



1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Suite 204 | Washington, DC 20036

Tel 202-822-9000  
Fax 202-822-5077

**Embargoed for Release  
on 2/11/2004**

**Contact: Mary Kayne Heinze  
(202) 822-9000**

## **STRONG STATE CHARTER SCHOOL LAWS INCREASE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

WASHINGTON, DC - - The Center for Education Reform (CER) today released the most compelling information available to date linking student achievement to the strength of state charter school laws. This conclusion is highlighted in the eighth edition of *Charter School Laws Across the States: Ranking Scorecard and Legislative Profiles*.

“We have been tracking the impact of weak and strong laws for years, but now we’re able to say, thanks to additional evidence, that academic achievement and strength of charter school law directly correlate,” said CER president Jeanne Allen. “Not only do strong laws foster a robust charter community in a state, but now we know that strong laws also produce schools that tend toward better results,” said Allen.

Nearly two-thirds of the 26 strong-law states saw significant gains in student achievement in test results and No Child Left Behind data during the most recent two-year period. In the 15 weak-law states, where charters fall under traditional school district management, only two states produced gains in student achievement.

“This new and persuasive evidence cannot be ignored. We now know that strong charter laws work both in providing abundant choices for families and in producing measurable results. Those who are seeking to either pass a law for the first time or improve their current law must take note. Our children deserve no less,” Allen said.

*Charter School Laws Across the States: Ranking Scorecard and Legislative Profiles*, rates and ranks the nation's 41 state charter laws on the basis of 10 different criteria. Each state is assigned a letter grade based on the strength of its charter law. This year, the evaluations resulted in the following grading: A: six states; B: fourteen states; C: thirteen states; D: six states and F: two states. Notable ranking changes in 2004 are New Hampshire's rise in the rankings from the 31<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> place because of a change in the New Hampshire law, and Maryland's weak debut at number 37, rating only a D. The Maryland law puts charter schools strictly under traditional school district control.

Copies of *Charter School Laws Across the States: Ranking Scorecard and Legislative Profiles* are available and may be purchased by contacting the Center at (202) 822-9000 or through the CER website at <http://www.edreform.com>.

*Also released today: the latest numbers of charter schools operating, including the number of charter school closures and the latest survey data from CER's **Annual Survey of America's Charter Schools**.* See <http://www.edreform.com> for more information.

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*CER is the leading authority for information on innovative reforms in education and works in states and communities across the country to advance the cause of educational excellence. For more information, contact CER at (202) 822-9000 or send e-mail to [cer@edreform.com](mailto:cer@edreform.com).*