Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2007-08
At Current Pace, Schools Will Lose Many More Generations

Inside this Issue:

by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.

The ability of Texas public high schools to keep students in school until they graduate is no better than 23 years ago, according to the latest attrition study by the Intercultural Development Research Association. In its most recent annual attrition study that examines school holding power in Texas public high schools, IDRA found that 33 percent of the freshman class of 2004-05 left school prior to graduating in the 2007-08 school year. While declining one percentage point each year recently, the statewide attrition rate is the same as it was found to be in IDRA's landmark 1985-86 study.

A supplemental analysis indicates that, based on one statistical scenario of Texas attrition rate history, the state will not reach an attrition rate of zero until 2044. At this pace, the state will lose an additional 2.6 million students. (Montes, 2008)

This 2007-08 attrition study represents the 23rd study conducted by IDRA and the latest in a series of reports that began in the 1985-86 school year. In 1986, IDRA conducted Texas' first comprehensive statewide study of high school dropouts using a high school attrition formula to estimate the number and percent of students who leave school prior to graduation. The study in 1986 was the state's first major effort to assess the school holding power of Texas public schools.

This inaugural study entitled, *Texas School Dropout Survey Project,* was conducted under contract with the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the then Texas Department of Community Affairs. It examined three major research questions: (1) What is the magnitude of the dropout problem in the State of Texas? (2) What is the economic impact of the dropout problem for the state? and (3) What is the nature and effectiveness of in-school and alternative out-of-school programs for dropouts in the state?

IDRA's inaugural study found that 86,276 students had not graduated from Texas public high schools, costing the state $17 billion in forgone income, lost tax revenues and increased job training, welfare, unemployment and criminal justice costs (Cárdenas, Robledo and Supik, 1986).

Methods

Spanning a period from 1985-86

The overall attrition rate of 33 percent was the same in 2007-08 as it was more than two decades ago.

through 2007-08, the IDRA attrition studies have provided time series data, using a consistent methodology, on the number and percent of Texas public school students who leave school prior to graduation. These studies provide information on the effectiveness and success of Texas public high schools in keeping students engaged in school until they graduate with a high school diploma.

The attrition calculations were derived from public school enrollment data in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). During the fall of each year, school districts are required to report information to TEA via the PEIMS for all public school students and grade levels. IDRA's attrition studies involve an analysis of ninth-grade enrollment figures and 12th-grade enrollment figures three years later. This period represents the time span during which a student would be enrolled in high school.

IDRA collects and uses high school enrollment data from the TEA Fall Membership Survey to compute countywide and statewide attrition rates by race-ethnicity and gender. Enrollment data from special school districts (military schools, state schools and charter schools) are excluded from the analyses because they are likely to have unstable enrollments or lack a tax base for school programs.

Attrition rates are an indicator of a school's holding power or ability to keep students enrolled in school and learning until they graduate. Along with other dropout measures, attrition rates are useful in studying the magnitude of the dropout problem and the success of schools in keeping students in school. Attrition, in its simplest form, is the rate of shrinkage in size or number. Therefore, an attrition rate is the percent change in grade level enrollment between a base year and an end year.

Historical statewide attrition rates are categorized by race-ethnicity and by gender (see boxes on Pages 6 and 7). County-level data are provided on Pages 5, 16 and 17. In addition, trend data by county is provided via IDRA's web site at www.idra.org. IDRA is including online historical county-level numbers of students lost to attrition. See box on Page 8 for statewide historical numbers and the graph on Page 5 for historical rates. General conclusions from this year's study follow.

Latest Study Results

One of every three students (33 percent) from the freshman class of 2004-05 left school prior to graduating with a high school diploma. The class of 2008 began with 373,712 students. Of these students, 132,815 were lost from public school enrollment between the 2004-05 and 2007-08 school years (see table on Page 7). Numerically, 132,815 students were lost from public high school

In This Issue...

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Hold On – Changing Course to Raise Graduation Rates

by Laurie Posner, M.P.A.

Against a backdrop of rising 21st Century consequences for students who leave high school without a diploma, school and community leaders are looking for new ways to raise graduation rates. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, students who drop out of high school are now almost four times more likely to be unemployed than those who graduate from college. More than half of the fastest growing occupations now call for an associate degree or higher (2007). And today's jobs require people to think critically, collaborate and find innovative solutions, which are skills students develop as they encounter increasingly complex ideas and problems (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2008).

Beyond the common-sense economics of education, a good education also is an invitation to each child to join in a common conversation. Students who leave school lose pathways to either destination – a better paycheck and a bigger world of possibilities. And these losses aren't random.

Despite what the 14th Amendment demands, weak *school holding power* consistently keeps low-income, African American, Latino and Native American students from benefiting equally under the law. IDRA's 2008 annual study of attrition in Texas public schools (Page 1), for example, finds that in 2007-08, 33 percent or 132,815 students were lost from public school enrollment in Texas. Almost four out of 10 (38 percent) Black and Native American students, and more than two in five Hispanic students (44 percent), were lost to attrition.

These outcomes fall far short of what most Americans want for children (Lake Research Partners, 2006). The problem of weak school holding power will persist, however, as long as we frame the problem and respond to it in more or less the same ways. This article pairs current responses with course corrections, offering recommendations for change with an eye trained on equity.

From Recovery to Revamping

This time of year, school districts around the country enlist business leaders, civic leaders and celebrities to pound the pavement and pay a visit to former students where they live. Referred to as "Reach Out to Drop Outs" day in Texas, these initiatives extend a personal appeal to students to return to school. Laudable as such efforts are, it is unclear how students fare once they return. Consensus is clear on two points, however: (1) it is better to strengthen schools to prevent student attrition in the first place, and (2) students who return are only likely to stay if changes are in place that engage them in learning and support them on the path to success.

"Grafting additional staff and programs onto existing ineffective structures" and intervention without follow-up have long been considered unworkable approaches (Woods, 1995). A set of interrelated strategies and supports for students at key transition points are far more effective. These include: (1) addressing academic barriers and achievement gaps; (2) strengthening student engagement and eliminating barriers to attendance; (3) raising teaching quality and ensuring equitable distribution of highly qualified teachers; (4) improving curriculum quality and access for diverse learners; (5) addressing school policies and practices that disproportionately affect underserved students; and (6) engaging families and community members as meaningful partners (Allensworth, et al., 2007, Hammond, et al., 2007, Levin, 2007, Robledo Montecel, 2007).

These strategies clearly privilege "first chance" prevention over "second chance" recovery but they also suggest that when recovery is our next best bet, it must be coupled with revamping systems to keep students from being lost again and again.

Within system change strategies, improving teaching and instructional quality is key. A recent study on teaching quality in Texas finds: "High-performing schools consistently had far greater aggregate teacher quality," while "low-performing schools with high poverty rates and high minority populations had much higher numbers of teachers teaching out of field" not "fully certified and inexperienced" (Fuller, 2008).

Proven Practice: Strengthening Teaching Quality through Smaller Learning Communities

In south Texas, IDRA is partnering with a school district to implement a model for raising teaching quality and reducing dropout rates. A growing body of research finds that professional learning communities, combined with mentoring, improve outcomes for students and staff. IDRA has assisted the district in creating smaller learning communities to support secondary students who were previously at risk of dropping out. Through this learning community, students' reading scores on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) increased at a statistically significant level, student attendance rose, no at-risk student dropped out, and there were many fewer disciplinary problems (Montemayor & Cortez, 2007).

Quality Schools Action Framework

IDRA's Quality Schools Action Framework provides a model for strengthening school holding power through informed family-school-community partnerships and enlightened policymaking (Robledo Montecel, 2005).

