A study undertaken by the Center for Persons with Disabilities will allow schools in four districts to participate in an extended school year program in New Mexico—and generate data on whether more days in school is a good investment of public money. The project will examine the effects of a longer school year on all children, regardless of their background or academic standing. The StartSmart K-3 Plus project will compare the performance of students who had an extended school year to those who did not. For Judith Touloumis, administrator of Carlos Rey Elementary School in Albuquerque, the project is another tool to bolster a good trend. “This is a school that they claim is failing,” she said. She disagrees. Over the past few years at Carlos Rey, scores have risen. The percentage of Carlos Rey students who met the annual measurable objective climbed from 44 percent in 2008 to 57 percent in 2010. Despite the improvements, though, one identifiable group lags behind: English language learners. Touloumis hopes a chance to go to school longer will help them close the gap.