



## Reclaiming the Promise of Public Education: *Conversation Series*

### **The 2016 Elections: What Do They Mean for American Education?**

November 16, 2016 | Noon to 2 p.m.

#### **Catherine Brown**

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Catherine Brown is the vice president of education policy at American Progress. Previously, Brown served as the vice president of policy at Teach for America and as a senior consultant for Leadership for Educational Equity. Prior to her role at Teach for America, Brown served as senior education policy advisor for the House Committee on Education and Labor, where she advised Chairman George Miller (D-CA). In 2008, Brown served as the domestic policy advisor for presidential candidate Hillary Clinton. Earlier in her career, Brown directed Teach for America's Early Childhood Initiative and served as a legislative assistant for both Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY) and Rep. Jim Langevin (D-RI), as well as a research assistant at Mathematica Policy Research in New Jersey. Brown received her bachelor's degree from Smith College and holds a master's in public policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Follow her on Twitter @catbrown66 @amprog.

#### **Frederick M. Hess**

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Frederick Hess is a resident scholar and director of education policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute. An educator, political scientist and author, he studies K-12 and higher education issues. His books include *The Cage-Busting Teacher*, *Cage-Busting Leadership*, *Breakthrough Leadership in the Digital Age*, *The Same Thing Over and Over*, *Education Unbound*, *Common Sense School Reform*, *Revolution at the Margins* and *Spinning Wheels*. He is also the author of the popular *Education Week* blog "Rick Hess Straight Up," and is a regular contributor to *The Hill*. Hess's work has appeared in scholarly and popular outlets such as *Teachers College Record*, *Harvard Educational Review*, *Social Science Quarterly*, *Urban Affairs Review*, *American Politics Quarterly*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Phi Delta Kappan*, *Educational Leadership*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *National Affairs*, *USA Today*, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Atlantic* and *National Review*. He has edited widely cited volumes on the Common Core, the role of for-profits in education, education philanthropy, school costs and productivity, the impact of education research, and No Child Left Behind. Hess serves as executive editor of *Education Next*, as lead faculty member for the Rice University Education

Sponsored by the Albert Shanker Institute and the American Federation of Teachers, this conversation series is designed to engender lively and informative discussions on important educational issues. We deliberately invite speakers with diverse perspectives, including views other than those of the Albert Shanker Institute and the AFT. What is important is that these participants are committed to genuine engagement with each other.

Entrepreneurship Program, and on the review board for the Broad Prize for Public Charter Schools. He also serves on the boards of directors of the National Association of Charter School Authorizers and 4.0 Schools. A former high school social studies teacher, he teaches or has taught at the University of Virginia, the University of Pennsylvania, Georgetown University, Rice University and Harvard University. He holds an M.A. and Ph.D. in government, and an M.Ed. in teaching and curriculum, from Harvard University. Follow him on Twitter at @rickhess99.

## **Luis A. Huerta**

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Luis Huerta is an associate professor of education and public policy at Columbia University's Teachers College. He earned his Ph.D. in education policy from the University of California, Berkeley, in 2002. He teaches courses in policy analysis and implementation, school finance and organizational sociology. His research and scholarship focus on school choice reforms and school finance policy. His research on school choice reforms examines policies that advance both decentralized and market models of schooling—including charter schools, home schooling, tuition tax credits and vouchers. His research on school finance policy focuses on how legal and legislative battles over finance equity in schools, and the research that has analyzed the effects of resources on student achievement, have consistently overlooked how resources are used within schools. Prior to joining the Teachers College faculty in January 2002, he served as a research associate and coordinator for K-12 education policy research for Policy Analysis for California Education. He also served as a California public school teacher for six years. He is the author of recent articles on school choice and school finance published in *Educational Policy*, *Journal of Education Finance*, *Teachers College Record*, *Peabody Journal of Education*, *Journal of Education Policy* and *Phi Delta Kappan*. He recently served as co-editor of the journal *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*.

## **Michelle Ringuette**

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Michelle Ringuette is an experienced strategist and campaigner who oversees politics, government relations and moving a progressive agenda for the American Federation of Teachers. She is Chair of For Our Future, the nation's largest independent field organization that engages working people on economic fairness, climate issues, public education and racial justice. She is also a co-founder and steering committee member of the HedgeClippers Campaign, which seeks to rein in the excesses of the financial services industry and give voice and relief to hard-working families who have been harmed by that industry's abusive practices. Her background includes both domestic and international advocacy and strategic communications in labor, corporate accountability, women's rights, social justice, economic rights, educational and political campaigns. Most recently, she served as the Chief of Campaigns and Programs at Amnesty International USA, where she led efforts to pass a global arms trade treaty at the UN, seek the closure of the Guantanamo Bay detention facilities, increase transparency and accountability around drone use and highlight the plight of Prisoners of Conscience around the world, such as Russian feminist punk group Pussy Riot.

In 2011, Ringuette co-founded the ALECexposed Network, which aligned multiple groups efforts to unveil the American Legislative Exchange Council's voter suppression efforts and its role in advancing state legislation to benefit its corporate members. ALEC has backed passage of the "stand your ground law" invoked in the Trayvon Martin shooting in Florida. Through the work of ALECexposed, many major multinational companies, including Kraft and CocaCola, ended their involvement with ALEC. Ringuette holds degrees in English and Philosophy from Boston College, and she conducted graduate work in psychology at Harvard University. She lives with her husband, 9 year old son and dog in Washington DC.

## **Randi Weingarten**

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Randi Weingarten is the president of the 1.6 million-member American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, 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. The AFT champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for students, their families and our communities. The AFT and its members advance these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through members' work.

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 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 2012-13, Weingarten served on an education reform commission convened by New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, which made a series of recommendations to improve teaching and learning. She was appointed to the Equity and Excellence Commission, a federal advisory committee chartered by Congress to examine and make recommendations concerning the disparities in educational opportunities that give rise to the achievement gap. For 10 years, while president of the UFT, Weingarten chaired New York City's Municipal Labor Committee, where she coordinated labor negotiations and bargaining for benefits on behalf of the MLC unions' 365,000 members.

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. Weingarten's column "What Matters Most" appears in *The New York Times'* Sunday Review the third Sunday of each month. Weingarten holds degrees from Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations and the Cardozo School of Law. Follow her on Twitter at @rweingarten @AFTunion.

**Next Event: THE CHALLENGE OF PRECARIOUS LABOR.**

**Monday, Dec. 5, 2016, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Washington Court Hotel, 525 New Jersey Ave. N.W., Washington, DC. Registration: [www.shankerinstitute.org/precarious-labor-conference](http://www.shankerinstitute.org/precarious-labor-conference).**

**Next Conversation: AFT: 100 YEARS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE TEACHER UNIONISM.**

**Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2017, noon to 2:00 p.m., American Federation of Teachers, 555 New Jersey Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20001. Registration: [www.shankerinstitute.org/event/aft-one-hundred-years](http://www.shankerinstitute.org/event/aft-one-hundred-years).**