

LAURIE OLSEN

Laurie Olsen is the Executive Director of California Tomorrow, a non-profit advocacy, research and technical assistance organization committed to helping create a fair and equitable society. Dr. Olsen is an expert on educational equity for immigrant students, students of color, language minority students and low-income students. Since 1986, she has developed a national reputation as the architect of California Tomorrow's equity-centered education reform work at the school site, community and policy levels. In 1991 she was named Executive Director and led the organization through a major restructuring. She has directed the research and been the principal author of many of California Tomorrow's publications including (among others): *Crossing the Schoolhouse Border*, *Embracing Diversity*, *The Unfinished Journey: Restructuring Schools in a Diverse Society*, *The Schools We Need Now: How Parents, Families and Communities Can Change Schools*, *Turning the Tides of Exclusion*, and *And Still We Speak...Stories of communities and families reclaiming and sustaining language and culture*.

In 1998, The New Press published Dr. Olsen's book, *Made in America*, an exploration of the dynamics of Americanization and racialization that occurs in our public schools.

Before joining California Tomorrow, Dr. Olsen spent four years as Executive Director of the Citizens Policy Center. Her career spans 30 years of providing training and technical assistance on dynamics of gender and race, language and culture, and conducting social and policy research and advocacy on access and equity. Before entering the field of education and advocacy, she worked as an assistant to Dr. Margaret Mead at the Museum of Natural History in New York. She is the past Chair of the National Coalition of Advocates for Students. Dr. Olsen holds a Ph.D. in Social and Cultural Studies in Education from the University of California at Berkeley where she has also been a lecturer.

Dr. Olsen has attained a national reputation as a researcher on immigrant education, a keynote speaker and articulate advocate for equity and access to quality schooling, a skillful facilitator and sought-after provider of technical assistance to schools and other institutions grappling with dynamics of race, language and culture.