The framework focuses on key school features that must be addressed to improve outcomes for all students (teaching quality, curriculum quality, student engagement and family engagement).

The article beginning on Page 3 provides examples of effective practices in three of these domains:
- Teaching Quality – Professional Learning Communities
- Curriculum Quality – the EBSI model
- Student Engagement – IDRA's Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program
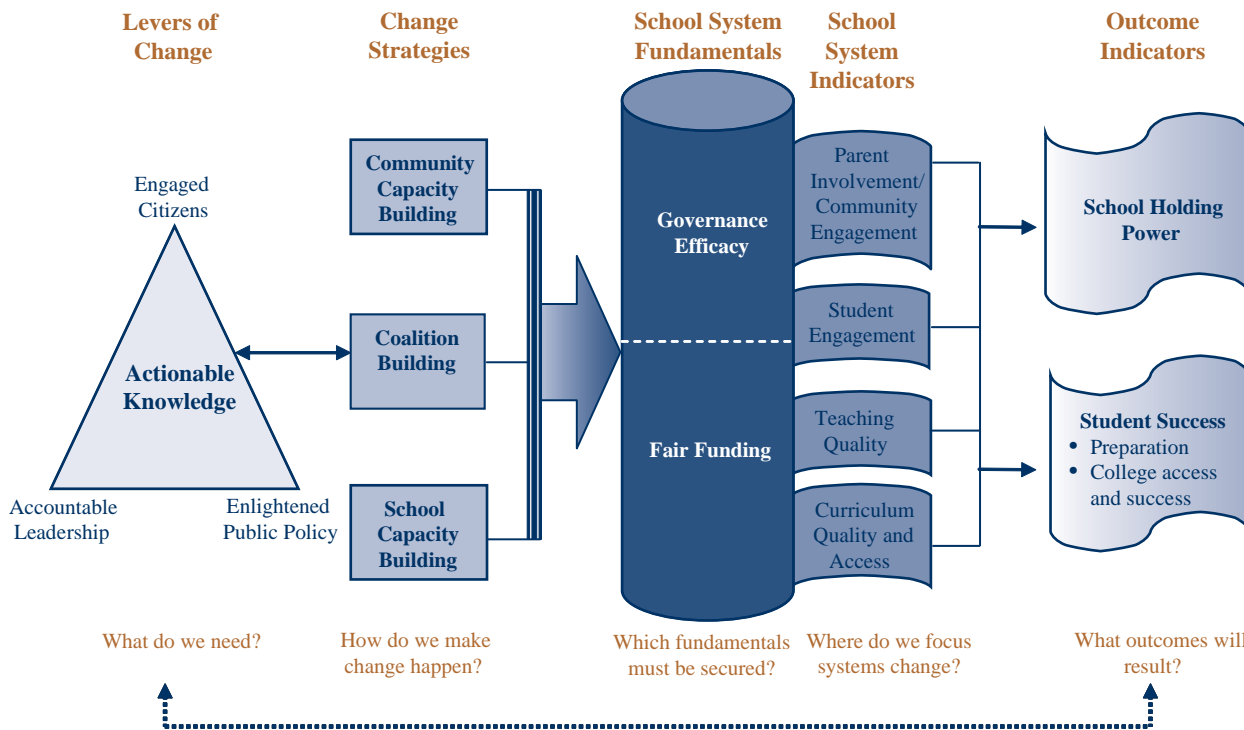
Levers of Change	Change Strategies	School System Fundamentals	School System Indicators	Outcome Indicators
Engaged Citizens / Actionable Knowledge / Accountable Leadership / Enlightened Public Policy	Community Capacity Building / Coalition Building / School Capacity Building	Governance Efficacy / Fair Funding	Parent Involvement/Community Engagement / Student Engagement / Teaching Quality / Curriculum Quality and Access	School Holding Power / Student Success • Preparation • College access and success
What do we need?	How do we make change happen?	Which fundamentals must be secured?	Where do we focus systems change?	What outcomes will result?

Robledo Montecel, M. "A Quality Schools Action Framework – Framing Systems Change for Student Success," *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, November-December 2005).

enrollment in 2007-08 compared to 86,276 in 1985-86.

The overall attrition rate of 33 percent was the same in 2007-08 as it was more than two decades ago. The percentage of students who left high school prior to graduation was 33 percent in both 1985-86 and 2007-08. Attrition rates have fluctuated between a low of 31 percent in 1988-89, 1989-90 and 1990-91 to a high of 43 percent in 1996-97.

The overall attrition rate was less than 40 percent in 2007-08 for the seventh time in 14 years. For the seventh consecutive year, the overall statewide attrition rate in Texas public schools was less than 40 percent. The current rate of 33 percent compares to 39 percent in 2001-02, 38 percent in 2002-03, 36 percent in 2003-04 and 2004-05, 35 percent in 2005-06, and 34 percent in 2006-07. After seven consecutive years of overall statewide
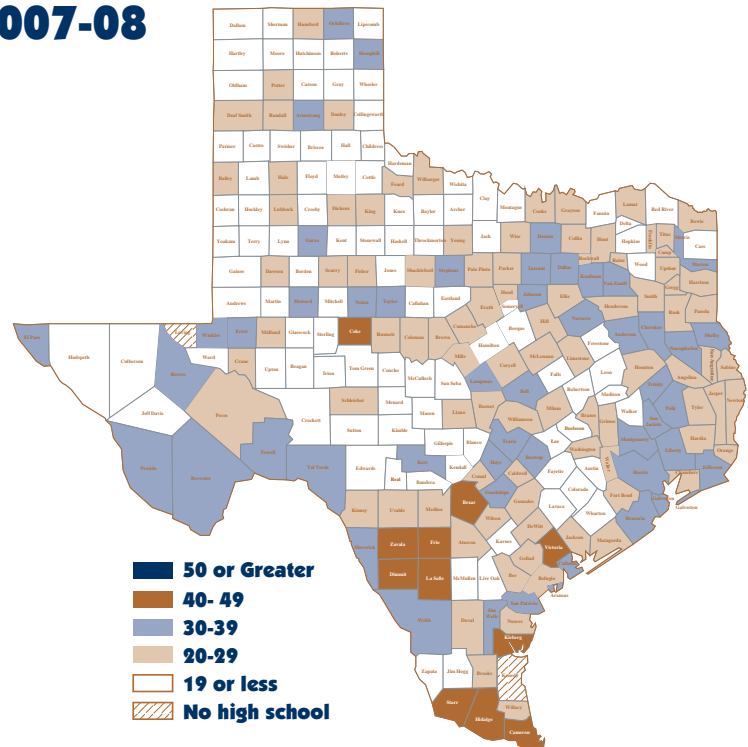
Attrition Rates by Texas County, 2007-08

Legend:
- **50 or Greater**
- **40- 49**
- **30-39**
- **20-29**
- **19 or less**
- **No high school**

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2008.

