

Education Week presents

Reform, Money, and Politics

The Post-Election Outlook for American Education

This fall will represent a pivotal moment for education reform. The winners of the Race to the Top and i3 competitions have been announced, the historic infusion of more than \$100 billion in education-stimulus money will have largely run its course, and the November elections could produce as many as 37 new governors and a power shift in Congress. Emerging from a period dominated by the economic recession, federal stimulus, and state and local responses, education observers will be looking ahead to the next chapter of K-12 policy and reform.

To survey the education landscape and the terrain ahead, *Education Week* will host a group of prominent education leaders for ***Reform, Money, and Politics: The Post-Election Outlook for American Education***. A one-day conference to be held on Nov. 12 in Washington, D.C., the event is presented in partnership with the American Enterprise Institute and the Center for American Progress, and made possible by support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. At this forum, a high-level gathering of decision makers will delve into the forces that will determine the trajectory of the today's school-improvement movement and define the education agenda for years to come.

Adopting the model of other successful *Education Week* convenings, the event will be built around a combination of: real substance, keen insights from American education's leaders, and genuine engagement with an audience of experts, stakeholders, and decision makers. In two keynote addresses and three moderated roundtable discussions, prominent policymakers, commentators, and analysts will grapple with the key issues that have defined and will continue to shape the national education debate. Speakers will exchange views with one another and with members of the audience. The event will capture viewpoints spanning the political spectrum while at the same time seeking common ground for constructive dialogue.

A draft of the conference agenda, with preliminary logistical information, is attached. This summary provides a brief description for each element of the program.

Today's unique confluence of economic events, political dynamics, and educational reform offers a prime opportunity to examine what has been learned about the underlying intent and practical effect of stimulus-era reforms, among them new school-turnaround models, common standards and tests, and renewed attention to teacher performance and evaluation. To what extent have states and districts adopted such reforms, and will these reforms survive and flourish once the stimulus funding dries up? And, more importantly, will they provide a coherent and durable school-improvement agenda that states and districts can rally around, thus marking a true turning point for K-12 education?

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We believe that this event will generate strong interest in the post-election season. It is also our hope that it will spark a great deal of thoughtful and constructive dialogue within in key education policy circles.

I look forward to discussing the event further and to answering any questions you might have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Swanson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Christopher B. Swanson

Vice President
Editorial Projects in Education

The nonprofit publisher of Education Week

Reform, Money, and Politics

The Post-Election Outlook for American Education

Preliminary Logistical Information

Date: November 12, 2010

Time: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Location: Pew Charitable Trusts headquarters in downtown Washington, D.C.

Audience: Approximately 100 members of Washington's education and policy community, as well as district- and state-level leaders

Format: The event will be built around a program featuring two highlighted speakers (keynote and capstone addresses) and three topically focused panels. The panels of featuring prominent thought leaders, policymakers, and commentators will be moderated by *Education Week* reporters and editors. Those roundtable discussions will be conducted in a group-interview style, with no prepared statements or extended speeches. A question-and-answer period will follow each panel, in order to ensure audience participation and a day of lively discussions. The program will also include lunch and a networking break to provide attendees with ample opportunity to interact and exchange ideas.

Preliminary Event Program

November 12, 2010

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

(program details subject to change)

Welcome

10:00 – 10:15 (15 min.)

Brief introductory remarks.

Virginia B. Edwards

President, Editorial Projects in Education

Editor-in-Chief of *Education Week*

Keynote Address

10:15 – 10:45 (30 min.)

Prepared remarks from a high-profile elected official or policymaker who is deeply engaged in education issues. The keynote and capstone addresses will offer a balance of political viewpoints from a leading Democrat and Republican. The speakers will share insight and perspective on recent events in education as well as their thoughts on the emerging national agenda. The speakers may also take questions from the audience, time permitting.

Speaker: TDB

Panel 1: The Post-Election Environment

10:45 – 11:30 (45 min.)

