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# Temporary Policy Relieves High-Stakes for 6,000 Students

Use of Individual Graduation Committees Unlocks Diplomas for Qualified Students

San Antonio (November 14, 2016) - Students who are economically disadvantaged, Latino or African American benefited most from the alternative graduation policy established by the Texas legislature in SB149. For the 2014-15 school year, 12,077 students were assigned an individual graduation committee, and about half of those (6,279) were recommended for graduation.

Texas requires students to pass five exit STAAR exams to graduate high school. With the new policy, students who have completed all requirements and do not pass one or two of the end-of-course exams may still graduate if approved by an individual graduation committee (IGC). The policy is set to expire in 2017.

"Student assessment is essential to informing good teaching and can help communities hold local schools accountable for effectively serving all students, but children must not be hurt in the process," said Dr. María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel, IDRA president and CEO. "Texas policy often goes too far by basing promotion and graduation on performance on the state's mandated tests."

The Intercultural Development Research Association's analysis of the new IGC policy was released this month with its high school attrition study. Key findings show:

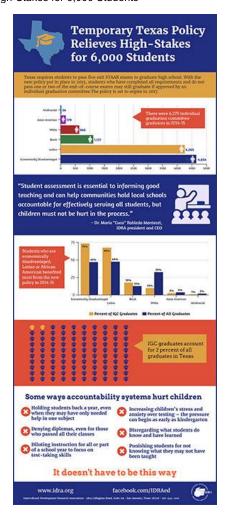
- In the 2014-15 school year, 12,077 students were assigned an individual graduation committee (IGC). Of these, 52 percent (6,279) were recommended for graduation.
- Latino students comprise 68 percent of IGC graduates and 48 percent of all graduates.

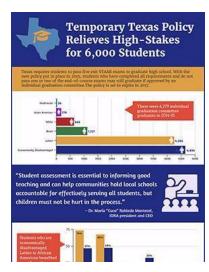
- Economically disadvantaged students comprise 74 percent of IGC graduates and 47 percent of all graduates.
- IGC graduates account for 2 percent of all graduates in Texas.
- Of the 3,684 IGC graduates failing one high school exit exam, the English II and U.S. History exams account for 83 percent of all IGC graduates.
- Of the 1,991 students failing two end-of-course exams, fewer than 1 percent failed a combination of exams that did not include either the English II or U.S. History exam.

"IDRA and others have been calling for accountability that does not misuse testing data for holding students back in grade or preventing them from graduating," said David Hinojosa, J.D., IDRA National Director of Policy and author of the IGC study. "Reliance on a single measure fails to consider multiple factors that impact student achievement, including the fact that the student has no control over inequitable school resources or the quality of teaching they receive."

The IGC consists of the school principal or designee, the teacher of the course, the teacher's supervisor or department chair, and the parent or designee or student. They review the student's academic record to determine

his or her eligibility to graduate. The IGC analysis and IDRA's latest attrition study are available online.





### Infographic - IGC Policy

Use of individual graduation committees unlocks diplomas for qualified students

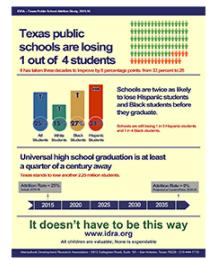
See Infographic



#### **Article**

Temporary Texas Policy Using IGCs Relieves High-Stakes for 6.000 Students

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## Infographic - Attrition

Texas public schools are losing one out of four students

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