Attrition and Dropout Rates in Texas Over Time

	IDRA Attrition Rates	TEA Long. Dropout Rates	TEA Annual Dropout Rates
1985-86	33	--	--
1986-87	34	--	--
1987-88	33	34.0	6.7
1988-89	31	31.3	6.1
1989-90	31	27.2	5.1
1990-91	31	21.4	3.9
1991-92	34	20.7	3.8
1992-93	36	15.8	2.8
1993-94	39	14.4	2.6
1994-95	40	10.6	1.8
1995-96	42	10.1	1.8
1996-97	43	9.1	1.6
1997-98	42	14.7	1.6
1998-99	42	9.0**	1.6
1999-00	40	7.7**	1.3
2000-01	40	6.8**	1.0
2001-02	39	5.6**	0.9
2002-03	38	4.9**	0.9
2003-04	36	4.2**	0.9
2004-05	36	4.6**	0.9
2005-06	35	9.1***	2.6****
2006-07	34	11.6***	2.7****
2007-08	33		

† Change in TEA dropout definition or data processing procedures
** Longitudinal completion rate (Grades 7-12)
***Annual dropout rate using NCES definition (Grades 7-12)
****Longitudinal dropout rate using NCES definition (Grades 7-12)

Sources: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2008. Texas Education Agency, Secondary School Completion and Dropouts, 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07.

attrition rates of 40 percent or higher between 1994-95 through 2000-01, the overall statewide attrition rate of 33 percent in 2007-08 was the lowest since a 34 percent rate in 1991-92 and 2006-07, and continues a downward trend over the last several years. Between 1994-95 and 2006-07, the overall attrition rate ranged from a low of 34 percent to a high of 43 percent.

The attrition rates of Hispanic students and Black students have either remained unchanged or widened since 1985-86. Hispanic students and Black students historically have had much higher attrition rates than White students. From 1985-86 to 2007-08, attrition rates of Hispanic students declined by 2 percent (from 45 percent to 44 percent). During this same period, the attrition rates of Black students increased by 12 percent (from 34 percent to 38 percent).

The gap between the attrition rates of White students and Black and Hispanic students are increasing.

Attrition rates of White students declined by 33 percent (from 27 percent to 18 percent). Hispanic students have higher attrition rates than either White students or Black students.

From 1985-86 to 2007-08, Native American students, Asian/Pacific Islander students, Hispanic students and White students saw a decline in their attrition rates. Native American students had a decline of 16 percent in their attrition rates (from 45 percent to 38 percent), and Asian/Pacific Islander students had a decline of 58 percent (from 33 percent to 14 percent).

The gaps between the attrition rates of White students and Black and Hispanic students are increasing. The gap between the attrition rates of White students and Black students has increased from 7 percentage points in 1985-86 to 20 percentage points in 2007-08. Similarly, during this time period, the gap between the attrition rates of White students and Hispanic students has increased from 18 percentage points in 1985-86 to 26 percentage points in 2007-08. See graph on Page 9.

The gap between the attrition rates of White students and Native American students has increased from 18 percentage points in 1985-86 to 20 percentage points in 2007-08.

Asian/Pacific Islander students exhibited the greatest positive trend in the reduction of the gap in attrition rates

Longitudinal Attrition Rates in Texas Public High Schools, 1985-86 to 2007-08

Group	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	Percent Change* From 1985-86 to 2007-08
Race-Ethnicity																								
Native American	45	39	37	47	39	39	40	39	38	42	44	43	42	25	43	42	29	39	42	40	39	36	38	-16
Asian/Pacific Islander	33	30	28	23	22	23	21	21	21	18	18	20	21	19	20	20	14	17	16	17	17	14	14	-58
Black	34	38	39	37	38	39	39	43	47	50	51	51	49	48	47	46	46	45	44	43	40	40	38	12
White	27	26	24	20	19	22	22	25	28	30	31	32	31	31	28	27	26	24	22	22	21	20	18	-33
Hispanic	45	46	49	48	48	48	48	49	50	51	53	54	53	53	52	52	51	50	49	48	47	45	44	-2
Gender																								
Male	35	35	35	34	34	34	37	39	41	43	45	46	45	45	44	43	43	41	40	39	38	37	36	3
Female	32	32	31	29	29	28	30	33	36	37	39	40	38	38	36	36	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	-9
Total	**33**	**34**	**33**	**31**	**31**	**31**	**34**	**36**	**39**	**40**	**42**	**43**	**42**	**42**	**40**	**40**	**39**	**38**	**36**	**36**	**35**	**34**	**33**	**0**

Rounded to nearest whole number.   Figures calculated by IDRA from the Texas Education Agency *Fall Membership Survey* data.

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2008.

2004-05 and 2007-08 Enrollment, 2006-07 Attrition in Texas

Race-Ethnicity and Gender	2004-05 9th Grade Enrollment	2007-08 12th Grade Enrollment	2004-05 9-12th Grade Enrollment	2007-08 9-12th Grade Enrollment	2004-05 Expected 12th Grade Enrollment	Students Lost to Attrition	Attrition Rate
Native American	**1,282**	**939**	**3,778**	**4,481**	**1,520**	**581**	**38**
Male	647	437	1,914	2,285	772	335	43
Female	635	502	1,864	2,196	748	246	33
Asian/Pacific Islander	**10,174**	**10,024**	**38,054**	**43,611**	**11,659**	**1,635**	**14**
Male	5,343	5,131	19,693	22,496	6,103	972	16
Female	4,831	4,893	18,361	21,115	5,556	663	12
Black	**54,905**	**37,501**	**167,757**	**184,976**	**60,537**	**23,036**	**38**
Male	28,672	17,860	84,627	93,161	31,563	13,703	43
Female	26,233	19,641	83,130	91,815	28,974	9,333	32
White	**144,802**	**114,516**	**509,436**	**494,079**	**140,439**	**25,923**	**18**
Male	75,074	58,000	261,661	254,177	72,927	14,927	20
Female	69,728	56,516	247,775	239,902	67,512	10,996	16
Hispanic	**162,549**	**104,571**	**469,802**	**538,293**	**186,214**	**81,640**	**44**
Male	85,552	50,855	240,399	273,831	97,450	46,595	48
Female	76,997	53,719	229,403	264,462	88,764	35,045	39
All Groups	**373,712**	**267,554**	**1,188,827**	**1,265,440**	**400,369**	**132,815**	**33**
Male	195,288	132,283	608,294	645,950	208,815	76,532	36
Female	178,424	135,271	580,533	619,490	191,554	56,283	29

Figures calculated by IDRA from the Texas Education Agency *Fall Membership Survey* data. IDRA's 2007-08 attrition study involved the analysis of enrollment figures for public high school students in the ninth grade during 2004-05 school year and enrollment figures for 12th grade students in 2007-08. This period represents the time span when ninth grade students would be enrolled in school prior to graduation. The enrollment data for special school districts (military schools, state schools, and charter schools) were excluded from the analyses since they are likely to have unstable enrollments and/or lack a tax base to support school programs.

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2008.

compared to White students. In fact, rates for Asian/Pacific Islander students were 6 percentage points higher than those of White students but now are 4 percentage points lower than those of White students.

Historically, the attrition rates for Hispanic students and Black students have been higher than the overall attrition rates. For the period of 1985-86 to 2007-08, students from ethnic minority groups account for more than two-thirds (70.4 percent) of the estimated 2.8 million students lost from public high school enrollment.

Hispanic students account for 51.5 percent of the students lost to attrition. Black students account for 17.4 percent of all students lost from enrollment due to attrition over the years. White students account for 29.6 percent of students lost from high school enrollment over time. Attrition rates for White students and Asian/Pacific Islander students have been typically lower than the overall attrition rates.

The attrition rates of males have been higher than those of females. Between 1985-86 and 2007-08, attrition rates for males have increased by 3 percent (from 35 percent to 36 percent). Attrition rates for females declined by 9 percent from 32 percent in 1985-86 to 29 percent in 2007-08. Longitudinally, males have accounted for 56.7 percent of students lost from school enrollment, while females have accounted for 43.3 percent of students lost.

