



Making Schools Work Better for all Children

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Vol. 2, No. 16 CHOICE: A groundbreaking report was released Monday, April 24, 2000 giving compelling evidence that real school choice is the only vehicle for true public school reform. The report entitled *Competing to Win: How Florida's A+ Plan Has Triggered Public School Reform* identifies reforms that have come to Florida schools because of the threat from competition and choice. It found that "not only have those schools with children already eligible for the Opportunity Scholarship program implemented significant reform, but all of the 15 districts with 'F' schools – as well as those with 'D' schools -- have also moved swiftly to fix their failing ways." Long-time education reporter Carol Innerst authored *Competing to Win*. CER was among several organizations that co-published the report.

Victory for school choice! The opponents of Florida's Opportunity Scholarships were in court yesterday asking the same judge who ruled against the program to lift the stay in the injunction of the program to stop the A+ Plan from operating while the courts decide its fate. They were denied their motion as they could not make a compelling case in the eyes of Judge Ralph Smith. The substance of the case will be considered this summer. For more information, visit www.ij.org. **TEACHERS:** New York's bidding war over summer school — which last had Mayor Guiliani pitted against union boss Randi Weingarten — resulted in a net win for the union. The Mayor had wanted to give high performing teachers \$2,500 bonuses while Weingarten wanted \$700 bonuses for everyone. Since the Mayor's office and the union are at an "unofficial impasse," the school board has to fill positions for Summer school under the normal union contract. The result is that NO incentives will be offered to attract more teachers for this year's expanded summer school program. The *New York Times* on April 24, 2000 sounded a bit more like reformers than usual. Its editorial entitled "The Politics of Teacher Testing" called for less smoke and mirrors among the unions and more substance behind their calls for teacher testing. Addressing a worthy report by the AFT, the *Times* said, "...it will take more than rhetoric for the AFT [and the NEA] to be seen as reformers."

CHARTER SCHOOLS: There's one more week left for the possibility of bringing charter schools to Washington State — legislatively, that is. The special session currently in progress has among its business the authorization of some forty charter schools, but the Senate Education chair, Rosemary McAuliffe, is doing one of those "over my dead body" things over the charter bill. That's after the WEA — the state's union — endorsed the bill, and just about every other side has come together. So, once again the Educational Excellence Coalition has launched the signature-gathering phase of the Initiative process, which may be the last recourse for charter supporters. **CHARTER SCHOOLS WEEK:** Mark Your Calendar! [National Charter Schools Week](#) is NEXT week, May 1-5, 2000. The national celebration is sponsored by more than 50 local and state charter groups in concert with the [Charter Friends National Network](#). Open Houses in charter schools will be plentiful throughout the country. CER announces the Congressional Salute to Charter Schools! Congress is joining the celebration for National Charter Schools Week. The honorary co-chairmen of the Congressional Salute to Charter Schools were announced today. They are: Sen. Judd Gregg, Sen. Joseph Lieberman, Rep. Peter Hoekstra and Rep. Tim Roemer. These national

leaders will tour DC charter schools and address their colleagues and the media about the importance of this national movement. How many charter schools are there? Who attends them? [Where does each state's law rank?](#) This and more breaking news can all be found in next week's CER Newswire.



The Center for Education Reform
910 Seventeenth Street, NW, Suite 1120 • Washington, DC 20006
800-521-2118 • 301-986-8088 • Fax: 301-986-1826
www.edreform.com • cer@edreform.com
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