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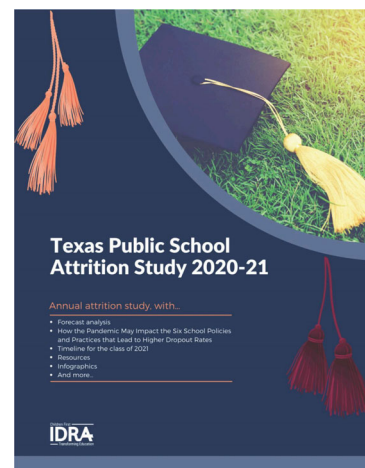
Texas High Schools Reach All-Time Low Attrition Rate but Still Lose 80,000 Students

IDRA Study Gives a First Look at the Pandemic's Effect on Attrition Rates

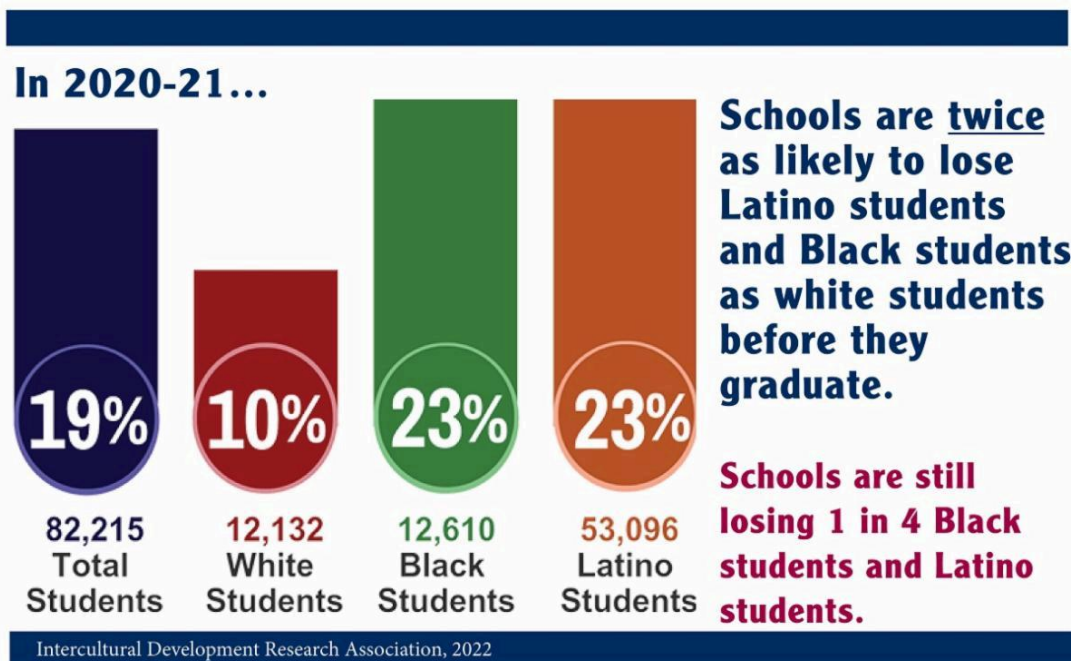
San Antonio (June 14, 2022) - The Texas high school attrition rate declined to 19% last year, which is the lowest rate in over three decades. IDRA released [detailed findings](#) today from its latest study, which examines time series data covering 2020-21, the first full school year during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key findings from IDRA's study show:

- Texas is failing to graduate **one out of every five students** - which translates to losing **10 students per hour**.
- The statewide **attrition rate is 19%**, meaning 19% of the freshman class of 2017-18 left school prior to graduating in the 2020-21 school year.
- At this rate, Texas will not reach universal high school education until 2039.



- Schools are twice as likely to lose Latino students and Black students as white students before they graduate.
- In the last 33 years, Texas schools have lost a cumulative total of more than 4 million students from public high school enrollment prior to graduation.
- 125 counties had improved attrition rates since last year, 85 counties had higher attrition rates and 19 counties remained the same.



“While the attrition rate did decline, Texas high schools lost over 80,000 students, and racial-ethnic gaps still remain,” said Celina Moreno, J.D., IDRA President & CEO. “Federal pandemic response funding for school programming provides an opportunity to implement programs and strategies that work.”

There is no doubt that the pandemic negatively impacted students’ school attendance, engagement, participation and learning, and additional research will examine its effects in the coming years. It is too early to know the full impact. As the nation passed its two-year anniversary of the COVID-19 pandemic’s shutdown of schools, IDRA explored how the pandemic affected the six school policies and practices that lead to higher dropout rates: exclusionary discipline; in-grade retention; low funding and insufficient support for emergent bilingual students; unfair and insufficient funding; watered-down, non-college prep curricula; and testing that is high-stakes.