Although the results of the upcoming elections are as yet undecided, all indications point to the potential for a tremendous amount of change. This session will feature two prominent political pollsters discussing the results of the 2010 midterm elections and the big-picture implications for the policy agenda. The speakers will have established reputations as well-known pollsters who routinely work with Republicans and Democrats, respectively. (In an alternative format under consideration, the session might feature two notable commentators or political pundits.) The discussion will range broadly across a variety of issues but will also place a particular emphasis on education. The session will be moderated by an *Education Week* staffer or a “neutral” political or public-opinion analyst. About 15 minutes of the segment will be devoted to a question-and-answer period with the audience.

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Geoffrey Garin

President

Peter Hart Research Associates

David Winston

President

The Winston Group

Second Panelist

TBD

Andrew L. Yarrow (moderator)

Consultant, Public Agenda

Lecturer, American University

Lunch Break

11:30 – 12:30 (60 min.)

Panel 2: The Education Agenda

12:30 – 1:15 (45 min.)

This four-person roundtable will take stock of the course of education policy and reform over the past several years. That recent history has been marked, perhaps most notably, by the most severe economic downturn in generations, an unprecedented federal response (and infusion of federal education dollars) in the form of the stimulus, the emergence of a broader education agenda as seen through the priorities of such programs as Race to the Top and i3, and a variety of state-led efforts, including the Common Core State Standards Initiative. The discussion will also include some forecasting of major trends we are likely to see on the horizon in the near future. Panelists will include leading experts and elected and appointed officials from the Hill, U.S. Department of Education, White House, think tanks, and the policy and advocacy community. The session will be moderated by an *Education Week* reporter or editor and will include a 15-minute question-and-answer period with the audience.

David Cleary

Staff Director, Subcommittee on Children and Families (Minority Staff)

U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Jamie Fasteau

Senior Education Policy Advisor (Majority Staff)

U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor

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Frederick M. Hess

Resident Scholar and Director of Education Policy Studies
American Enterprise Institute

Carmel Martin

Assistant Secretary for Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development
U.S. Department of Education

Networking Break

1:15 – 1:30 (15 min.)

Panel 3: Education's Economic Challenges

1:30 – 2:15 (45 min.)

Economic issues will undoubtedly factor into discussions of the political environment and education agenda featured in the event's first two panel sessions. This final roundtable will delve more deeply into economic and financial dynamics as they specifically impact education and public schooling.

Among the key questions facing the field: Now that the bulk of the federal stimulus money has been handed out, are states and school districts tumbling down a funding cliff that will erase the education-reform momentum that has been building? Did the influx of federal funds in fact spur real reform and structural changes, or did states and districts forestall tough decisions that will now need to be made? How can stimulus-era reforms be sustained after the federal dollars run out, and as states claw their way back from a national recession? In this session, state and district leaders will discuss successful strategies for meeting new reform goals and accountability demands in a time of severe budget constraints. The four-person panel will offer perspectives from key education stakeholders, such as state schools chiefs, district superintendents, school business officials, teachers, policy analysts, and education-finance experts. The session will be moderated by an *Education Week* reporter or editor and will include a 15-minute question-and-answer period with the audience.

Andrés Alonso

Chief Executive Officer
Baltimore City Public Schools

Cynthia G. Brown

Vice President for Education Policy
Center for American Progress

William R. Hite, Jr.

Superintendent
Prince George's County Public Schools

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Karen Hawley Miles

President and Executive Director
Education Resource Strategies

Capstone Address

2:15 – 2:45 (30 min.)

Prepared remarks from a high-profile elected official or policymaker who is deeply engaged in education issues. The keynote and capstone addresses will offer a balance of political viewpoints from a leading Democrat and Republican. The speakers will share insight and perspective on recent events in education as well as their thoughts on the emerging national agenda. The speakers may also take questions from the audience, time permitting.

Speaker: TDB

Conclusion (15 min.)

Brief concluding remarks

Barbara Chow

Program Director, Education Program
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation