 26, 2023

**Peter Gonzales Falcon, Star of Federico Fellini's 'Roma,' Dies at 75**, by Mike Barnes, Hollywood Reporter, August 24, 2023 (related articles: Peter Gonzales Falcon Dies: Star of Fellini's 'Roma' Was 75, by Tom Tapp, Deadline, August 24, 2023; and Peter Gonzales Falcon Dies: Star of Federico Fellini's 'Roma' Was 75, by Martin Holmes, TV Insider, August 25, 2023)

**Controversial 'Don't Say Gay' bill in Georgia sparks ongoing debate among legislators and advocates**, by Brianna Cook, WGXA, August 24, 2023. (Also ran in 70 other media outlets in Washington, D.C., Maryland, Washington, Oregon, Montana, Tennessee, Utah, Ohio, North Carolina, South Carolina, Michigan, Florida, Oklahoma, Alabama, California, Pennsylvania, Arizona, New York, Wisconsin, Virginia, West Virginia, Nebraska, Indiana, Idaho, Nevada, Missouri, Iowa)

**A near unanimous vote gives Judson ISD more time to hire district officers to comply with HB3**, by Amanda Henderson, FOX29, August 17, 2023. (Also in News4SA)

**Texas State University trying to bring more diversity to the agriculture industry**, by Dylan McKim, KXan, August 16, 2023

**New Texas law requires armed guard at every school but there is not enough money to pay for it**, by Camille Phillips, Texas Public Radio, August 15, 2023

[See these news stories and other recent media coverage with links on our website.](#)

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## Other IDRA News

August 16, 2023 – **Save the Date for IDRA's 50th Anniversary Gala**

August 10, 2023 – School Opening Alert – Immigrant Students' Rights to Attend Public Schools – Immigrant Students (English) • (Español)

August 8, 2023 – **IDRA Federal Education Policy Update – Inside: DC reception highlights**

July 31, 2023 – **June-July issue of the IDRA Newsletter – State Education Policy Impact**

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IDRA 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.

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