

Center for Education Reform



Making Schools Work Better for all Children

Newsire - April 16, 1999

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Accountability is American's buzz word of choice in education circles today, and for good reason: most parents want it, and find it lacking in our schools. Surveys show that more than 90% of all parents surveyed want their children to learn the basics and be held to high standards. Further, they want schools to be held accountable for results. To their credit, several states have started holding people -- students and schools -- to tough standards, but some school officials (hopefully in the minority) don't like the heat. In Texas, a deputy superintendent was indicted for tampering with scores to make the district's students appear smarter.

And a spokesperson for the NEA's Texas affiliate which serves 80,000 teachers said about testing, "Our major complaint is that careers are on the line. You can be fired if the children aren't performing."

As our children might say, DUUUHHH! The heat should be sparking people to work harder, and those that can't, shouldn't be in business.

Elsewhere, our weekly glimpse at schools working takes us to Pittsburgh, PA, where founders of the Northside Urban Pathways charter are working hard to close a successful first year. They've encountered challenges beyond what most educators can even imagine, but what draws them together is a united passion and commitment for making things work no matter what the obstacles. Kudos to Northside Urban Pathways, our charter of the week!

And if you know anyone in Wyoming, you might want to direct them to the Citizens for Educational Choice, a growing group of dedicated parents and citizens who want to bring about better schools. They've started a newsletter to network people across the state, and are bringing together people to have an impact on public school policy. To get on the weekly update list, e-mail Nancy Hamilton at treyham@uwyo.edu, or call the Center at (800) 521-2118 for more information.

Next week, we hope we'll be able to report on good news about the Florida school choice debate, where the Senate is slated to consider the Governor's bill this week, but is being deluged by union-paid opponents to kill all reform proposals currently on the table. Oh, the battle never ends! But the cause is just. Bye for now.



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