



National Charter School Week: National and Local Activities

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It has been more than 10 years since the first charter school opened its doors. Charter schools, their successes, and their contributions to children, families and communities will be celebrated this year from April 28-May 2, 2003. Some basic facts:

- Charter schools are *public* schools that operate on an accountability contract. In exchange for freedom from some district and state regulations, charter operators promise to meet certain academic and operational goals.
- Charters *are* accountable. To date roughly seven percent of all charters opened have been closed. That is interesting news in light of the fact that last year 8,600 schools were listed as "needing improvement" by the states' own standards and none of those have been shut down for poor academic performance.
- Nearly 2,700 charters are open in 36 states and the District of Columbia. The schools serve almost 685,000 students
- Over 1.8 million teachers, administrators and board members participate in this movement.

EVENTS: The following events, which the Center for Education Reform helped create, will be taking place in Washington, D.C., and throughout the country:

NATIONAL EVENTS in WASHINGTON DC:

Congressional Salute to Charter Schools is being chaired by: Senators: Judd Gregg (NH); Tom Carper (DE); Joseph Lieberman (CT); Lamar Alexander (TN) and Congressmen: John Boehner (OH); Johnny Isakson (GA); Jeff Flake (AZ) and Michael Castle (DE). **A Lesson on Capitol Hill:** Wednesday, April 30th 10:00 a.m. 2261 Rayburn House Office Building. District of Columbia high school charter students will come to Capitol Hill for a class led by the co-chairs.

MAJOR STATE EVENTS:

CER has worked with state and local charter school leaders and the U.S. Department of Education to coordinate a series of events. For more information, contact: Anna Varghese-Marcucio, CER, 202.822.9000. **Monday, April 28 Washington, DC:** John Bailey, Director of the Office of Educational Technology at the U.S. Department of Education will visit the Arts and Technology Academy.

About Arts and Technology Academy: Provides an academically challenging, technology rich environment for 615 students in grades PreK-5. Curriculum features Saxon Math and Direct Instruction. Will ultimately serve through grade 6. **District of Columbia Charter School Statistics:** Law Passed: 1996. Schools: 39 Enrollment: 11,530

Tuesday, April 29 Los Angeles, CA: Deputy Undersecretary of Education for Innovation and Improvement Nina Rees will visit Camino Nuevo Charter Academy-Burlington Site and then meet with charter school and business leaders along with members of the LA Alliance for Student Achievement at a luncheon at the Regency Club in Westwood. Center for Education Reform president Jeanne Allen will give remarks at the luncheon in addition to Ms. Rees. Also expected are LAUSD School Board president Caprice Young and Los Angeles School Superintendent Roy Romer.

About Camino Nuevo Charter Academy-Burlington: Founded in August 2000 to serve the McArthur



Park -- a densely populated neighborhood of immigrants primarily from Mexico and Central America. Camino Nuevo Charter Academy runs four sites, two elementary and two middle schools serving 280 students in grades K-5. Ninety-four percent of the Burlington site students are English Language Learners and nearly 99 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch. Ana Ponce serves as Administrative Principal for all four sites and has been active in education reform for the past seven years. She was a founding teacher at the Los Angeles Accelerated School and later served as the school's Instructional Leader – during that time, Accelerated was recognized as TIME magazine's Elementary School of the Year for 2000. **California State Charter School Statistics:** Law Passed: 1992 Schools: 428 Enrollment: 153,935



New York, NY: Under Secretary of Education Eugene Hickok will be the featured guest at an event sponsored by the New York Charter Schools Association, "Celebration of New York City Charter Schools" aboard the U.S.S. Intrepid. Pictured at left are Dr. Hickok and Beginning with Children Charter School students. Pictured below are event organizers and participants (L-R: Omar Wasow, founder of Brooklyn Excelsior Charter School; Lisa Coldwell O'Brien, chairman of the New York Charter Schools Association; EWH; Congressman John E. Sweeney; and Robin Hubbard, President of ReadNet Foundation and founder of ReadNet

Bronx Charter School.(Contact: Lisa Coldwell O'Brien 518.283.5558)

New York State Charter School Statistics: Law Passed: 1998 Schools: 38 Enrollment: 10,954



Thursday, May 1 **Detroit, MI and Dearborn, MI** Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Gerald Reynolds, will visit Ross Hill Academy in Detroit (Serves Grades: K-8) and the Henry Ford Academy in Dearborn. Assistant Secretary Reynolds will give remarks at a luncheon with Michigan charter school and local leaders. (Contact: Lisa Diaz of the Michigan Association of Public School Academies 517.374.9167).

Michigan State Charter School Statistics: Law Passed: 1993 Schools: 196 Enrollment: 60,236 **About Ross Hill Academy:** Educates 260 students in grades K-8. Provides excellent elementary learning experience to enable the students to meet the challenges of higher education with an emphasis on math and science. **About Henry Ford Academy:** Developed and implemented in cooperation with Ford Motor Company, the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village, the school educates 415 students in grades 9-12. Eighty-eight percent of Henry Ford's first graduating class and 91 percent of its second were accepted into advanced learning programs or the U.S. Armed Services. Students attending Henry Ford Academy come from 65 different middle schools – 70 percent come from Detroit.

Friday, May 2 **Columbus, OH:** Department of Education General Counsel Brian Jones will speak at the Ohio Charter School Conference. He will also visit two Columbus charter schools: Millennium Community School and The Arts and College Prep Academy. (Contact: Anita Nelam of the Ohio Charter School Association at 614.224.2647).

Ohio State Charter School Statistics: Law Passed: 1997 Schools: 131 Enrollment: 28,446 **About Millennium Community School:** Serves 535 students in grades K-6. The kindergarten tested in the top 25 percent in reading on standardized tests and first grade scores in math and reading exceed the national average. **About the Arts and College Prep Academy:** Serves 62 students in Grades 9-10. Recent test scores for 9th Ohio Proficiency Tests in writing, reading, math, citizenship and science range from 82 percent to 97 percent.

Indianapolis, IN Assistant Secretary of Education for Vocational and Adult Education Carol D'Amico will tour the 21st Century Charter School and the Irvington Community School. She will be a keynote speaker at a luncheon with charter school and business leaders. (Contact: Marty Dezlan 765.717.2165)

Indiana State Charter School Statistics: Law passed: 2001 Schools: 11 Enrollment: 1,300 **About 21st Century Charter School:** The school opened in Fall 2002 and currently educates 150 students in grades K-7. It uses the Little Red Schoolhouse model with block scheduling with an extended day and school year. There is an emphasis on art and music as well as physical wellness. **About Irvington Community**



School: Opened in Fall 2002, the school educates 110 students in grades K-5. The school pairs a proven academic program with an arts and music component and an additional emphasis on achievement and character. The school operates on an extended day and extended year. The school also serves as a resource and community base for the Irvington area.

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