

## **Biographies of Governor Bill Richardson's Education Appointments**

### **Veronica C. Garcia, Secretary of Education**

Veronica Garcia, a native New Mexican has a span of 30 years experience in public education. She holds a Ed.D. in Candidate Educational Leadership, a M.A. in Ed. Diagnosis, a B.A. in Special Education and an certificate in Elementary Education, all received from the University of New Mexico. Hence, Ms. Garcia holds New Mexico certifications in five areas: elementary education, special education, educational administration, school psychologist and speech/communications.

Some of Ms. Garcia's accomplishments have been Superintendent of Santa Fe Public Schools where she undertook the feat of successfully digging the Santa Fe school district out of a huge financial hole. She has also been Associate Superintendent of School Effectiveness, Associate Superintendent for APS Southwest Region, Principal at Rio Grande High School and also New Futures School. Ms. Garcia was a classroom teacher for five years, a school psychologist for Albuquerque Public Schools, director of a non-profit entity and a lecturer at Highlands University.

Veronica Garcia serves on statewide committees that influence educational policy, namely the LESC Committees: Ad Hoc Ed Reform, Charter Schools and the State Board of Education Council for Assessment and Accountability. Veronica is an appointment to the Governor's Progress Agenda Task Force and also serves as liaison between New Mexico State Department of Education and district superintendents.

### **Kurt Steinhaus, Deputy Secretary for Learning and Accountability**

Kurt Steinhaus, of Santa Fe, has served since August as education policy advisor to Governor Bill Richardson in a part-time special assignment. Since 1999, he has served as director of Student and Education Programs at Los Alamos National Laboratory. Steinhaus has coordinated the science, mathematics, engineering and technology education programs throughout the Laboratory, directed and led 22 initiatives involving more than 2,000 students and contributed to a systemic change in mathematics and science education. From 1987 to 1999, Steinhaus served as assistant superintendent and division director for Accountability and Information Services for the New Mexico State Department of Education. He directed and led six major units, including Program Evaluation and Student Assessment, Data Collection and Reporting and School Management Support and Intervention, managed more than \$20 million in state and federal funding, facilitated strategic planning about education in New Mexico and led major organizational restructuring efforts. Steinhaus, a Los Alamos native, is a former employee of the year and teacher of the year for the Alamogordo Public Schools.

### **Carlotta Penny Bird, Assistant Secretary for Indian Education**

Carlotta Penny Bird, of Santo Domingo Pueblo, has worked with the Zuni Public Schools since 1993. Since July 1999, she has served as director of Instruction for the district, working to help students reach their maximum potential and ensuring that instruction in the schools aligns with state standards and benchmarks. Throughout her career, Ms. Bird, who is proficient in both Keres and English, has worked with the 19 Pueblos, the Jacarilla Apache, the Mescalero Apache and the Dineh tribes in New

Mexico. She has worked for Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute in Albuquerque, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque Public Schools, Bernalillo Public Schools, Laguna-Acoma High School in the Grants-Cibola County Schools, American Indian Scholarships, Inc. in Taos, All Indian Pueblo Council in Albuquerque and Albuquerque Indian School. Prior to working in Zuni, Ms. Bird served as an education consultant in the Indian Education Unit at the New Mexico State Department of Education.

**Ellen Bernstein, Chairwoman Governor's Council on Teaching**

Ellen Bernstein, of Albuquerque, was elected president of the Albuquerque Teachers Federation in 1999. She has held the position ever since. Ms. Bernstein began her career as a substitute teacher in Albuquerque Public Schools in 1982. She later taught at Carlos Rey, Mary Ann Binford and Sandia Base elementary schools. She also taught in primary multi-age and inclusion programs at APS. Most recently, Bernstein has taught courses at the university level. She earned her Bachelor's degree in elementary education, Master's degree in special education, and is working on her Ed.D. in education administration from the University of New Mexico.