Numbers of Students Lost to Attrition in Texas, School Years 1985-86 to 2007-08

School Year	Total	Race-Ethnicity					Gender	
		Native American	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Black	White	Hispanic	Male	Female
1985-86	86,276	185	1,523	12,268	38,717	33,583	46,603	39,673
1986-87	90,317	152	1,406	14,416	38,848	35,495	48,912	41,405
1987-88	92,213	159	1,447	15,273	34,889	40,435	50,595	41,618
1988-89	88,538	252	1,189	15,474	28,309	43,314	49,049	39,489
1989-90	86,160	196	1,214	15,423	24,510	44,817	48,665	37,495
1990-91	83,718	207	1,324	14,133	23,229	44,825	47,723	35,995
1991-92	91,424	215	1,196	15,016	27,055	47,942	51,937	39,487
1992-93	101,358	248	1,307	17,032	32,611	50,160	57,332	44,026
1993-94	113,061	245	1,472	19,735	37,377	54,232	63,557	49,504
1994-95	123,200	296	1,226	22,856	41,648	57,174	68,725	54,475
1995-96	135,438	350	1,303	25,078	45,302	63,405	75,854	59,584
1996-97	147,313	327	1,486	27,004	48,586	69,910	82,442	64,871
1997-98	150,965	352	1,730	26,938	49,135	72,810	85,585	65,380
1998-99	151,779	299	1,680	25,526	48,178	76,096	86,438	65,341
1999-00	146,714	406	1,771	25,097	44,275	75,165	83,976	62,738
2000-01	144,241	413	1,794	24,515	41,734	75,785	82,845	61,396
2001-02	143,175	237	1,244	25,017	39,953	76,724	82,762	60,413
2002-03	143,280	436	1,611	25,066	36,948	79,219	82,621	60,659
2003-04	139,413	495	1,575	24,728	33,104	79,511	80,485	58,928
2004-05	137,424	490	1,789	24,373	31,378	79,394	78,858	58,566
2005-06	137,162	512	1,876	24,366	29,903	80,505	78,298	58,864
2006-07	134,676	500	1,547	23,845	28,339	80,445	76,965	57,711
2007-08	132,815	581	1,635	23,036	25,923	81,640	76,532	56,283
All Years	**2,800,660**	**7,553**	**34,345**	**486,215**	**829,961**	**1,442,586**	**1,586,759**	**1,213,901**

Figures calculated by IDRA from the Texas Education Agency *Fall Membership Survey* data.
Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2008.

Conclusions

Texas public schools are failing to graduate one out of every three students. Attrition rates as an indicator in a school holding power index show that the rate was 33 percent overall and near 40 percent for Black students and Hispanic students. The overall attrition rate has remained at 33 percent in 1985-86 and 2007-08.

Though the overall attrition rate has remained under 40 percent over the last seven years, improving school holding power in Texas schools is still an imperative as many of our schools have failed to keep students in schools through graduation with a high school diploma. The number of students lost from public school enrollment has increased from 86,276 in 1985-86 to 132,815 in 2007-08.

In a written statement presented to the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, entitled "Graduation for All: A Framework for Policy and Action" in September 2008, Dr. María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel, IDRA's President and CEO, offered four primary recommendations on how communities and schools can work together to strengthen public schools' capacities to improve their holding power. These recommendations included: (1) count every student to make sure every student counts; (2) tend to the transition points; (3) spur school-level action around a Quality Schools Action Framework (see Page 4); and (4) invest in school holding power.

IDRA is working on a number of efforts to improve school holding power through its collaboration with schools and communities in Texas and other parts of the country. One of these efforts, "Graduation Guaranteed/*Graduación Garantizada,*"

emphasizes the accountability of the school in keeping students in school until they graduate with a high school diploma. This initiative includes a school holding portal that contains dropout data that neighborhoods at the local level can use to know what is going on and take action around the issue.

Another of IDRA's efforts to improve school holding power is the dissemination of the *Graduation For All* e-newsletter, which provides up-to-date information on dropouts and actions to improve school holding power.

School holding power is an important indicator of a school's success and the quality of its educational services to students. Improving school holding power in our public schools is not only a Texas issue but a national imperative since one in three of our nation's students leave our schools prior to graduating with a diploma. Working together, all stakeholders (i.e., schools, parents, students, educators, policymakers, researchers) can make a difference in strengthening school holding power.

Resources

Cárdenas, J.A., and M. Robledo Montecel, J. Supik. *Texas Dropout Survey Project* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 1986).

Johnson, R.L. "Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2005-06: Gap Continues to Grow," *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 2006).

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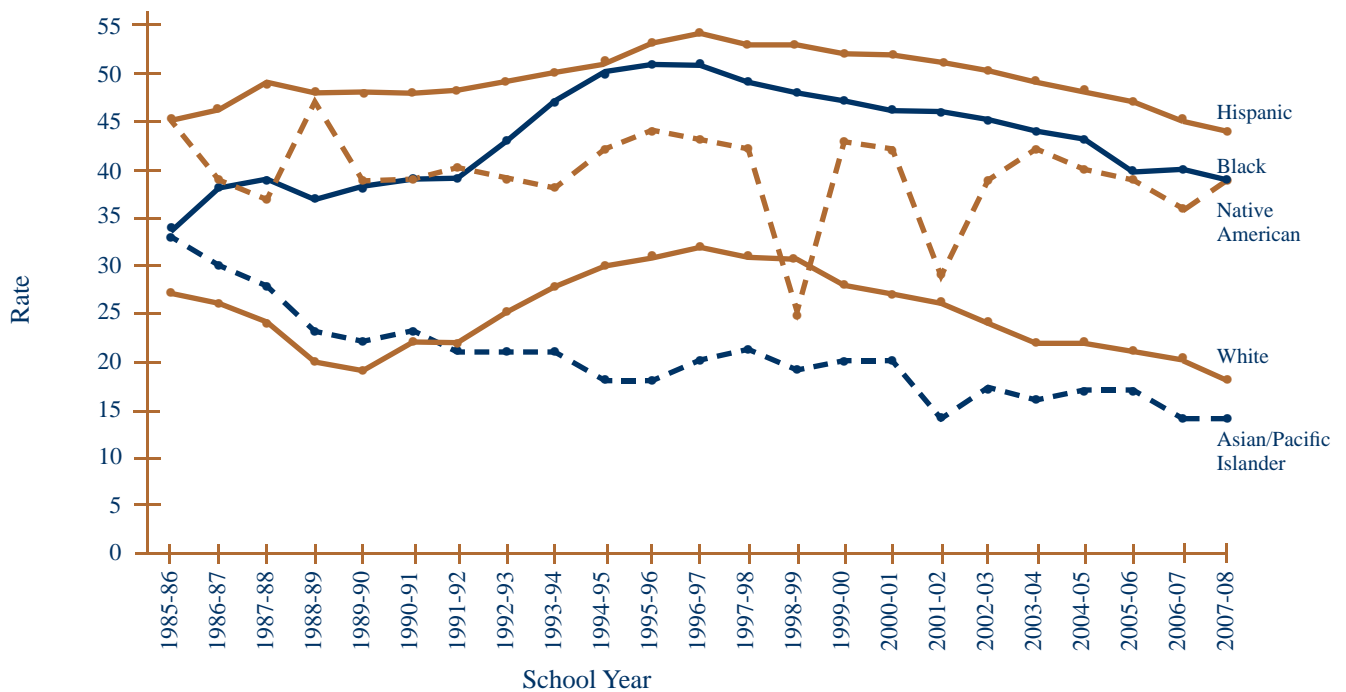Intercultural Development Research Association, October 2008).

Robledo Montecel, M. "A Quality Schools Action Framework: Framing Systems Change for Student Success," *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research

Longitudinal Attrition Rates by Race-Ethnicity in Texas Public Schools, 1985-86 to 2007-08

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2008.

From Estrangement to Engagement

Students at the margins of school systems are increasingly pushed out for disciplinary reasons. Studies suggest that disciplinary programs and zero tolerance policies, while intended to keep students safe, may be exacerbating the problem of student alienation. Texas's Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) is one telling example. Created in 1995 to address student violations of the state criminal code and other serious offenses, DAEP has been marked by mission creep. Five years into implementation, only one in four students referred to DAEPs had committed serious offenses (Cortez and Robledo Montecel, 1999). Special education and minority students are disproportionately represented in referrals, and very young children – including pre-kindergartners– are increasingly referred (Texas Appleseed, 2007, Cortez and Cortez, 2008). Students typically encounter less rigorous curricula in DAEPs, moving success further out of reach on their return. Despite these problems, DAEP referrals are up 93 percent in just a decade (Cortez and Cortez, 2008).

The distribution and expansion of referrals places us on a "slippery slope" toward segregation, raising important 14th Amendment concerns. This is underscored by poor outcomes: students drop out of DAEPs at five times the rate of children in mainstream programs (Appleseed, 2007).

Successful initiatives, in contrast, are ensuring pro-actively that students of all backgrounds are academically, cognitively and socially engaged in school. They use referral only as a last resort, when safety is truly at risk.

Promising Practice:
Systemic Student Engagement

In addition to small learning environments, systemic approaches

Tools for

Engaging Students for Success

Engaged students perform better academically. And the role of fostering student engagement is critical both in the classroom and schoolwide. When the whole school environment and activities value students and incorporate them in learning and co-curricular school activities the result is academic achievement. Research provides student engagement indicators that educators can use to observe students to help guide educator decisions for strategy adjustment and implementation. These student indicators cluster around four areas of evidence showing: students as part of a community; students use of academic language, students' concentration and focus; students' confidence in performance; and students as active and participatory.

A Snapshot of What IDRA is Doing

Developing leaders – IDRA has created a professional development model to help teachers engage English language learners. Through this training, teachers learn, reflect on use and adapt instructional strategies so that English language learners are engaged in the instructional process. See Engagement-Based Sheltered Instruction at the IDRA web site (**http://www.idra.org**) for more information.

Conducting research – Each year, for the past 23 years, IDRA has published findings from its high school attrition research (see "Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2007-08 – At Current Pace, Schools Will Lose Many More Generations") including the addition of a searchable online database that anyone can use to look up attrition rates for their county in Texas (see Page 18). These studies have used consistent research methodology, that at the time was new. But today, researchers across the country are using this methodology for state- and national-level studies of school attrition.

Informing policy – Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed., director of the IDRA Texas Parent Information and Resource Center, presented a framework for policy and action at the education summit of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, Inc. in Washington, D.C. Based on IDRA's two decades of research on attrition and the constellation of factors that result in weak school holding power, IDRA offered four primary recommendations focused at the campus, district and system levels for breaking the routine: count every student to make sure every student counts, tend to the transition points, spur school-level action around a Quality Schools Action Framework, and invest in school holding power.

Action . . . .

Engaging communities – The promise of access to college and to educational technology has not been fulfilled for low-income Hispanic students, particularly first-generation college students and their families. IDRA kicked off the second phase of its Technology Enhanced Community Neighborhood Organizations (TECNO) project with a College Rocks! fair for hundreds of students featuring information about colleges, college tours and seminars on Kid's College, financial aid, and middle school college preparation.

What You Can Do

Get informed. The Annenberg Institute has released a report, *Organized Communities, Stronger Schools: A Preview of Research Findings*, that indicates that effective community organizing contributes to an improved learning environment and improved educational outcomes for students; strengthens school-community relations, parent engagement and a sense of community and trust in schools; and stimulates important changes in policy, practices and resource distribution that expand equity and capacity at the system level, especially in historically underserved communities. View the report free online at: **http://www.annenberginstitute.org/CIP/publications/2008/organized-communities-stronger-schools.pdf.**

Get involved. A special report from Indiana University's High School Survey of Student Engagement (HSSSE) shows that two out of three students are bored in class every day, while 17 percent say they are bored in every class. The HSSSE is a new survey that offers teachers and administrators actionable information on school characteristics that shape the student experience. For more information and to see the latest report, "Voices of Students on Engagement," go to: **http://ceep.indiana.edu/hssse/**.

In a Classnotes Podast episode, Dr. Juanita García, an education associate at IDRA, describes how enabling students to generate their own content questions increases engagement, improves learning, and can result in purposeful involvement with the content. She discusses ways to foster student questions and describes a specific group memory strategy teachers can use right away. Listen to the podcast conversation, "Fostering Student Questions" at **http://www.idra.org/Podcasts/.**

Get results. A research brief outlines steps for initiating collaborative efforts among all of the schools' stakeholders. View the brief, Developing a Collaborative Team Approach to Support Family and Community Connections with Schools: What Can School Leaders Do?, online at: **http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/rb/research-brief3.pdf**.

to prevention have recently included a focus on adolescent literacy. This is because most students who leave school are reading at several grade levels behind their peers (Steinberg and Almeida, 2004). IDRA's Engagement-Based Sheltered Instruction model is one example of a professional development approach that improves literacy, language skills and content mastery among students who are English language learners by foregrounding student engagement. Consistently correlated with higher academic achievement, student engagement "cannot happen only at the classroom level" but also "has to happen at the broader school or system level" (Grayson, 2008).

In a partnership with a west Texas school district, for example, the model has proven effective at helping teachers hone skills and abilities to assess whether and to what extent their students are engaged in learning, build a sense of community in their classrooms that is conducive to learning, and expand student concentration, confidence and active involvement (Solís and Grayson, 2007).

From Faulting to Valuing

Students' families, background or home language often are cited as causes of failure in school. Or, teachers, no matter what their resources or preparation, are categorically blamed. Neither response engenders constructive action. Miller illustrates the problem in a discussion of what he terms *circular causation:* "Teacher feels pupil's behavior could be improved if only his mother would 'cooperate with school' and accept there is a problem. Teacher makes sure that each incident, however small, is reported home." In turn: "Mother feels that teacher makes a fuss about the smallest things and is picking on her son. So in order to protect him, she challenges the significance

of each reported incident" (2007). Far more successful are school-based changes to improve teaching and learning and programmatic approaches that value and build on the diverse language, cultural and experiential capital students bring.

Proven Practice: Valuing Youth

IDRA's longitudinal evaluation of its Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program – a cross-age tutoring dropout prevention model – shows the value of combining robust instructional strategies with student recognition and support strategies. The program's lifeblood, however, is not a collection of interventions but "an uncompromising belief that all students can and will learn and that schools must value all students" (Supik, 1994).

Research on IDRA's Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, implemented in the United States and Brazil, shows that the single most important factor in keeping students in school is to ensure that there is at least one caring adult who values the student, follows the student's progress and helps the student stay on track. The results are evident: since the program's inception in 1984, over 98 percent of participating students stay in school. To date, the program has kept in school more than 25,000 young people who were previously considered at risk of dropping out.

The Commitment to Change

On forward-looking campuses around the country, dedicated teachers, administrators, students, families and community members are working together to put new strategies into practice. Combined with research, these first-hand findings are a window on how we can achieve improved results in every school. Constructive change cannot occur, however, unless we allow these practices to act as a crowbar, prying us away from unworkable practices, and as a

searchlight, guiding us toward action that values all youth.

