



IDRA Education Policy Fellows

Building on a Powerful Legacy of Education Policy



Dr. Altheria Caldera

IDRA Education Policy Fellow – Preparation and Access to College

IDRA's ground-breaking program is changing policy advocacy because policymakers can make stronger education policy decisions by working with advocates who are connected to impacted communities. Our Education Policy Fellows work with coalitions, students and families to craft a community-centered education policy agenda and join a network of advocates and policy influencers focused on improving racial equity in education policymaking spaces. The program's inaugural cycle in Texas operated from November 2020 through July 2021.

About Altheria

Dr. Altheria Caldera is a scholar, writer and equity activist whose other identities include dog-lover, nature-enthusiast and college football fan. The Alabama native began her professional career as a middle school English teacher. As a teacher educator for the last four years, she aims to equip her students with the knowledge necessary to effectively teach students of color in P-12 schools. Through her research and scholarship, she aims to promote access and equity for all minoritized students in academic institutions that span the P-16 spectrum. Altheria earned her Ph.D. in education studies from Texas Christian University in Fort Worth and is looking forward to learning how to apply her classroom knowledge to state-level advocacy work. As an IDRA Education Policy Fellow, Altheria identified and pursued advocacy opportunities to expand access to and ensure success in postsecondary education spaces, particularly for students of color.

Fellowship Products

Analysis

- Culturally Sustaining Practices in Four Critical Levels – Overview, IDRA EAC-South, May 2021
- Equity-centered Pedagogies – An Overview of Terminology, IDRA, May 2021
- HB 3979 Conflicts & Redundancies, IDRA analysis, April 2021

IDRA Newsletter Articles

- Most Opportunities Missed to Expand College Preparation and Access in Texas, June-July 2021
- Texas HB 3979 Will Hurt Students by Curtailing Schools' Equity Efforts, May 2021
- Anti-Racist Schooling for All Students of Color, co-author, May 2021
- What the Term "Culturally Sustaining Practices" Means for Education in Today's Classrooms, May 2021
- Students of Color Deserve Culturally Responsive Instruction and Ethnic Studies, co-author, April 2021

Classnotes Podcast

- The Future of Education Advocacy and Being Pushy – #217
- Education Policy Fellows Get Things Done in the Suppression Session – #216
- An Inside Look at Advocating with Communities of Color – #215
- Education Advocacy Hinges on Community Collaboration – #214

After the fellowship, Altheria became assistant professor of language arts and reading at Howard University and director of its DC-Area Writing Project.

Op-Eds and Media Interviews

- Juneteenth is a federal holiday. Can it be taught after Texas limited teaching on race?, by Eleanor Dearman, Fort Worth Star-Telegram, June 18, 2021
- Texas educators, not the Legislature, should decide how to teach current events, op-ed, Fort Worth Star-Telegram, May 12, 2021

Community Engagement

- Education Policy Study Hall – IDRA Webinar Series
- Education Policy Testimony Help – Virtual Office Hours

Testimony

- Reject the Erasure of Race in Texas Schools in SB 3, IDRA testimony presented to the Senate State Affairs Committee, July 15, 2021
- Eliminate Bias and Discrimination Against Black Students – IDRA comment presented to the Texas House State Affairs Committee, April 29, 2021
- Equity Should Be Upheld in Top Ten Percent Plan – IDRA testimony presented to the Senate Higher Education Committee, April 28, 2021 (Video on IDRA YouTube)
- SB 1277 Supports College Access with Student Advising for Dual Credit – IDRA comments submitted to the Texas House Higher Education Committee, April 20, 2021
- HB 4403 Supports Student Advising for Dual Credit – IDRA comments submitted to the House Higher Education Committee, April 15, 2021
- Adopt HB 3638 to Establish an African American Studies Advisory Board – IDRA testimony presented to the House Public Education Committee, April 13, 2021 (Video on IDRA YouTube)
- HB 2554 Furthers the Inequitable Practice of Funneling Students of Color into Vocational Education – IDRA testimony presented to the Texas House Public Education Committee, April 6, 2021
- Equity Should be Upheld in Eligibility for College, Career, and Military Readiness Outcomes Bonus Funding – IDRA testimony to the House Public Education Committee, March 30, 2020



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