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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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ACHIEVEMENT GAINS FOUND AT CALIFORNIA CHARTER SCHOOLS *Disadvantaged children benefit more from charter schools*

(Washington, DC 3/11/02) California charter schools are proving more effective in improving academic achievement for low income and at-risk students than their non-charter public school counter-parts according to a new study from California State University, Los Angeles. The findings from, "California Charter Schools Serving Low SES Students: An Analysis of the Academic Performance Index," include:

- In schools with at least 50 percent enrollment participating in the Free and Reduced Lunch program charter school students improved at a rate of 22 percent vs. the 19 percent of non-charter public schools.
- The rate of improvement is even higher when looking at enrollments of 75 percent of students participating in the Free and Reduced Lunch program improving at a rate of 28 percent vs. 24 percent.
- Significant in the findings was that the schools were able to do more with less funding and resources.

"This study is an important advance in charter school research, and validates what is clear to parents and communities that have long embraced charter schools. The yearly rankings done by California of its school test scores made this research possible," noted Center for Education Reform (CER) president Jeanne Allen. "As more states are pressed to adopt meaningful measurements, it is likely we'll see more good news."

This study joins a growing number of national, regional and state charter school studies CER has reviewed. Of 65 studies, 61 show positive effects of charter schools. Two recent studies by U.S. Department of Education confirm the ripple effect charter schools have on local districts by driving these schools to implement new educational programs, make systemic changes or create similar programs within the traditional public schools. The study is available at

http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/ccoe/c_perc/announce.htm

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The Center for Education Reform is a national, independent, non-profit advocacy organization providing support and guidance to individuals, community and civic groups, policymakers and others who are working to bring fundamental reforms to their schools. For further information, please call (202) 822-9000 or visit our website at <http://edreform.com>.