

Improving Education the New Mexico Way

Jeannie Oakes and Carmen Gonzales will discuss research they conducted over the past two years about challenges facing New Mexico's education system. The central finding is that fundamental improvement requires recognizing that students who face barriers to school success—including poverty and systemic racism—are not exceptions in New Mexico; rather, they are the norm. Accordingly, the state must design a system that places these students at the center and builds the state and local capacity to meet their diverse needs. Jeannie and Carmen will provide specific examples of the challenges and opportunities as the state tries to build a racially and economically just system as it recovers from the setback from COVID-19.

Jeannie Oakes is a Senior Fellow at the Learning Policy Institute (LPI) and Presidential Professor Emeritus in Educational Equity at UCLA, where she founded UCLA's Institute for Democracy, Education, and Access; the University of California's All Campus Consortium on Research for Diversity; and Center X, UCLA's urban teacher preparation program. Her LPI work focuses on equity, community schools, and teacher preparation, with a special emphasis on education policy in New Mexico. Oakes's books include *Keeping Track: How Schools Structure Inequality*, *Becoming Good American Schools: The Struggle for Civic Virtue in Education Reform*, and *Learning Power: Organizing for Education and Justice*. She is past president of the American Educational Research Association and a member of the National Academy of Education. Oakes resides in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Carmen Gonzales has been a long-time educator working in leadership roles in both k–12 and higher education. She retired as Vice President for Student Success at both Santa Fe Community College (SFCC) and New Mexico State University (NMSU), where she is Vice President Emerita. While at NMSU and SFCC, she was able to bring in close to \$30 million in grant funding to provide professional development opportunities for k–12 and higher education educators. At NMSU, she served as President of the Higher Learning Commission and was a member of eArmyU and other national education boards. She is currently President of the SFCC's Foundation Board of Directors, was recently elected to the Santa Fe Public Schools Board of Education and is a consultant to the Learning Policy Institute. Gonzales is a native of Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Class Assignment

- **Improving Education the New Mexico Way: An Evidence-Based Approach.** Brief overview of report. <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/new-mexico-improving-education-report>
- **Executive Summary from full report.** Review as much as time permits. https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/New_Mexico_Improving_Education_REPORT.pdf