

Center for Education Reform



Making Schools Work Better for all Children

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Welcome to the Center for Education Reform's weekly hot-line, this week beginning Friday October 22.

The **Ohio** Department of Education disputes a claim by the Cleveland Teachers Union that the state illegally let four private schools convert into charter schools. Education Department spokeswoman Lee Ann Rogers said the conversions were legal because the schools gave up their old charters and appointed new governing boards. But the unions keep trying to undermine charters. As we reported last week these groups are holding a rally on Saturday designed to highlight the misinformation that they have been putting out in flyers and now on the radio. These claims are all, of course, totally untrue. In fact, community, or charter, schools will be held more accountable than other public schools. Along with test scores, report cards, annual reports, audits, and LOEO studies, community schools will also be held to the accountability plan in their contracts. This means that sponsors can close a low performing school. How many other public schools will be held to this standard?

In **Oregon**, the state Board of Education on Wednesday authorized the first two schools to operate under the state's new charter school law. The first two schools to become official charter schools are Lourdes, near Scio, and an alternative school in the Molalla River School District. Because the schools already are operating as alternative schools, the state board granted them waivers from a rule requiring school organizers to wait 120 days from the time they apply for approval until they can open. But as can be expected the teachers union stands against the reform. They have launched an initiative petition drive to send the voters a measure next year that would repeal the charter school law.

In **Florida**, The Hillsborough County School Board approved a plan Tuesday to convert the district to a charter school. The board voted to send the charter school district plan to the state Department of Education. The plan calls for class sizes of 18 students per teacher, extended school days and an extended school year, more freedom to hire teachers who are certified out of state and the expansion of pre-kindergarten services to more families. Florida has 3 districts that have applied out of the 6 possible under the 1998 law, "Charter School Districts Pilot Program."

In **Arizona**, the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors has established some standards that charter and private schools will have to meet if they locate inside county islands or in county rural areas. The established standards would require that a charter school must sit on 5 acres, must have a fence separating it from homes and the building must be set back 100 feet from adjacent property. What does this mean? Regulation CREEP imposed by those that oppose charters! And we are keeping

an eye on it.

In **Missouri**, following up on our story last week. the state Board of Education voted Thursday to revoke Kansas City's accreditation in May 2000 because of the district's failure to meet any of the state standards for student performance. The district had been provisionally accredited since 1993. The board did not strip accreditation from the St. Louis district. Instead it voted to give St. Louis 2 years to improve its performance.

Thanks for checking into the Center's hotline - for more information on the Center for Education Reform and reform issues, please call our offices at 800-521-2118 or browse the [website](#). Have a great week!



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