

Biographies

Sponsor

Christopher B. Swanson, Director, [Editorial Projects in Education Research Center](#)

Christopher B. Swanson, Ph.D., is the Director of the EPE Research Center, a division of Editorial Projects in Education, the non-profit organization that publishes *Education Week*. In this capacity, he oversees a staff of full-time researchers and interns who conduct annual policy surveys, collect data, and perform analyses that appear in the Quality Counts, Technology Counts, and Diplomas Count annual reports of *Education Week*. The Center also contributes data and analysis to special coverage in *Education Week*, *Teacher Magazine*, and EDWEEK.ORG, publishes the monthly *Research Connections Newsletter*, hosts live web chats on research topics, and maintains the Education Counts and EdWeek Maps online data resources.

Among the EPE Research Center's major projects is *Quality Counts*, an annual special issue of *Education Week* supported throughout its 12-year history by the Pew Charitable Trusts and the Pew Center on the States. In 2006, the EPE Research Center and *Education Week* launched a new four-year project to examine graduation rates and related issues facing the nation's high schools. The project's major releases include the annual Diplomas Count report and EdWeek Maps, a powerful GIS-based online data tool that allows users to map out information on graduation rates and generate customized reports for any school district in the nation.

Prior to joining EPE in 2005, Swanson was a Senior Research Associate at the Urban Institute, where his work focused on issues of federal policy and urban high school reform involving small-school restructuring. While at the Urban Institute, he led several evaluation and research projects sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and other funders. Swanson was also the co-Principal Investigator of a large five-year evaluation of an extensive high school reform initiative being implemented in the Baltimore City Public School System.

During the past few years, much of Swanson's research has examined the implementation of accountability provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act. In particular he has extensively investigated the persistent challenges associated with accurately measuring high school graduation rates, a required element of the performance-based accountability mandated under the federal law. Swanson's body of research on this topic has been widely profiled in the national and regional media and has provided policy leaders important insights into this critical issue. He has been called on by the U.S. Department of Education as well as the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to advise on issues related to graduation rates. In addition, Swanson has served on advisory panels for such groups as the National Governors Association, Council of Chief State School Officers, and the Alliance for Excellent Education and has provide guidance to a variety of professional and membership organizations.

Dr. Swanson's research on a variety of educational policy issues – among them standards and accountability, instructional reform, high school dropout and completion, student mobility, and public school choice – has been presented at national conferences and published in leading scholarly journals, including *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, *Sociology of Education*, *Social Psychology of Education*, and *Rationality and Society*. He has also contributed chapters in several recent and forthcoming edited volumes: *No Child Left Behind and The Reduction of the Achievement Gap* (Routledge), *Dropouts in America: Confronting the Graduation Rate Crisis* (Harvard), and *Reflections on the Social Organization of Schooling: A Tribute to Charles E. Bidwell* (Russell Sage Foundation).

Speakers

Sally Brownfield, Facilitator, [Center for the Improvement of Student Learning](#) at the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

Sally Brownfield is a facilitator in the Center for the Improvement of Student Learning at the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The focus of her work addresses the academic achievement gap and promoting partnerships between schools, families, communities and tribes.

Ms. Brownfield is a veteran classroom teacher, over 20 years K-12 plus university and community college instruction. Sally's publications include *Motivating Native American Students: Strategies for Educators*, and *The Children: A Child Care Curriculum for Young Native Americans*. She has also written course curriculum specifically for Native American high school students.

Ms. Brownfield has served as the Chair of Washington State Indian Education Association, on the board of Northwest Regional Educational Laboratories and many other boards and communities. She is a citizen of the Squaxin Island Tribe on South Puget Sound in Washington State.

Susan C. Faircloth, Assistant Professor and Co-Director, [The Center for the Study of Leadership in American Indian Education](#), The Pennsylvania State University

Susan C. Faircloth is the Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership at the Pennsylvania State University. During the 2007-2008 academic year, Dr. Faircloth is on leave from Penn State while she completes a Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship with The Civil Rights Project at the University of California, Los Angeles. Her research focuses on the education of American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) students with disabilities. She is specifically interested in the factors that account for the referral and placement of AI/AN students in special education programs and services in the early grades, the preparation of school leaders, and the moral and ethical dimensions of school leadership.

Patricia Gándara, Professor of Education and Co-Director, [The Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles](#) at the University of California, Los Angeles

Patricia Gándara is the Professor of Education in the Graduate School of Education & Information Studies at UCLA. She received her Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from UCLA and has been a bilingual school psychologist, a social scientist with the RAND Corporation, director of education research in the California Legislature (State Assembly) and Commissioner for the Postsecondary Education Commission for the State of California. She is currently Co-Director of The Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles at UCLA and Associate Director of the UC Linguistic Minority Research Institute. Professor Gándara's research focuses on educational equity and access for low income and ethnic minority students, language policy, and the education of Mexican origin youth. She is the author of numerous articles and several books, including the forthcoming *The Latino Education Crisis: The Consequences of Failed Social Policies* (Harvard University Press).

Brian Jeffries, Graduation Policy Director and Senior Policy Advisor, [Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction](#)

Brian Jeffries is the Graduation Policy Director for the Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) for the State of Washington. Mr. Jeffries advises the superintendent on policy issues pertaining to high school graduation, college and career readiness, and higher education transition. Prior to re-joining the Superintendent's Office (previously with the OSPI from 2000-2004), he was a policy and advocacy consultant to The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Coordinator of the Washington State Senate Early Learning, K-12, and Higher Education Committee.

Nettie Legters, Ph.D., Co-Director, [Center for Social Organization of Schools](#), Talent Development High Schools (TDHS) Program, Johns Hopkins University

Nettie Legters is a Research Scientist at the Johns Hopkins University Center for Social Organization of Schools, and Co-Director of the Center's Talent Development High Schools (TDHS) program. Her research focuses on equity in education, school organization, teachers' work, dropout prevention, and implementation, scale-up, and impact of secondary education reform. Dr. Legters has dedicated her professional career to improving low performing high schools and advancing the national high school reform movement. She has published extensively and presented to a wide variety of audiences in national, state, regional, and district forums. She is co-author, with Robert Balfanz, of the widely cited *Locating the Dropout Crisis* report, and her book, *Comprehensive Reform for Urban High Schools: A Talent Development Approach* is available through Teachers College Press. Nettie Legters received her Ph.D. in Sociology from Johns Hopkins University in 1996. Since then, she has served as a Research Scientist at the JHU Center for Social Organization of Schools where she leads research projects for the Center's secondary education program and co-directs the Center's Talent Development High School initiative. Dr. Legters also holds an MA in Sociology from Johns Hopkins, and a BA in Philosophy from Whitman College.

Daniel J. Losen, J.D., M.Ed., Senior Education Law and Policy Associate, [The Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles](#) at the University of California, Los Angeles

Daniel J. Losen is a Senior Education Law and Policy Associate for The Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles (CRP) at UCLA (formerly at Harvard Law School) where he also has been a lecturer on law. He frequently serves as an independent consultant on education and racial justice issues for civil rights advocates as well as for state and district education agencies. His work concerns the impact of federal, state and local education law and policy on students of color. His efforts have focused on revealing and remedying the high school dropout crisis, on reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, on revealing and redressing the "School to Prison Pipeline" and the resulting disproportionate minority confinement, and on racial inequity in special education. On these and related topics he conducts law and policy research, publishes books, reports, and articles, drafts model legislation and provides other guidance for civil rights advocates, policymakers, and educators. Mr. Losen also has experience as a legal services education attorney representing socio-economically disadvantaged students. Before becoming a lawyer, Mr. Losen taught in public schools for 10 years, including work as a school founder of an alternative public school.

Gary Orfield, Professor of Education, Law, Political Science and Urban Planning and Co-Director, [The Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles](#) at the University of California, Los Angeles
Gary Orfield is Professor of Education, Law, Political Science and Urban Planning at UCLA and Professor of Education and Social Policy at Harvard during the transition of the Civil Rights Project to UCLA. Professor Orfield is interested in the study of civil rights, education policy, urban policy, and minority opportunity. He has been Director of the Civil Rights Project at Harvard, an initiative that is developing and publishing a new generation of research on multiracial civil rights issues. At UCLA the Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles is adding more emphasis on issues of immigration and language and more focus on California and the Southwest to its long-standing work and a new co-director, Patricia Gándara.

Gary Orfield's central interest has been the development and implementation of social policy, with a central focus on the impact of policy on equal opportunity for success in American society. Recent works include five co-edited books over the last two years and numerous articles and reports. Recent books include, *Dropouts In America: Confronting The Graduation Rate Crisis*, *School Resegregation: Must the South Turn Back?* (with John Boger), and *Higher Education and the Color Line* (with Patricia Marin and Catherine Horn). In addition to his scholarly work, Dr. Orfield has been involved with development of governmental policy and has served as an expert witness in several dozen court cases related to his research, including the University of Michigan Supreme Court case which upheld the policy of affirmative action in 2003 and has been called to give testimony in civil rights suits by the United States Department of Justice and many civil rights, legal services, and educational organizations.

Dr. Orfield was awarded the American Political Science Association's Charles Merriam Award for his "contribution to the art of government through the application of social science research." He has been awarded the 2007 Social Justice award of the American Education Research Association for "work [that] has had a profound impact in demonstrating the critical role of education research in supporting social justice." He is a member of the National Academy of Education. A native Minnesotan, Dr. Orfield received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago.

Mandy Smoker Broaddus, American Indian Student Achievement Specialist, [Office of Public Instruction, Indian Education Division](#)

Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux, works in the Indian Education Division at the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) as an academic specialist who focuses her work on Indian Student Achievement. The Indian Education Division is committed to narrowing the achievement gap that exists in Montana between Indian and non-Indian students. Before coming to OPI in 2005, Mandy worked as a Principal and Dean of Students in Frazer, Montana, a rural K-12 school in her home community that has a 100% American Indian student population. In addition, she has taught composition, creative writing, and literature courses at the University of Montana and Fort Peck Community College

Mike Tulee, Policy Analyst, [Center for the Native Education](#), Antioch University Seattle

Mike Tulee is a Policy Analyst for the Center for Native Education. Mr. Tulee provides sites with district, state, federal, and tribal policy analysis, tools, resources, and other forms of technical assistance. Mr. Tulee also coordinates the Center's tribal work group. He has worked locally and nationally in Indian Education for nearly 20 years, serving as Title VII Indian Education Director for Seattle Public Schools, as a grant

support specialist with the Office of Indian Education, and as a classroom teacher and school leader in secondary education. Mr. Tulee served in the U.S. Air Force for four years, received a B.A. in Geography from the University of Washington where he also received his Washington State Teacher's Certificate, and a M.Ed. from Antioch University. Mr. Tulee is alumnus of White Swan High School, located on the Yakima Indian Reservation in 1979.