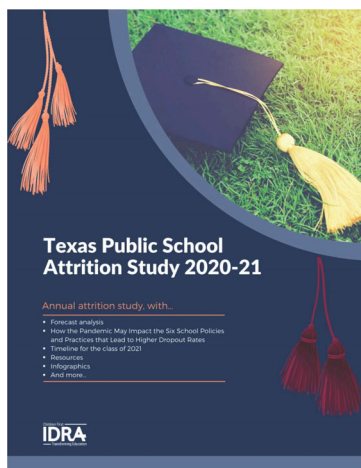
“The investments of some school districts in dropout prevention and college readiness initiatives are making a difference in supporting students through graduation and beyond,” said Moreno. “But much of our state leadership has instead shown a willingness to neglect many of our students and their families by weakening curriculum and graduation requirements, censoring classrooms and books, and withholding fair funding that would pay for vital teachers and programs.”

Almost four decades ago, IDRA conducted the first-ever comprehensive study of school dropouts in Texas. IDRA developed a now industry-wide attrition methodology to calculate the number and percent of high school students leaving school prior to graduating with a high school diploma. This made it possible to measure a class of students over time since schools lose a number of students before their senior year. The initial rate of 33% found in IDRA's landmark 1985-86 study resulted in over 86,000 students missing from high school enrollment, a figure not much higher than in 2020-21.

Each fall, IDRA releases its attrition study. Attrition rates are an indicator of a school's holding power, or the ability to keep students enrolled in school and learning until they graduate. IDRA is the only organization that has examined Texas attrition rates consistently, with the same methodology, for 34 years.

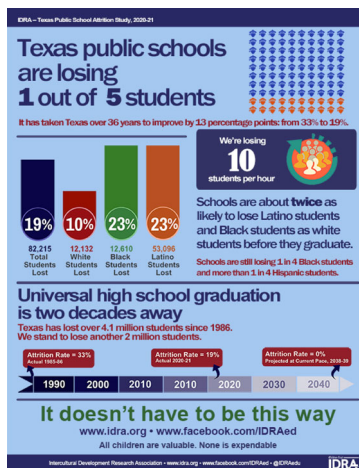
The annual attrition studies released by IDRA include county-level data by race and ethnicity. Trend graphs of high school attrition in each Texas county are available online. The study includes detailed findings, a supplemental analysis for reaching a rate of zero and graphics showing different types of dropout data.

IDRA Attrition Study & Resources



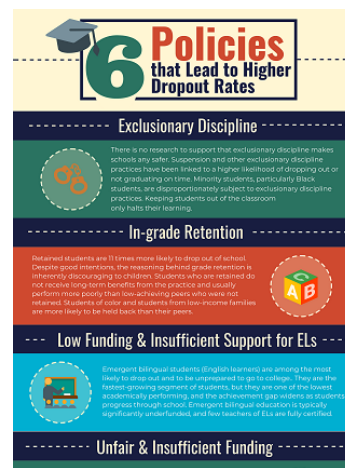
Attrition study plus forecast analysis, class of 2021 timeline, pandemic effect, state report, national ranking

[See Study PDF](#)



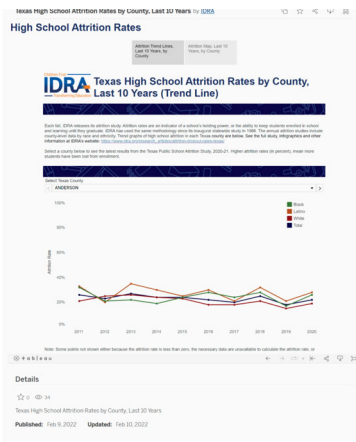
Infographic – Texas public schools are losing one out of five students

[See Infographic](#)



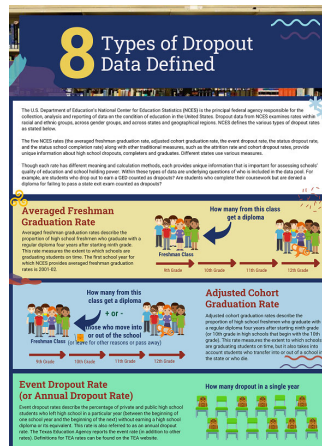
Infographic – 6 Policies and Practices that Lead to Higher Dropout Rates

[See Infographic](#)



Look Up Your County -
See attrition rates and numbers over the last 10 years

[See Dashboard](#)



Infographic –
8 Types of Dropout Data Defined

[See Infographic](#)



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