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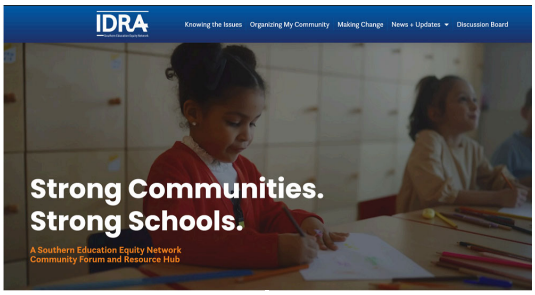
IDRA Launches ‘Southern Education Equity Network’ to Support Family & Community Advocates

SEEN’s New Virtual Tool Will Help Students, Families and Educators Stand Up for Accurate and Inclusive Education

(Atlanta • March 14, 2022) As small but loud factions attack public education, students and families across the U.S. South are pushing back. IDRA’s new Southern Education Equity Network (SEEN) trains and assists communities in improving education policy and practice across the South and provides an



online and mobile space for community members and coalitions to coordinate their advocacy.

"It is more important than ever that we stand united and help one another stand up for our students' futures," said Terrence Wilson, J.D, IDRA's regional policy and community engagement director based in Atlanta. "We are excited to elevate IDRA's community-centered advocacy across the South, ensuring that underserved students and families are seen and heard and have an opportunity to participate in the policymaking process that impacts them."

Community advocates are working together to expand culturally-sustaining teaching that accurately portrays the contributions of all communities. They oppose classroom censorship and book banning, want to eliminate discipline and policing practices that adversely impact students of color, and want to confront systemic racism in education policy. SEEN partners in Georgia and Texas include **Deep Center, Excellence & Advancement Foundation, Georgia Educators for Equity and Justice, Georgia Youth Justice Coalition,** and **South Fulton Arrow Youth Council.**

SEEN builds on the intergenerational community-building IDRA has led for years to secure education opportunities for all students. The network also supports the work of **IDRA's Education CAFEs** (Community Action Forums for Excellence) as they expand across the U.S. South. An Education CAFE is a family-led group, rooted in a community-based organization rather than on a single campus, focused on collaborating with schools to improve the success of students in the community.

The dynamic SEEN site features facts about key issues, news alerts and a forum to help communities stay connected and share lessons learned while organizing for excellent and equitable schools. It also provides tools for advocacy skill-building, such as learning how to testify before a legislative committee.

The Southern Education Equity Network is generously supported by The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

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IDRA is an independent, non-profit organization whose mission is to achieve equal educational opportunity through strong public schools that prepare all students to access and succeed in college.

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