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Dropout Counts Reported by the Texas Education Agency Continue to Swell

by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.

In August 2008, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) released its second dropout and school completion report using the dropout definition and calculation methods mandated by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The report entitled, *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2006-07*, shows that the number of school dropouts reported by TEA for grades seven through 12 increased from 51,841 in 2005-06 to 55,306 in 2006-07, an increase of 6.7 percent (see table on next page). The annual dropout rate rose from 2.6 percent in 2005-06 to 2.7 in 2006-07, an increase of 3.8 percent. The attrition rate for the class of 2007 (grades nine to 12) was 30 percent compared to an attrition rate of 31.0

Students, Dropouts and Annual Dropout Rates in Texas, Grades 9-12, by Race-Ethnicity, 1994-95 to 2006-07

School Year	Dropouts	Students	Annual Dropout Rate (%) By Group, Grades 7-12				
			African American	Hispanic	White	Other	Total
1994-95	26,499	1,058,191	3.3	3.6	1.6	1.5	2.5
1995-96	24,574	1,085,859	2.8	3.2	1.4	1.2	2.2
1996-97	24,414	1,124,991	2.9	3.1	1.3	1.4	2.2
1997-98	24,886	1,145,910	3.3	3.1	1.2	1.2	2.2
1998-99	27,592	1,773,117	2.3	2.3	0.8	0.9	1.6
1999-00	21,439	1,163,883	2.6	2.7	1.0	1.0	1.8
2000-01	16,003	1,180,252	1.8	2.0	0.8	0.7	1.4
2001-02	15,117	1,202,108	1.8	1.9	0.6	0.7	1.3
2002-03	15,665	1,230,483	1.7	1.9	0.6	0.6	1.3
2003-04	15,160	1,252,016	1.4	1.9	0.6	0.6	1.2
2004-05	17,056	1,273,950	1.7	2.0	0.7	0.6	1.3
2005-06*	48,803	1,317,993	5.4	5.2	1.8	1.5	3.7
2006-07*	52,418	1,333,837	5.8	5.4	1.9	1.5	3.9

*The 2005-06 and 2006-07 dropout rate was calculated using the National Center for Education Statistics dropout definition.

Source: Texas Education Agency, *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2004-05*. Texas Education Agency, *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2006-07*.

Students, Dropouts and Annual Dropout Rates in Texas, Grades 7-12, by Race-Ethnicity, 1987-88 to 2006-07

School Year	Dropouts	Students	Annual Dropout Rate (%) By Group, Grades 7-12				
			African American	Hispanic	White	Other	Total
1987-88	91,307	1,363,198	8.4	8.8	5.1	6.1	6.7
1988-89	82,325	1,360,115	7.5	8.1	4.5	4.9	6.1
1989-90	70,040	1,361,494	6.7	7.2	3.5	4.3	5.1
1990-91	53,965	1,372,738	4.8	5.6	2.7	3.1	3.9
1991-92	53,420	1,406,838	4.8	5.5	2.5	2.9	3.8
1992-93	43,402	1,533,197	3.6	4.2	1.7	2.0	2.8
1993-94	40,211	1,576,015	3.2	3.9	1.5	1.7	2.6
1994-95	29,918	1,617,522	2.3	2.7	1.2	1.1	1.8
1995-96	29,207	1,662,578	2.3	2.5	1.1	1.1	1.8
1996-97	26,901	1,705,972	2.0	2.3	1.0	0.9	1.6
1997-98	27,550	1,743,139	2.1	2.3	0.9	1.1	1.6
1998-99	27,592	1,773,117	2.3	2.3	0.8	0.9	1.6
1999-00	23,457	1,794,521	1.8	1.9	0.7	0.7	1.3
2000-01	17,563	1,818,940	1.3	1.4	0.5	0.5	1.0
2001-02	16,622	1,849,680	1.3	1.3	0.4	0.5	0.9
2002-03	17,151	1,891,361	1.2	1.4	0.4	0.4	0.9
2003-04	16,434	1,924,717	1.0	1.3	0.4	0.4	0.9
2004-05	18,290	1,954,752	1.2	1.4	0.5	0.4	0.9
2005-06*	51,841	2,016,470	3.8	3.5	1.3	1.1	2.6
2006-07*	55,306	2,023,570	4.1	3.7	1.3	1.1	2.7

*The 2005-06 and 2006-07 dropout rate was calculated using the National Center for Education Statistics dropout definition.

Source: Texas Education Agency, *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2004-05*. Texas Education Agency, *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2006-07*.

Dropout Counts – continued from Page 13

percent for the class of 2006.

For a number of years, IDRA and many others called for a major restructuring of the state dropout reporting system. IDRA President and CEO, María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., testified in 2002, "Over the years, the state has pursued a course of trying to define away the dropout numbers, rather than actually decreasing the numbers of dropouts."

The 78th Texas Legislature in 2003 passed Senate Bill 186 mandating that TEA compute dropout rates according to the NCES dropout definition and calculation standards. In order to implement the legislative requirements for the computation of dropout rates, TEA had to make changes in some dates dropout status is measured and additions to which groups of students were considered dropouts.

Using the NCES definition, a dropout is defined as "a student who is enrolled in public school in grades seven to 12, does not return to public school the following fall, is not expelled, and does not graduate, receive a General Education Development (GED) certificate, continue school outside the public school system, begin college or die."

What a difference a dropout definition and calculation methods make. When the NCES dropout definition was used, the total number of dropouts reported by TEA increased

Accountability: School Holding Power Attrition

A high priority for the Parent Information and Resource Center is to ensure that school accountability reports are transmitted to families. The attrition rate – which compares enrollment in the ninth grade with enrollment three years later – is as important as are student test scores in measuring the effectiveness of a school. Attrition rates are generally embarrassing to schools, and when reported by the media these are seen as evidence of school failure.

The accountability challenges when presenting attrition data to families and the community are:

1. Having schools face the problem without blaming students and parents;

2. Creating school holding power responses that can succeed through institutional transformation rather than simply bringing back students that have left and putting them in the context that was not previously succeeding;

3. Supporting family-school partnerships that develop positive and pro-active solutions to ensure student success and high school completion; and

4. Moving beyond punitive and alternative campus measures and instead toward valuing, supportive and high expectation approaches.

Engaging families in conversations about school accountability is filled with possibilities. Families are concerned about the education of their children. Meetings and gatherings to examine how schools are doing are opportunities for dialogue and invitations to see the big picture beyond their own children. It is through these conversations that the spirit of Title I parent engagement requirements can have impact beyond the report card notification to individual families.

School children, especially those in Title I schools need families and teachers to come together to figure out what will most help them succeed in school.

from 18,290 in 2004-05 to 51,841 in 2005-06 and to 55,306 in 2006-07. From 2004-05 to 2006-07, the number of dropouts reported increased by 37,016 students, or by 202 percent. The dropout count was 3.02 times higher in 2006-07 than in 2004-05, and the dropout rate in 2006-07 was 3.0 times higher than in 2004-05.

Of the 55,306 reported dropouts, 2,888 were in grades seven and eight, and 52,418 were in grades nine through 12. The seventh through eighth grade dropout rate was 0.4 percent, while the ninth through 12th grade dropout rate was 3.9 percent.

The annual dropout rates of African American students and Hispanic students were much higher than the rates of White students – the rate for African American students and Hispanic students was three times higher. The 2006-07 dropout rate for African American students was 3.42 times higher than their 2004-05 rate, and the 2006-07 rate for Hispanic students was 2.64 times higher than the 2004-05 rate.

