

Reclaiming the Promise of Public Education: *Conversation Series*

SPONSORED BY THE ALBERT SHANKER INSTITUTE AND THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

A New Social Compact For American Education: Fixing Our Broken Accountability System

Sept. 10, 2014

Noon to 2:30 p.m.

PANELISTS

PEDRO A. NOGUERA

Pedro A. Noguera is the Peter L. Agnew Professor of Education at New York University. Noguera is a sociologist whose scholarship and research focuses on the ways in which schools are influenced by social and economic conditions, as well as by demographic trends in local, regional and global contexts. Noguera holds faculty appointments in the departments of Teaching and Learning and Humanities and Social Sciences at the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development. He also serves as an affiliated faculty member in NYU's Department of Sociology. Noguera is the executive director of the Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools. From 2008 to 2011, he was an appointee of the governor of New York to the State University of New York (SUNY) board of trustees, and in 2014, he was elected to the National Academy of Education.

Noguera received his bachelor's degree in sociology and history and a teaching credential from Brown University in 1981, his master's degree in sociology from Brown in 1982, and his doctorate in sociology from the University of California, Berkeley in 1989. He was a classroom teacher in public schools in Providence, R.I., and Oakland, Calif., and continues to work with schools nationally and internationally as a researcher and adviser. He has held tenured faculty appointments at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, where he was named the Judith K. Dimon Professor of Communities and Schools, and at the University of California, Berkeley, where he was also the director of the Institute for the Study of Social Change.

Noguera has published more than 200 research and scholarly articles, monographs, research reports and editorials on topics such as urban school reform, education policy, conditions that promote student achievement, the role of education in community development, youth violence, and race and ethnic relations in American society. He is the author of several books, including *The Imperatives of Power: Political Change and the Social Basis of Regime Support in Grenada*; *City Schools and the American Dream*; *Unfinished Business: Closing the Achievement Gap in Our Nation's Schools*; *The Trouble with Black Boys ... and Other Reflections on Race, Equity and the Future of Public Education*; and *Creating the Opportunity to Learn: Moving from Research to Practice to Close the Achievement Gap*. His most recent book is *Schooling for Resilience: Improving the Life Trajectory of Black and Latino Boys*.

The Reclaiming the Promise of Public Education conversation series is designed to engender lively and informative conversations on important educational issues. We deliberately invite speakers with diverse perspectives, including views other than those of the AFT and the Albert Shanker Institute. What is important is that these participants are committed to genuine engagement with each other.

JOSHUA P. STARR

Joshua P. Starr began his tenure as superintendent of Montgomery County (Md.) Public Schools (MCPS) on July 1, 2011. Since arriving at MCPS, Starr has worked tirelessly to provide all students with an education that prepares them for success in the 21st century. Starr has worked collaboratively with staff, students and the community to develop a strategic focus for MCPS that is aligned with the skills and knowledge students will need in college and the workplace—academic excellence, creative problem solving and social-emotional learning. In June 2013, the Montgomery County Board of Education passed a new Strategic Planning Framework that aligns the work of MCPS to these three competencies and a continued commitment to operational excellence.

During his MCPS tenure, Starr has been recognized for his willingness to advocate for teachers and school staff. A strong believer in the potential of the Common Core State Standards to create meaningful change in public education, he has urged state and national leaders to consider a moratorium on accountability systems and evaluations based on out-of-date standardized tests so schools and districts can effectively align their systems, policies and professional development to the standards. Starr has also worked hard to engage staff, students, parents and community members in conversations about education in a variety of ways, including through student and parent town hall meetings, book clubs, podcasts and the use of social media.

Starr began his career as a special education teacher in New York City, working with students with emotional and behavioral disorders. He held administrative and executive positions in urban and suburban school districts and served as director of school performance and accountability for New York City Public Schools, the nation's largest school district. From 2005 to 2011, Starr was the superintendent of Stamford (Conn.) Public Schools, where he distinguished himself by increasing academic rigor for all students, standardizing curriculum, and building partnerships with the civic and business communities. Starr is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, earned a master's degree in special education from Brooklyn College, and holds a doctorate degree in administration and social policy from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

RANDI WEINGARTEN

Randi Weingarten is the president of the 1.6 million-member American Federation of Teachers, which represents teachers; paraprofessionals and school-related personnel; higher education faculty and staff; nurses and other healthcare professionals; local, state and federal government employees; and early childhood educators. She also serves as president of the Albert Shanker Institute.

Prior to her election as AFT president in 2008, Weingarten served for 12 years as president of the United Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 2, representing approximately 200,000 educators in the New York City public school system, as well as home child care providers and other workers in health, law and education. In 2013, the *New York Observer* named Weingarten one of the most influential New Yorkers of the past 25 years, and *Washington Life* magazine included Weingarten on its 2013 Power 100 list of influential leaders.

From 1986 to 1998, Weingarten served as counsel to UFT President Sandra Feldman, taking a lead role in contract negotiations and enforcement, and in lawsuits in which the union fought for adequate school funding and building conditions. A teacher of history at Clara Barton High School in Brooklyn's Crown Heights neighborhood from 1991 to 1997, Weingarten helped her students win several state and national awards debating constitutional issues. Elected as the local union's assistant secretary in 1995 and as treasurer two years later, she became UFT president after Feldman became president of the AFT. Weingarten was elected to her first full term as UFT president in 1998 and was re-elected three times.

Weingarten holds degrees from Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations and the Cardozo School of Law. She is an active member of the Democratic National Committee and numerous professional, civic and philanthropic organizations.

LEO CASEY (MODERATOR)

Leo Casey is the executive director of the Albert Shanker Institute, which focuses on issues of public education, unionism and democracy promotion. Previously, he served as the United Federation of Teachers' vice president for academic high schools. After a stint in political organizing, Casey began his teaching career in 1984 at Clara Barton High School in Brooklyn, where he taught classes in civics, American history, African-American studies and political science. His classes—entirely students of color, largely immigrant and female—won the New York City championship of the national We the People civics competition 10 years in a row, winning the New York state championship four times and placing fourth in the nation twice. Casey has won several awards for his teaching, and he was named national Social Studies Teacher of the Year for the American Teacher Awards in 1992. He served as the New York state teacher reviewer for the National Standards for Civics and Government Project. He has worked with teacher unions and teachers in Russia, Tanzania and China on the development of civics education. The son of two New York City public school teachers, Casey attended Antioch College, the University of Dar es Salaam and the University of Toronto, where he earned a Ph.D. in political philosophy.

NEXT CONVERSATION:

HOW DO WE GET EXPERIENCED TEACHERS INTO HIGH-NEED SCHOOLS?

Wednesday, Oct. 8, noon to 2 p.m., 555 New Jersey Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20001.

Register here: www.shankerinstitute.org/conversationregistrationoct2014

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