

PHOTOGRAPH/MATT WEBER



## Transition Time

**BIG TRANSITIONS ARE UNDERWAY** throughout American education. A new federal education law, the Every Student Succeeds Act, has drawn to a close the era of No Child Left Behind. Thirty of the 50 state school chiefs—those charged with implementing the new law—have assumed their posts since 2014. With baby boomers retiring, the nation’s educator workforce is turning over at an unprecedented clip; there are now more teachers in their first year than at any other experience level. In a few short months, a presidential administration that has pursued arguably the most ambitious national school-reform agenda in U.S. history will be replaced by ... Heaven only knows.

Here at *Education Next*, we are in the midst of a transition of our own. Our founding editor-in-chief, Paul E. Peterson, who has steered the journal on a steady course since its 2001 launch, has decided it is time to hand over the reins. A member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the National Academy of Education, Paul has clearly made his mark as a political scientist and education scholar. Yet the launch of *Education Next* and its success over nearly two decades may be his most enduring legacy. As his successor, I will do my best to make that so.

In the journal’s inaugural issue, the editors of *Education Next* announced their dual commitment to “readability and scholarly integrity”—qualities that too often seem incompatible. To Paul fell the task of proving that a journal on education policy could achieve both. Fortunately, he possesses unique editorial gifts: the vision to detect angels hidden within the marble of even the most disjointed manuscripts, and the discernment to see when more polished submissions conceal evidentiary or logical flaws. Equally important has been his sheer devotion to ensuring a high-quality final product. Rarely over the past 16 years has he been without a stack of page proofs filled with painstakingly entered edits.

I step into the role of editor-in-chief with some hesitation,

having seen up close the energy Paul has devoted to the job. But I take confidence from the talent and dedication of the editorial team he has assembled, and from the fact that Paul himself will remain active as the journal’s senior editor.

A second key asset that I inherit is a large and growing audience, both in hard copy and especially online. It is to you, readers, that we editors are ultimately accountable. Please don’t be shy in letting us know how we are doing.

What can you expect from *Education Next* going forward? As always, you will find vigorous coverage of and debate over the defining policy issues facing American education. Regardless of your views on those issues, you can expect them to be challenged. You will find more content presented in new and different formats, ranging from an increased number of web-only articles and interactive graphics, to our recently launched podcast, to live events. And, with evidence mounting that the challenges facing American education reach beyond the K–12 level, we will strategically expand our coverage of higher education as well.

*Education Next* was founded on the belief that “bold change is needed” in American education. That was true in 2001 and remains so today. The journal’s mission has been to serve as an independent voice, presenting “worthy research, sound ideas, and responsible arguments” to help steer the system in new directions.

At this time of transitions for both the journal and the sector it covers, carrying out that mission feels as important as ever. I am honored to have the opportunity, along with our entire team, to pursue it.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Martin R. West". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Martin R. West

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**MISSION STATEMENT** In the stormy seas of school reform, this journal will steer a steady course, presenting the facts as best they can be determined, giving voice (without fear or favor) to worthy research, sound ideas, and responsible arguments. Bold change is needed in American K-12 education, but *Education Next* partakes of no program, campaign, or ideology. It goes where the evidence points.

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