



### About our speakers

**Steve Farkas** is the President of Farkas Duffett Research Group. Prior to co-founding the FDR Group, Steve was Research Director at Public Agenda, a nonprofit and nonpartisan think tank, from 1992 to 2004. Originally planning a career in political consulting, he began with a short stint as a Senior Research Analyst at Penn & Schoen, Inc., in 1990. Steve is the principal author of over 100 major opinion studies on a range of issues from public education, families, poverty and immigration, to social security, crime and foreign policy. His expertise lies in crafting original questionnaires, employing advanced statistical techniques and moderating focus groups. On education alone he has conducted over 150 focus group discussions with teachers, students, parents and administrators. He has appeared dozens of times on CNN, NPR, CBS, ABC and others. He earned his B.A. from New York University, and his M.A. and M. Phil. from Columbia University's Department of Political Science. At Columbia, Steve received a MacArthur Pre-Dissertation Fellowship; he is currently writing his dissertation on religious faith and tolerance. In 2004–2005 he was a Program Associate at the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. He continues his affiliation with Public Agenda as a Senior Research Fellow. Steve lives in Manhattan with his wife, daughter, a dog, a cat and a turtle—and they all get along.

**Tom Loveless** is Director of the Brown Center on Education Policy and Senior Fellow in Governance Studies at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. Loveless' research focuses on education policy and the politics of educational reform. He is the author of recent articles in the *Wilson Quarterly*, *Education Next*, *American Journal of Education*, *Educational Policy*, *Educational Leadership*, *Educational Administration Quarterly*, and *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*. Loveless also authors *The Brown Center Report on American Education*, an annual report explaining important trends in achievement test scores. His op-eds have been published in *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Newsday*, *The Washington Post*, *USA Weekend*, and *Education Week*. Loveless has appeared on NBC's *Today* show, *NBC Nightly News*, *ABC World News Tonight*, and *Fox News*. Loveless' book, *The Tracking Wars: State Reform Meets School Policy* (Brookings Institution Press, 1999), examines two states' attempts to dismantle tracking in public middle schools. Most recently Loveless co-edited a volume on school choice with Julian Betts, *Getting Choice Right: Ensuring Equity and Efficiency in Education Policy* (Brookings Institution Press, 2005). Loveless holds a Ph.D. in education from the University of Chicago, an M.A. in special education from California State University, Sacramento, and an A.B. in English from the University of California, Berkeley. From 1979 to 1988, Loveless was a classroom teacher in the San Juan Unified School District, near his hometown of Sacramento, California. While teaching sixth grade, he served on numerous state and local curriculum committees. After receiving his Ph.D. in 1992, Loveless joined the faculty of Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, where he served as both assistant and associate professors of public policy until 1999. Loveless was

selected as a National Academy of Education Spencer Post-Doctoral Fellow in 1995. He is currently on advisory boards of the *American Journal of Education* and *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*. Since 2004, Loveless has represented the United States at the General Assembly of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Attainment, a sixty nation organization that governs international testing.

**Michael Petrilli** is Vice President for National Programs and Policy at the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, where he oversees the Foundation's research projects and publications, including *The Education Gadfly*. He is also research fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution and Executive Editor of *Education Next*. Petrilli is author, with Frederick M. Hess, of *No Child Left Behind: A Primer*, the most comprehensive overview of the law and its implementation to date. He comes to the Foundation from the U.S. Department of Education, where he served as Associate Assistant Deputy Secretary in the Office of Innovation and Improvement. In that role, he oversaw approximately two-dozen discretionary grant programs that support a variety of education reforms, including alternate routes to certification, charter schools, and more, and helped to lead the implementation of No Child Left Behind's public school choice and supplemental services provisions. Before working at the Department of Education, he was Vice President of Community Partnerships at K12, an Internet education company. He started his career as a teacher at the Joy Outdoor Education Center in Clarksville, Ohio. Mr. Petrilli holds a Bachelor's degree in Honors Political Science from the University of Michigan and a teaching certificate in high school social studies.

**Ross Wiener**, a Principal Partner at the Education Trust, directs the policy team where he connects policymakers, reporters, and advocates with data, research, and examples from the field regarding what can be done to close achievement gaps. Prior to joining the Education Trust, he spent four and a half years as a trial attorney in the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division. As an attorney in the Educational Opportunities Section, he investigated and prosecuted violations of federal civil rights laws in schools and school districts across the country, including cases involving desegregation, disability rights, harassment, and services for limited-English proficient students. He is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and he received a law degree with high honors from the George Washington University Law School. He clerked for Judge Kermit V. Lipez of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit.

As Executive Vice President of the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, **Joshua Wyner** is responsible for developing, implementing, and evaluating the Foundation's programs. Prior to joining the Foundation, Mr. Wyner was Executive Director of the DC Appleseed Center, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the operations of the DC government, including its educational system. Previously, he was a private attorney, a policy analyst with two Washington, DC-based nonprofit organizations, and a program evaluator with the U.S. General Accounting Office. He is the author of articles and reports on subjects ranging from education finance to international environmental law. Mr. Wyner has a J.D. from the N.Y.U. School of Law, a master of public administration degree from Syracuse University, and a B.A. in history from Vassar College.