The adoption of the NCES dropout definition and standards has had a dramatic impact on the dropout count and rate reported by TEA. Since the adoption, both the dropout count and the dropout rate are three times higher than under the previous definition and calculations.

Yet, IDRA is still concerned that state reports mask the magnitude of the problem. The fact remains, communities need accurate, understandable information in order to make good decisions to improve their schools.

Roy L. Johnson, M.S., is director of IDRA Support Services. Comments and questions may be directed to him via e-mail at comment@idra.org.

Attrition Rates in Texas Public Schools
By Race-Ethnicity, 2007-08

County Name	Attrition Rates[1]				County Name	Attrition Rates[1]			
	Black	White	Hispanic	Total		Black	White	Hispanic	Total
Anderson	40	24	50	31	Dewitt	39	12	47	28
Andrews	**	**	14	4	Dickens	.	23	25	24
Angelina	22	18	43	24	Dimmit	.	39	40	40
Aransas	24	31	45	33	Donley	70	20	39	27
Archer	.	0	32	3	Duval	.	**	24	23
Armstrong	50	24	100	31	Eastland	46	11	32	17
Atascosa	0	10	35	28	Ector	38	21	41	34
Austin	15	5	36	16	Edwards	.	3	23	18
Bailey	64	**	45	28	Ellis	25	20	39	26
Bandera	.	14	38	17	El Paso	32	19	35	34
Bastrop	38	23	43	31	Erath	40	15	48	25
Baylor	100	3	51	11	Falls	8	2	39	14
Bee	57	13	30	26	Fannin	20	15	32	16
Bell	45	27	42	36	Fayette	7	8	36	14
Bexar	40	23	46	40	Fisher	43	22	20	24
Blanco	70	9	6	10	Floyd	21	**	30	19
Borden	.	6	30	12	Foard	.	39	5	28
Bosque	**	10	24	14	Fort Bend	29	11	39	24
Bowie	30	17	41	22	Franklin	53	22	27	25
Brazoria	43	24	42	32	Freestone	**	22	42	20
Brazos	42	10	37	25	Frio	.	23	45	42
Brewster	.	27	32	30	Gaines	13	11	17	14
Briscoe	.	**	0	**	Galveston	38	26	48	32
Brooks	.	0	26	25	Garza	86	9	36	33
Brown	43	21	29	23	Gillespie	**	9	27	13
Burleson	24	11	39	19	Glasscock	.	15	7	12
Burnet	46	22	33	25	Goliad	42	11	42	26
Caldwell	25	13	31	24	Gonzales	21	4	42	27
Calhoun	43	32	44	39	Gray	17	12	32	17
Callahan	.	9	24	10	Grayson	27	22	42	25
Cameron	57	26	48	47	Gregg	46	11	44	26
Camp	12	27	39	27	Grimes	26	21	32	24
Carson	50	7	**	6	Guadalupe	36	17	49	33
Cass	6	18	62	17	Hale	17	**	33	22
Castro	100	**	32	18	Hall	**	23	9	15
Chambers	32	24	39	27	Hamilton	.	**	29	4
Cherokee	27	25	49	32	Hansford	.	16	27	22
Childress	**	9	37	16	Hardeman	30	10	29	17
Clay	.	22	5	19	Hardin	11	21	38	21
Cochran	**	14	17	13	Harris	43	16	48	37
Coke	.	15	59	40	Harrison	20	20	49	23
Coleman	21	22	13	22	Hartley	.	5	33	15
Collin	41	18	38	24	Haskell	**	**	23	6
Collingsworth	**	16	31	14	Hays	35	22	39	31
Colorado	15	6	24	13	Hemphill	.	27	40	31
Comal	33	18	38	24	Henderson	27	24	31	25
Comanche	.	18	39	26	Hidalgo	26	27	45	45
Concho	50	**	16	4	Hill	11	16	36	20
Cooke	26	17	44	22	Hockley	.	9	28	18
Coryell	28	26	36	28	Hood	.	22	25	22
Cottle	23	**	30	1	Hopkins	18	14	30	17
Crane	.	18	32	29	Houston	30	9	52	22
Crockett	.	**	2	**	Howard	67	18	45	34
Crosby	**	**	16	5	Hudspeth	.	**	10	4
Culberson	.	2	11	13	Hunt	29	17	51	24
Dallam	**	8	26	14	Hutchinson	43	5	25	11
Dallas	40	7	53	38	Irion	**	14	38	9
Dawson	13	13	26	21	Jack	71	11	42	16
Deaf Smith	**	0	27	21	Jackson	43	5	41	20
Delta	19	14	**	16	Jasper	33	20	36	23
Denton	44	29	57	37	Jeff Davis	0	10	8	10

[1]Calculated by: (1) dividing the high school enrollment in the end year by the high school enrollment in the base year; (2) multiplying the results from Calculation 1 by the ninth grade enrollment in the base year; (3) subtracting the results from Calculation 2 from the 12th grade enrollment in the end year; and (4) dividing the results of Calculation 3 by the result of Calculation 2. The attrition rate results (percentages) were rounded to the nearest whole number.

** = Attrition rate is less than zero (0).

*** = No high school.

• = The necessary data are unavailable to calculate the attrition rate.

Attrition Rates in Texas Public Schools By Race-Ethnicity, 2007-08 (continued)

| County Name	Black	White	Hispanic	Total	County Name	Black	White	Hispanic	Total
Jefferson	38	22	45	33	Rains	46	21	66	25
Jim Hogg	.	21	7	7	Randall	67	16	39	20
Jim Wells	86	22	39	36	Reagan	**	**	17	5
Johnson	37	30	42	32	Real	.	33	**	19
Jones	**	20	14	18	Red River	2	7	56	11
Karnes	**	**	11	5	Reeves	0	35	40	39
Kaufman	49	31	49	36	Refugio	0	18	34	24
Kendall	53	14	32	19	Roberts	.	**	.	**
Kenedy					Robertson	15	6	41	15
Kent	**	14	.	5	Rockwall	23	20	33	22
Kerr	61	28	49	36	Runnels	49	16	26	21
Kimble	.	9	30	16	Rusk	13	22	44	24
King	.	29	**	22	Sabine	17	24	0	23
Kinney	10	17	30	26	San Augustine	22	13	42	21
Kleberg	49	13	49	43	San Jacinto	9	39	37	34
Knox	4	4	30	13	San Patricio	49	26	40	35
Lamar	37	23	49	27	San Saba	.	5	8	5
Lamb	30	**	22	15	Schleicher	33	12	32	27
Lampasas	71	25	40	30	Scurry	20	8	43	25
La Salle	.	19	46	43	Shackelford	50	30	.	25
Lavaca	40	**	**	1	Shelby	46	24	53	35
Lee	33	11	31	19	Sherman	.	6	19	12
Leon	21	9	44	15	Smith	30	20	47	28
Liberty	19	31	42	31	Somervell	.	11	26	17
Limestone	28	16	30	22	Starr	.	19	41	41
Lipscomb	.	9	17	12	Stephens	0	27	47	32
Live Oak	.	25	29	27	Sterling	.	**	26	5
Llano	50	18	65	24	Stonewall	**	**	0	**
Loving					Sutton	.	**	3	**
Lubbock	23	10	32	21	Swisher	34	**	5	2
Lynn	**	**	1	**	Tarrant	39	20	48	33
Madison	21	13	31	18	Taylor	55	18	55	32
Marion	23	38	100	32	Terrell	.	21	30	31
Martin	100	12	6	10	Terry	24	**	9	5
Mason	.	12	**	2	Throckmorton	.	**	38	**
Matagorda	20	14	33	23	Titus	26	11	40	27
Maverick	100	48	33	33	Tom Green	16	4	27	16
McColluch	**	**	29	9	Travis	37	10	46	31
McLennan	34	14	41	26	Trinity	21	34	57	32
McMullen	.	15	**	**	Tyler	11	24	56	24
Medina	79	14	34	27	Upshur	30	24	33	25
Menard	0	**	**	**	Upton	**	**	**	**
Midland	38	2	42	24	Uvalde	0	**	34	28
Milam	35	18	40	27	Val Verde	18	33	36	35
Mills	100	16	25	23	Van Zandt	36	28	52	31
Mitchell	**	9	22	14	Victoria	50	20	53	41
Montague	.	13	22	15	Walker	25	9	26	17
Montgomery	43	27	46	32	Waller	29	21	40	29
Moore	.	3	25	18	Ward	44	8	24	19
Morris	32	25	68	32	Washington	45	**	56	21
Motley	**	**	**	**	Webb	22	16	39	39
Nacogdoches	31	18	53	30	Wharton	29	**	32	19
Navarro	41	19	56	34	Wheeler	47	12	34	17
Newton	21	24	100	25	Wichita	29	12	34	19
Nolan	53	26	36	32	Wilbarger	47	28	23	28
Nueces	21	16	32	27	Willacy	42	21	28	27
Ochiltree	.	15	46	32	Williamson	37	20	44	27
Oldham	**	**	18	2	Wilson	7	10	34	21
Orange	44	25	35	27	Winkler	.	27	37	33
Palo Pinto	10	18	34	21	Wise	20	20	30	22
Panola	24	27	45	27	Wood	16	17	28	19
Parker	31	24	36	26	Yoakum	**	**	2	**
Parmer	**	9	20	16	Young	40	19	35	22
Pecos	81	25	41	40	Zapata	50	5	19	18
Polk	11	33	38	30	Zavala	**	13	41	40
Potter	35	17	42	28					
Presidio	.	**	32	30	Total	38	18	44	33

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2008.

Look Up Your Texas County

IDRA is providing dropout trend data at your fingertips.

Go to the IDRA web site to see a graph of high school attrition in your county over the last 10 years. You'll also see the numbers of students by race-ethnicity who have been lost from enrollment in your county.

http://www.idra.org/Research/Attrition/
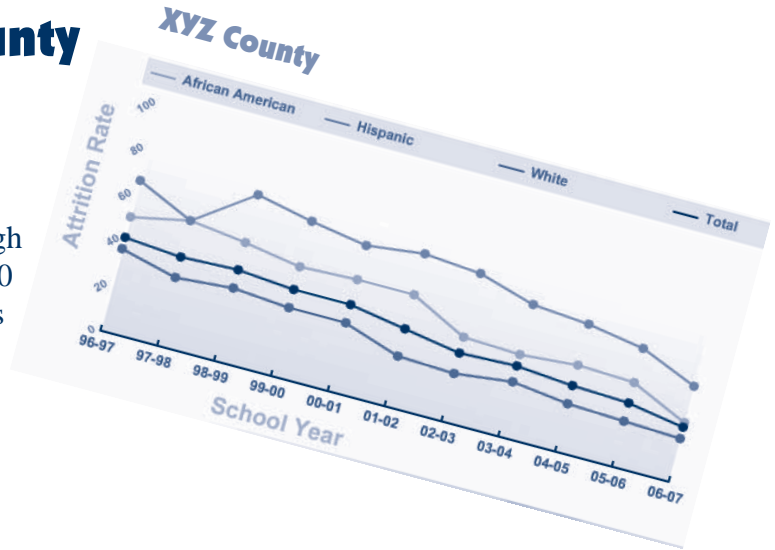
Highlights of Recent IDRA Activities

In August, IDRA worked with **7,009** teachers, administrators, parents and higher education personnel through **48** training and technical assistance activities and **155** program sites in the United states and Brazil. Some topics included:

✦ Excellence in Bilingual Education: Strategies for Second Language Learning
✦ Building Quality Schools: Continuous Improvement is Key
✦ Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program
✦ Equity and Excellence: The Board Members Role

Some participating agencies and school districts included:

✧ Atlanta Public Schools, Georgia
✧ United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County
✧ Malakoff Independent School District (ISD), Texas
✧ Jefferson Parish, Louisiana

Activity Snapshot

IDRA worked with a group of middle school teachers, a principal, counselor and social worker to create a small professional learning community whose only mission is to ensure the academic success of their students. Each of the teachers mentored and advocated for three students who needed an educator in their lives who believes in them and their capacity for learning and success. This emerging professional community met regularly to work together, sharing and exchanging insights about their students, developing strategies for success, and sharing in their responsibility for students. IDRA helped to guide them throughout the year with the best research, the best thinking and the best practices available. The result was a transformation of adults who see youth as valuable and capable and youth who know that someone cares about them and is committed to their success. And the students started with lower scores and reached higher scores in reading than the comparison group.

Regularly, IDRA staff provides services to:

✦ public school teachers
✦ parents
✦ administrators
✦ other decision makers in public education

Services include:

✧ training and technical assistance
✧ evaluation
✧ serving as expert witnesses in policy settings and court cases
✧ publishing research and professional papers, books, videos and curricula

For information on IDRA services for your school district or other group, contact IDRA at 210-444-1710.

Hold On – *continued from Page 12*

averages and weekly and hourly earnings data from the Current Population Survey," table from Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, nd).

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Laurie Posner, M.P.A., is an IDRA education associate. Comments and questions may be directed to her via e-mail at comment@idra.org.

Attrition Study – *continued from Page 9*

Association, November-December 2005).

Roy L. Johnson, M.S., is director of IDRA Support Services. Comments and questions may be directed to him via e-mail at comment@idra.org.

Free!

Classnotes Podcast
Intercultural Development Research Association

Twice monthly, award-winning podcast for people who care about excellent and equitable education for all children.

This award-winning podcast series for teachers and administrators explores issues facing U.S. education today and strategies to better serve every student.

Online Now

Episode 40: "Fostering Student Questions" IDRA Classnotes Podcast – Dr. Juanita García, an education associate at IDRA, discusses ways to foster student questions and describes a specific group memory strategy teachers can use right away.

Episode 39: "Supporting First Year Teachers" IDRA Classnotes Podcast – Dr. Adela Solís, an IDRA senior education associate, gives practical examples of ways schools can support their new teachers and of strategies for new teachers during their first days with their students.

Episode 38: "Effective Parent Outreach" IDRA Classnotes Podcast – Aurelio Montemayor, M.Ed., director of the IDRA Texas Parent Information and Resource Center, describes a new model for building a network of parent leaders and how it can transform the school-parent connection.

Episode 37: "Gender Equity at 36" IDRA Classnotes Podcast – Bradley Scott, Ph.D., director of the IDRA South Central Collaborative for Equity, discusses where we are now in terms of the advancement of girls as well as gender equity challenges affecting boys today and what the school's responsibility is under the law.

www.idra.org/podcasts

A podcast is an audio file that can de downloaded to your computer for listening immediately or at a later time. Podcasts may be listened to directly from your computer by downloading them onto a Mp3 player (like an iPod) for listening at a later date. The IDRA Classnotes podcasts are available at no charge through the IDRA web site and through the Apple iTunes Music Store. You can also subscribe to Classnotes through iTunes or other podcast directories to automatically receive each new podcast in the series when it is released. Classnotes is free of charge.

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Creating schools that work for all children,
through research • materials development • training • technical assistance • evaluation • information dissemination